Edward R. Murrow High School                                    American History Semester 1

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**HW#1: Unit 1 Homework Sheet: From Colony To Country**

Did **Christopher Columbus** the famous explorer discover America? Not really. Many other explorers came before him, but Columbus landing in the Caribbean in 1492 was very important because his travel led to the colonization of the **New World** (North, Central, and South America) by European countries. **Colonization** is when a country tries to take control of land that doesn’t belong to them. Spain colonized most of the Caribbean, Central and South America, while France and Britain colonized most of North America. England’s greatest possession was its **13 colonies** along the East Coast of North America (what is now present-day United States), these were known as **The American Colonies**. The **Mother Countries** get rich from colonization because they would take natural resources from the land, sell their products and collect taxes from their **colonists**. The economic system they created was known as **mercantilism.**

Another reason why Columbus did not discover America was that America was never empty. **Native American** **Tribes**, what many people call **Indians**, were living in America for thousands of years before the Europeans arrived. The arrival of the Europeans led to the destruction of the Indian tribes, as Europeans stole Indian land, killed their people and brought new diseases to America that killed as many as one in three Indians. Eventually the massive **Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade** was established to import African slaves to the New World to be used as workers on European farms.

In the American Colonies under Great Britain, colonists come settle for political, economic, social and religious freedom (such as the Quakers and Puritans) and opportunity. The colonies were divided into three sections based on geography – the New England Colonies, the Middle Colonies and Southern Colonies. Due to geography, each had a different type of economy and lifestyle (New England colonies had rocky soil but many harbors so focused on shipping and trade, but the Southern colonies had hot weather and good land so focused on farming and relied on slave labor). The America colonists slowly began to form early steps of **self-government** and early **representative democracies (governments based on the people).** The **Mayflower compact**, New England town meetings, and the **Virginia House of Burgesses** are early examples of democratic practices in early American history. The British policy of **Salutary Neglect**, being left alone by Britain, allowed for the growth of democratic government. At this time there was movement called the **Enlightenment** where many great thinkers began to question things like human rights and the role of government. The ideas of philosophers like **John Locke**, and **John Jacques Rousseau** greatly affected the way people viewed Britain’s control over her 13 American colonies – the relationship between the two was about to be strained!

By the mid 18th century, North America was divided up between the European powers of France, England, and Spain. The competition between France and England for control of North America resulted in **The French & Indian War**, seven years of brutal warfare. War had left England deep in debt.

Britain looked to tax its **13 American colonies** to help pay off that debt and created many new taxes such as the **Stamp Act and Townshed Acts (which included a Tea Tax).** The Colonists protested using slogans such as **“no taxation without representation” –** the colonists wanted a say if they were being taxed.The colonists boycotted British goods, but eventually tension led to armed conflict such as **The Boston Tea Party, Boston Massacre and Battles of Lexington and Concord (“The shot heard round the world!”).** All of this tension, including Enlightenment ideas such as **Thomas Paine’s pamphlet “Common Sense”** led the colonists to write **The Declaration of Independence** and fight **the American Revolution**. Under the leadership of George Washington, using the American terrain to our advantage, and with some help from the French (after the battle of Saratoga), a British army surrendered at Yorktown and England signed **The Treaty of Paris**, giving America our independence!

**Regents Vocabulary Words   
copy the words and the definition in your homework books/ or on a separate piece of paper.**

**1) Geography** – the study of the political (states, countries) and physical (rivers, mountains) features of the earth

**2) Colonization** - when a country tries to take control of land that doesn’t belong to them

**3) Colony** - land taken over and controlled by a "mother" country

**4) Colonists** - the people living in colonies

**5) Mother Country --** country that economically and politically controlled a colony.

**6) Democracy** – a representative government run by many people that includes equality, freedom and voting

**7) Mayflower Compact**- document of democratic government, written by the Pilgrims aboard the Mayflower ship

**8) Virginia House of Burgesses** - A representative government in the British colony of Virginia

**9) Mercantilism** - a system in which England made money by taking natural resources from the American colonies and forcing colonists to trade only with England.

**10) Salutary Neglect** - period of time when England was at war and allowed the colonies to manufacture and trade with little interference

**11) Stamp Act (1765)**- British plan to tax colonists by forcing them to purchase special stamps

**12) Townshed Acts 1767 –** Series of acts passed by British Parliament to tax the colonists (including tea)

**13) Intolerable Acts 1774** – laws passed by Britain to punish the citizens of Boston for the Boston Tea Party – includes Quartering Act, closing the Boston Harbor, no town meetings and trying criminals in England.

**14) Boston Tea Party**- the dumping of British tea into Boston Harbor as a form of protesting English taxes

**15) Boston Massacre --** when British soldiers shot colonists who were throwing snowballs packed with rocks at them.

**16) Representative Democracy**—government based on consent of the governed, with elected representatives to make decisions.

**17) “No Taxation Without Representation” –** slogan used by the colonists to protest England making laws without colonial representatives in Parliament.

**18) Boycott**- refusing to purchase goods or services as form of protest

**19) Enlightenment** – a movement of philosophers that believed government was responsible for its citizens well-being

**20) John Locke** - Enlightenment philosopher who believed people had “**natural rights**” (life, liberty, property)

**21) Common Sense** – pamphlet written by **Thomas Paine** that convinced many colonists to support the revolution.

**22) Sons of Liberty** – a radical organization that used terror tactics and **propaganda** against the British government

**23) American Revolution** - when the American colonies fought England in order to become a free country

**24) Declaration of Independence** – a document that stated why America was right in breaking away from England

**25) Continental Congress –** Colonial government in charge of governing during the Revolutionary War.

**26) Treaty of Paris** -- Treaty that gives America its freedom.

**Study Questions:**

**Use information from the documents to answer the following questions in one paragraph each. (4-7 sentences each, using at least 2 specifics from the documents).**

**Loyalist document baseline**

**Document #1: Thomas Paine, Common Sense, 1776**

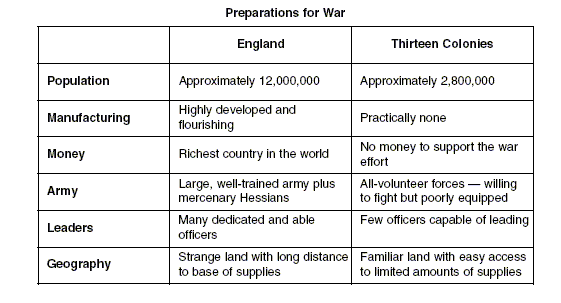
***“****…I offer nothing more than simple facts, plain arguments and common sense…It is right and reasonable for America to separate from England……As to government matters, it is not in the power of Britain to do this continent justice: the business of it will soon be too weighty and intricate [difficult]to be managed with any tolerable degree of convenience, by a power so distant from us, and so very ignorant of us; for if they cannot conquer us, they cannot govern us. Even the distance between England and America gives proof that we are not supposed to be connected…The period of debate is over. Weapons must be used as a last resort and they will decide who wins the argument…”*

**Document #2: Grievances Section of the Declaration of Independence, 1776**

*“The history of the King of Britain is a history of repeated injuries all starting an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be given to the world.*

* *He has broken up Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing Great Britain’s invasions on the rights of people.*
* *He has obstructed (got in the way of) the justice system by refusing to allow for laws to be passed.*
* *He has kept soldiers among us even during times of peace.*
* *For quartering large groups of troops among us.*
* *For protecting these troops with Mock (fake) Trial, from punishment for any murders, which they should commit on the colonists.*
* *For imposing taxes without our consent*
* *He has removed himself from government here by declaring us out from his protection and waging war against us . . .”*

**Document #3: Obstacles facing the Colonists at Independence**



1. **Describe the historical context of the documents**
2. **Evaluate the impact of declaring independence based upon the documents.**