

The American Revolution began when Britain's American colonies rebelled against King George III. The colonists defeated the British and set up a new country: they became the United States of America on 4th July 1776.

In the 1760s the British began taxing their 13 North American colonies. The Americans said this was wrong because they were not represented in the British parliament. *No taxation without representation!* was their cry.

The British removed all taxes – except on tea. The Americans were still not content, and fighting broke out in Massachusetts.

The fighting soon turned into a full-scale war. The Americans, guided by Thomas Jefferson, wrote a Declaration of Independence saying they now governed themselves. Led by George Washington, they fought to defend their freedom. In the winter of



„The Boston Tea Party“. On 16 December 1773 a group of Boston citizen disguised as Mohawks boarded the *Beaver*, a British tea ship, and threw chests of tea into the harbour. It was a protest against the tea tax and brought the American and British to war.

1777/78 during the military camp of Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, 2,500 American soldiers died of starvation, disease, and exposure to frost.



„The Horse America throwing his Master“, cartoon in a British newspaper of 1779.

- Who is the rider?
- What is his whip made of?
- Who is passing by?
- How many stars are there in the flag?

Then France, Spain and the Dutch joined in on the American side. After General Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown, Virginia, the British knew they could not win.

Peace was made at Paris and the USA became an independent country. Leading Americans then wrote a new constitution. It set out how the USA would be governed and gave its citizens human rights.

George Washington became the first president of the USA in 1789.

colony: settlement
to rebel: to uprising
to defeat: to beat
taxes: duties, toll
full-scale: complete
to guide: to lead

declaration: statement
independence: freedom
to govern: to rule
starvation: hunger
disease: illness
to surrender: to capitulate

citizen: inhabitant
to disguise: to mask, to hide
chest: wooden box
Mohawks: an Indian tribe

Change the sentences into the passive voice:

The British taxed the colonists. ... *The colonists were taxed by the British.*

The British didn't remove the taxes on tea.

Washington led the American army.

Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence.

Americans disguised as Mohawks threw tea chests into the water.