

Teacher guide:

Divide students into an even number of groups. Assign one of two sides to each group: half of the groups will argue for British taxation being justified and the other half will argue against British taxation being justified.

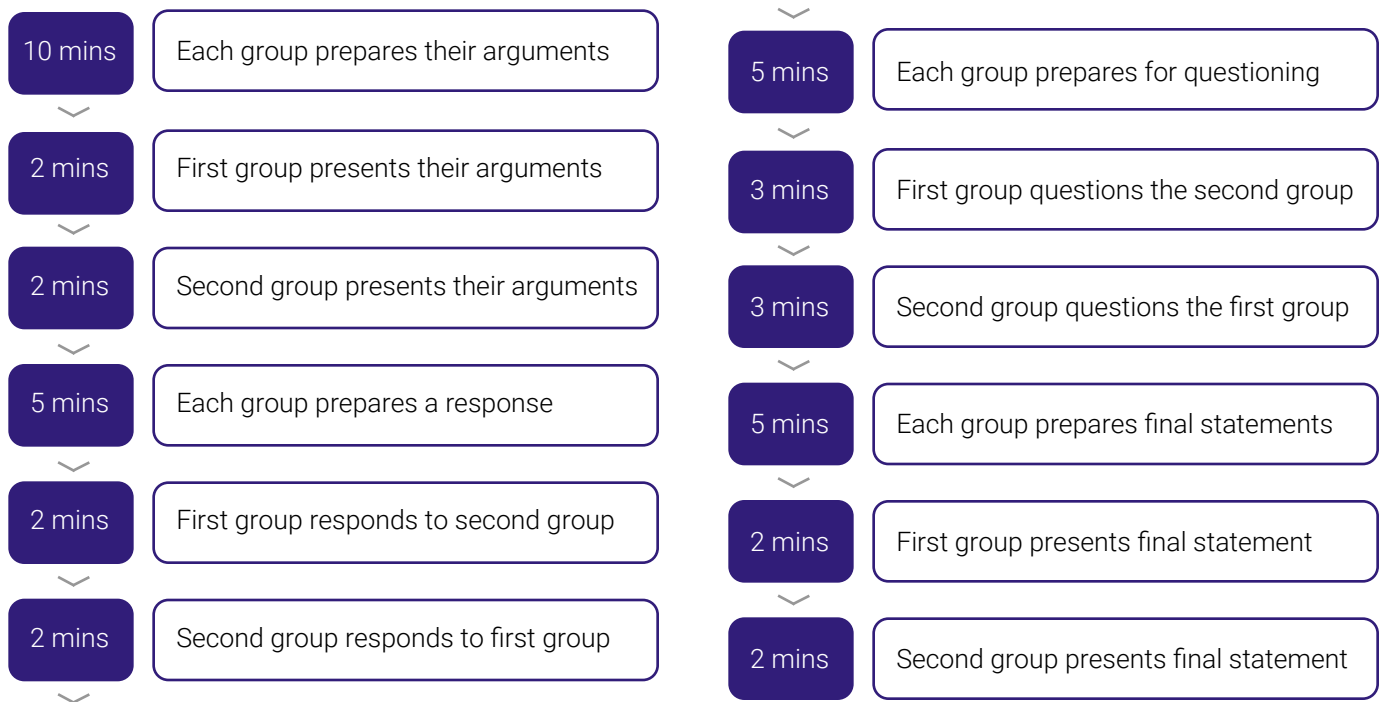
Hand out the following two pages to students. The first page outlines the structure of the debate as well as facts that support each side. The second, the graphic organizer, provides questions for students to answer as the debate progresses. There are built-in times for students to fill out their graphic organizer throughout the debate.

Structure the groups to fit your classroom: you can have 2 groups for the entire class to participate in the same debate, or have smaller groups and multiple debates going on at once!

WAS BRITISH TAXATION JUSTIFIED?

Debate guidelines:

Flip a coin to see which side will present first. Then, follow the structure laid out below. Make sure to fill out your graphic organizer during the debate to keep your arguments organized. Remember to use facts in your arguments!



The facts:

- The French and Indian War benefitted the colonists the most
- The French and Indian War was really expensive, and the British needed a way to pay for it
- The colonists didn't want to pay for a war they didn't start (the French and Indian War)
- The British needed to pay for troops left in the colonies after the French and Indian War meant to help protect colonists
- Britain had been ignoring the colonies, and now were paying attention because they needed money
- As British colonies, Britain had the right to demand taxes
- The Sugar Act actually lowered the tax on the colonies
- The Sugar Act came at a time when many colonists were struggling to make money, and made it harder for them
- Britain limited the colonies' ability to trade with other countries, which meant the colonists couldn't make as much money
- British citizens in Great Britain also had to pay the Stamp Act, not just the colonists
- The smuggling done by the colonists was not allowed in any other part of the British Empire
- The colonies had to pay less taxes than people living in Britain
- England gave the colonies the chance to impose a tax upon themselves before the Townshend Acts
- England didn't tell the colonies how much they wanted the colonies to raise before the Townshend Acts, and the colonies assumed no matter what they raised, England would say it wasn't enough
- The colonists thought internal taxes—taxes on things that happens between colonists and not with Britain—were unfair (the Stamp Act was an example of this, as it taxed documents colonists sent to each other)
- There wasn't even free trade in England, and all Englishmen paid their taxes
- The colonists were mad about the searches by customs officials of homes, stores, and office
- The colonists were questioning the Parliament's right to tax and rule them
- British citizens had the right to have no taxation without representation—the colonists should be able to have their needs represented in the British Parliament in order to accept taxes
- There were people in England who weren't directly represented in Parliament, and so the colonists were no different

WAS BRITISH TAXATION JUSTIFIED?

Which facts will support your side?

How can you respond to the other side's opening arguments?

What questions can you ask the other side to make them reconsider their stance?

What questions do you think the other side will ask you?