

GRADE 8

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 **Read the passage carefully and choose the letter of the correct answer.**

The Boston Tea Party



On the cold evening of December 16, 1773, a group of American colonists carried out one of the most famous acts of protest in history. Dressed as Mohawk Native Americans, they boarded three British ships anchored in Boston Harbor. In a dramatic display of defiance, they dumped 342 chests of British tea into the water. This act, later known as the Boston Tea Party, was not simply about the price of tea—it was about a principle. The colonists were enraged that Parliament in Britain had imposed taxes on them without giving them any voice or representation in government. The Tea Act of 1773 allowed the struggling British East India Company to sell tea directly to the colonies at a lower cost. While this might have seemed beneficial, many colonists recognized it as a political trap. If they accepted the cheaper tea, they would also be accepting Parliament's authority to tax them without their consent. To the colonists, this was a violation of their basic rights as Englishmen. The destruction of the tea was their bold response to laws they saw as unjust and dangerous to liberty.

Britain's reaction to the Boston Tea Party was swift and harsh. Parliament passed the Coercive Acts, known in the colonies as the "Intolerable Acts." These laws closed Boston Harbor, placed Massachusetts under stricter British control, and required colonists to house British soldiers. Instead of silencing dissent, however, these measures only united the colonies against Britain. Leaders from across the colonies gathered in solidarity, forming the First Continental Congress in 1774 to coordinate their resistance.

The Boston Tea Party became more than a local protest—it became a symbol of resistance throughout the American colonies. It demonstrated the power of ordinary citizens to take dramatic action in defense of their rights. More importantly, it set the stage for the American Revolution, proving that the colonists were willing to risk punishment, and even war, for the sake of freedom.

Part A – Multiple Choice (Choose the correct answer.)

Q1: Why did the colonists protest the Tea Act of 1773?

- A.** The price of tea was too high.
- B.** It gave Britain control without colonial representation.
- C.** They wanted tea from France instead.
- D.** They disliked the East India Company.

Q2: What disguise did the protestors use during the Boston Tea Party?

- A.** British soldiers
- B.** Farmers
- C.** Mohawk Native Americans
- D.** Merchants

Q3: Which British response most angered the colonists after the Tea Party?

- A.** A new tax on sugar
- B.** The Coercive (Intolerable) Acts
- C.** An increase in tea shipments
- D.** The Stamp Act

Q4: Which best describes the central idea of the passage?

- A.** The Boston Tea Party was an act of anger about expensive tea.
- B.** The Boston Tea Party was a symbolic act of resistance that united the colonies.
- C.** The Boston Tea Party marked the end of British rule in America.
- D.** The Boston Tea Party showed Britain's military strength.

Part B – Short Answer

Q5: Why did the colonists see the Tea Act as a political trap?

Q6: How did the Boston Tea Party influence the colonies' unity?

Part C – Vocabulary

Q7: What does the word **defiance** (paragraph 1) most nearly mean in the passage?

- A. Obedience
- B. Rebellion
- C. Confusion
- D. Weakness

Q8: In paragraph 3, what does the word **dissent** mean? Use context to support your answer.

Part D – Analysis

Q9: What cause-and-effect relationship does the passage highlight between the Tea Party and Britain's response?

Q10: Why is the Boston Tea Party considered a turning point in American history? Use evidence from the passage.



✓ Right Answers

Part A – Multiple Choice (Choose the correct answer.)

Q1: Why did the colonists protest the Tea Act of 1773?

- A.** The price of tea was too high.
- B.** It gave Britain control without colonial representation.
- C.** They wanted tea from France instead.
- D.** They disliked the East India Company.

Answer: B. It gave Britain control without colonial representation.

Q2: What disguise did the protestors use during the Boston Tea Party?

- A.** British soldiers
- B.** Farmers
- C.** Mohawk Native Americans
- D.** Merchants

Answer: C. Mohawk Native Americans

Q3: Which British response most angered the colonists after the Tea Party?

- A.** A new tax on sugar
- B.** The Coercive (Intolerable) Acts
- C.** An increase in tea shipments
- D.** The Stamp Act

Answer: B. The Coercive (Intolerable) Acts

Q4: Which best describes the central idea of the passage?

- A.** The Boston Tea Party was an act of anger about expensive tea.
- B.** The Boston Tea Party was a symbolic act of resistance that united the colonies.
- C.** The Boston Tea Party marked the end of British rule in America.
- D.** The Boston Tea Party showed Britain's military strength.

Answer: **B.** The Boston Tea Party was a symbolic act of resistance that united the colonies.

Part B – Short Answer (Answers may vary)

Q5: Why did the colonists see the Tea Act as a political trap?

The colonists saw the Tea Act as a trap because Britain lowered tea prices but still demanded a tax, which they believed forced them to accept "taxation without representation."

Q6: How did the Boston Tea Party influence the colonies' unity?

The Boston Tea Party united the colonies by inspiring others to protest and strengthening resistance against Britain's control.

Part C – Vocabulary

Q7: What does the word **defiance** (paragraph 1) most nearly mean in the passage?

- A. Obedience
- B. Rebellion
- C. Confusion
- D. Weakness

Answer: B. Rebellion

Q8: In paragraph 3, what does the word **dissent** mean? Use context to support your answer.

“Dissent” means disagreement or protest. The context shows colonists
opposing unfair British laws.

Part D – Analysis

Q9: What cause-and-effect relationship does the passage highlight between the Tea Party and Britain's response?

The Tea Party caused Britain to respond with the Coercive Acts, which in turn increased colonial anger and pushed them closer to revolution.

Q10: Why is the Boston Tea Party considered a turning point in American history? Use evidence from the passage.

It is considered a turning point because it shifted colonial resistance into a movement for independence. The passage notes it "ignited anger on both sides and strengthened unity among the colonies."