

A historical scene from the American War of Independence. In the upper left, a large American flag with 13 stars waves against a clear blue sky. Below, a group of soldiers in 18th-century attire are gathered on a dirt path. Some wear red coats and bicorne hats, while others wear blue coats and tricorn hats. The scene is set in a hazy, sunlit environment, suggesting a battlefield or a significant military event.

AMERICAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

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American War of Independence

- In 1492, Spanish navigator Christopher Columbus arrived in North America.
- Columbus called the North American people Red Indians, thinking they were Indians.
- Columbus' fleet: Santa Maria, Nina, Pinte
- Europeans called America the New World.
- People began to migrate from Europe to North America.



Immigration from England

- Following religious persecution by the King of England, a group of English people immigrated to America in the 17th century on the ship Mayflower.
- They are known as the Pilgrim Fathers.
- They established thirteen colonies on the coast of North America.

13 Colonies

1. New Hampshire
2. Massachusetts
3. New Jersey
4. Delaware
5. Virginia
6. North Carolina
7. Georgia
8. New York
9. Rhode Island
10. Connecticut
11. Pennsylvania
12. Maryland
13. South Carolina

- The American Revolutionary War was a war of independence waged by these thirteen colonies against their mother country, Britain.



Causes of the American War of Independence

- The colonies were not represented in the British Parliament.
- Seven Years' War
- Economic exploitation and resource drain in the American colonies. Britain collected the economic losses caused by the Seven Years' War from the colonies. Massive taxes were imposed on the people.
- Britain's mercantilist policies.

Seven Years' War

- The Seven Years' War was a war between Britain and France that took place from 1756 to 1763.
- France was defeated in the Seven Years' War, which led to the liberation of the French colonies in America.
- This ended French dominance in America.
- This marked the beginning of British dominance.
- In North America, Britain unified all of its colonies on the Atlantic coast and expelled the French from Canada.
- Britain also succeeded in capturing several Dutch territories.
- It was also the British who changed the name of New Amsterdam to New York.
- The war created an economic crisis in England, and in this context, the British Parliament imposed a number of taxes on the American colonies.
- George Grenville was the first Prime Minister of England after the Seven Years' War.

- He introduced a number of taxes and measures in the American colonies to increase British royal revenue.
- These included the Sugar Act of 1764 and the Stamp Act of 1765.

No taxation without representation

- The slogan of the American Revolutionary War was 'No taxation without representation'
- This slogan was coined by James Otis
- Mercantilism was a commercial policy implemented in the American colonies by merchants with the help of England.
- Mercantilism is an economic policy designed to maximize an economy's exports and minimize imports. They saw the colonies as a market for England's products and a source of raw materials.

Laws that fall within the scope of mercantilism

- Navigation Act 1651: Goods could only be transported to and from the colonies in English ships or ships built in the colonies.
- Hat Act 1732: A law regulating the production and export of hats in the American colonies to protect the British hat industry.
- Molasses Act 1733: Tax imposed on molasses and sugar imported from non-British colonies to the American colonies.
- Sugar Act 1764: This act imposed a special tax on the importation of sugar.
- Stamp Act 1765: All legal documents, newspapers, pamphlets, licenses, etc. in the colonies must bear the seal of England.
- Currency Act 1764
- Townshend Act 1767
- Tea Act 1773

Other conditions

- The colonies were to provide accommodation and necessary facilities for the English army retained in the colonies.
- Sugar, wool, cotton, tobacco, etc. produced in the colonies could only be sent to England.
- Heavy import duties were imposed on products coming into America from other colonies and outside of England.
- In 1767, Charles Townshend, the English finance minister, introduced a new tax law in America.
- Import duties were imposed on tea, glass, and paper imported into the colonies.

Townshend Law ,1767

- In 1767, Charles Townshend, the English finance minister, introduced a new tax law in America.
- Import duties were imposed on tea, glass, and paper imported into the colonies.
- This law is known as the Townshend Acts.
- Protests against the Townshend Acts erupted in the American colonies

Boston Massacre

- On March 5, 1770, British soldiers killed 5 Americans during a protest in Boston.
- This event is known as the Boston Massacre.
- After this incident, the Townshend Acts were repealed in 1770. In 1773, a new Tea Act was passed, imposing a tax on tea imports.

Sons of Liberty

- The Sons of Liberty was a political organization formed to fight against the British government's taxation system and protect the people of the colonies.
- The organization was founded in 1765 by Samuel Adams.

Boston Tea Party

- Strong protests erupted in America against the high tax imposed on tea by the English government.
- On December 16, 1773, a group of Boston residents dressed as Red Indians boarded an English ship anchored in the harbor and threw 342 chests of tea into the sea.
- This incident is known as the Boston Tea Party.

First Continental Congress

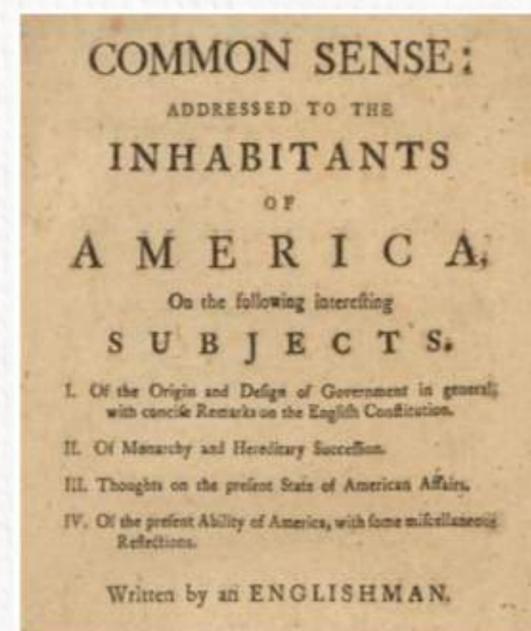
- The First Continental Congress was a meeting of representatives from the colonies to protest against the policies and laws of England.
- The First Continental Congress was held in Philadelphia on September 5, 1774.
- The people of the colony petitioned the King of England, demanding that restrictions on industry and trade be lifted and that taxes not be imposed without approval.
- But the king sent troops to suppress the people, which led to war between England and the colonies.
- On April 19, 1775, British troops and American colonists clashed at Lexington, Massachusetts
- The American colonies were victorious in this war.
- Georgia was the only colony not to participate in the First Continental Congress.

Second Continental Congress

- The Second Continental Congress met in Philadelphia on May 10, 1775.
- Delegates from all the colonies attended this congress.
- It was at this conference that an army was formed for the colonies, the Continental Army.
- George Washington was chosen as the leader of this army.

Olive Branch Petition

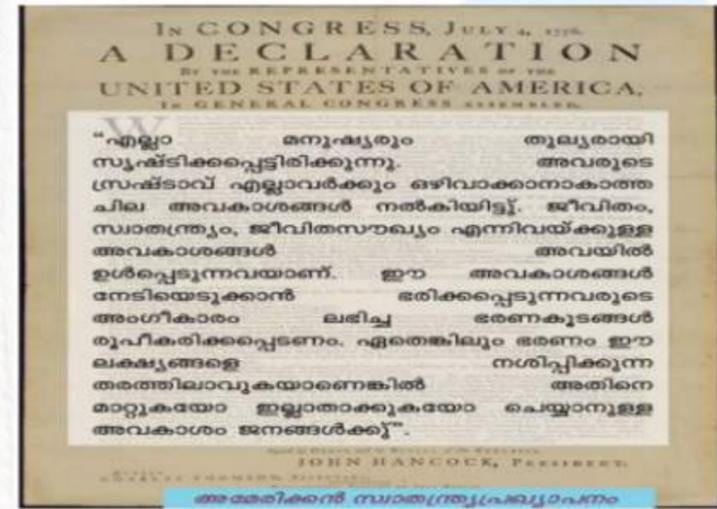
- In July 1775, the Second Continental Congress sent a petition to the British King George III in a last-ditch effort to avoid war with Britain.
- This is known as the Olive Branch Petition.
- However, George III rejected this request.
- Thomas Paine published a pamphlet called Common Sense in connection with the American War of Independence.
- In this pamphlet, Thomas Paine argued that the wise course of action for Americans was to separate from England.



American Declaration of Independence

- The American Declaration of Independence was presented at the Pennsylvania State House (now Independence Hall) in Philadelphia.
- On July 4, 1776, the Continental Congress adopted the American Declaration of Independence.
- The American Declaration of Independence was drafted by Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin.

- With this declaration, the war between England and America became more violent.
- On June 15, 1776, British and colonial forces clashed at Bunker Hill, near the city of Boston.
- In October 1777, the American colonial army, led by General Gates, defeated the British army at the Battle of Saratoga.



- The American colonies received French aid in their fight against the British.
- French forces led by the Marquis de Lafayette came to the aid of the American colonies.
- The war continued until 1781.
- On October 19, 1781, British forces under General Cornwallis surrendered to George Washington's forces at Yorktown.
- The event is known as the Battle of Yorktown and the Siege of Yorktown.
- After its defeat in the war, Britain signed the Treaty of Paris in 1783, recognizing American independence.

The American Constitution

- After independence, the American Constitutional Convention was held in Philadelphia in 1787.
- James Madison led the drafting of the American Constitution.
- James Madison is known as the Father of the American Constitution.
- The American Constitution was signed on September 17, 1787
- September 17 is Constitution Day.
- The United States Constitution was adopted in 1789.
- The United States is the world's first written constitution.
- The United States Constitution is also the shortest constitution in the world.
- It has only 7 articles.
- So far, only 27 amendments have been made to the United States Constitution.

- The Bill of Rights is a list of fundamental rights that protect the rights of citizens.
- It includes the first 10 amendments to the US Constitution, ratified in 1791.
- It guarantees a number of freedoms and protections, such as freedom of speech, the right to a fair trial, and protection against cruel and unusual punishment.

George Washington

- George Washington was the first person elected as President of the United States.
- George Washington is known as the Father of the United States.
- George Washington became President of the United States on April 30, 1789.

Quotes related to the American War of Independence

- “It is not reasonable that this continent should remain subject to any foreign power for long.” - Thomas Paine
- “Man has certain rights, which no government has the right to infringe.” - John Locke
- The revolution was already underway before the war began, but it was in the minds of the people.” - John Adams

American War of Independence - Influences

- It inspired and gave a sense of purpose to freedom struggles and revolutions in other colonies.
- Proposed the idea of a republican form of government.
- Proposed the idea of a federal state that gives independence and power to the states.
- Started a written constitution.

Presidents of the United States

- **First President of the United States: George Washington**
- **First Vice President of the United States: John Adams**
- **John Adams is the second president of the United States**
- **Third president of the United States - Thomas Jefferson**
- **Youngest US president - Theodore Roosevelt**
- **The longest-serving US president - Franklin D. Roosevelt**
- **The first US president to die in office - William Henry Harrison**
- **US President who resigned following the Watergate scandal - Richard M. Nixon**
- **US President who was a movie star- Ronald Reagan**

US presidents assassinated while in office

- **Abraham Lincoln**
- **James Garfield**
- **William McKinley**
- **John F. Kennedy**

Abraham Lincoln

- **Abraham Lincoln was the 16th President of the United States.**
- **The Gettysburg Address is his famous speech delivered in 1863.**
- **It was in this speech that he defined democracy (government of the people, by the people, for the people).**
- **He was the one who suggested that the ballot is more powerful than the bullet.**
- **He was also the one who abolished slavery in America.**
- **He was assassinated in 1865.**

IMPORTANT SOURCES USED

Class 8 – History, Chapter 10: The American Revolution

Class 9 – Democratic Politics, Democracy in the Contemporary World

Class 11 – Themes in World History, hanging Cultural Traditions

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS RELATED TO THIS TOPIC

1. Stamp Act and Townshend Act were related to which of the following?

- (A) French Revolution**
- (B) American War of Independence**
- (C) Russian Revolution**
- (D) Chinese Revolution**

(2025)

Correct Answer: (B) American War of Independence

2. Match the following events and movements and find out the correct answer from the choices given:(Degree level Prelims 2025)

- a) Stamp Act i) Great Revolution of England**
- b) Tennis Court Oath ii) American Revolution**
- c) Bill of Rights iii) Russian Revolution**
- d) Treaty of Brest-Litovsk iv) French Revolution**

(A) a – ii, b – iv, c – iii, d – i (B) a – ii, b – iii, c – iv, d – i

(C) a – iv, b – i, c – ii, d – iii (D) a – ii, b – iv, c – i, d – iii

Correct answer : (D) a – ii, b – iv, c – i, d – iii

3.The American Revolution was inspired by the ideas of which of the following philosophers? (UPSC PRELIMS 2014)

- (a) Karl Marx**
- (b) John Locke**
- (c) Rousseau**
- (d) Montesquieu**

Answer: (b) John Locke

4.Which one of the following statements is correct about the American Revolution? (UPSC PRELIMS 2012)

- (a) It resulted in the establishment of a monarchy.**
- (b) It was a conflict between the British and French settlers.**
- (c) It led to the establishment of a republican form of government.**
- (d) It was fought mainly for religious freedom.**

Answer: (c) It led to the establishment of a republican form of government.

Explanation: The 13 colonies declared independence in 1776 and established a republic with an elected president and a written constitution (1787).

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. What is the name of the petition sent by the Second Continental Congress to the British King George III, considered the last attempt to avoid war?

- A. Yorktown Petition
- B. Philadelphia Declaration
- C. Independence Bill
- D. Olive Branch Petition

Correct Answer: D. Olive Branch Petition

Explanation: The Olive Branch Petition was the appeal sent by the Second Continental Congress to King George III in July 1775, in an effort to avoid war with Britain. However, the King rejected it.

2. Who is known as the Father of the American Constitution?

- A. George Washington
- B. Thomas Jefferson
- C. James Madison
- D. John Adams

Correct Answer: C. James Madison

Explanation: James Madison led the effort to draft the US Constitution at the Constitutional Convention held in Philadelphia in 1787. He is considered the Father of the American Constitution. George Washington was the first President and the Father of the Nation. Thomas Jefferson was one of the drafters of the Declaration of Independence and the third President.

3. Which American President gave the famous definition of democracy as "government of the people, by the people, for the people"?

- A. George Washington
- B. Theodore Roosevelt
- C. Ronald Reagan
- D. Abraham Lincoln

Correct Answer: D. Abraham Lincoln

4. Which of the following statements regarding the impacts of the American Revolution are correct?

- 1. It initiated the written constitution.**
- 2. It provided the concept of a federal state granting independence and power to the states.**
- 3. It popularized John Locke's idea globally that "humans have certain inherent rights."**

- A. Only 1 is correct**
- B. Only 2 and 3 are correct**
- C. 1, 2, and 3 are all correct**
- D. Only 3 is correct**

Correct Answer: C. 1, 2, and 3 are all correct

5. Which statements regarding George Washington are correct?

- 1. He was elected as the head of the Continental Army.**
- 2. He was assassinated while serving as the President of the United States.**
- 3. He is known as the Father of the United States of America.**

- A. Only 1 is correct**
- B. Only 2 is correct**
- C. Only 1 and 3 are correct**
- D. 1, 2, and 3 are all correct**

Correct Answer: C. Only 1 and 3 are correct