American Revolution: Events Leading to War
1660: The Navigation Acts

**British Action:**
- Designed to keep trade in England and support **mercantilism**
- Colonists could only trade goods with England
- All colonial ships must stop in a British harbor before going to another country

**Colonial Response:**
- Ignored them (profitable to trade with other countries)
- **Salutary Neglect** (relaxed enforcement for continued loyalty)
The French and Indian War

- French empire collided w/ British empire
- Competing over the Ohio River Valley
Treaty of Paris
Proclamation Line of 1763

- Britain claimed land east of the Mississippi River
- Proclamation Line: banned all settlement west of Appalachian Mts. (to ease tensions w/ N.A.)
- Increased Independent Spirit
Writs of Assistance

- **British Action:**
  - Designed to crack down on colonial smuggling
  - Search warrants that allowed British officials to search any place, seize anything at any time

- **Colonial Response:**
  - Outraged the merchants of Boston
Britain’s New Policy for Colonial America

New Policy had three basic objectives:

– Place the colonies under strict British political and economic control
– Make the colonies respect and obey British laws
– Make the colonies pay their part in maintaining the British Empire
1764: Sugar Act

**British Action:**
- Cut the tax on molasses but raised it on other goods such as textiles, wine, coffee, indigo, and sugar
- Strengthened Vice-Admiralty courts
  - Cases decided by a single judge, not a jury

**Colonial Response:**
- First time a tax had been passed to raise revenue rather than regulate trade
- Colonial merchants protested the increased duties
1765: Quartering Act

British Action:
- Purpose to keep troops in the colonies and reduce the cost
- Colonists had to keep troops in their homes

Colonial Response:
- Colonists did not get along with army and did not want them there permanently
1765: The Stamp Act

**British Action:**
- Taxed all documents, newspapers, and playing cards by forcing colonists to place a special stamp on the items
- Direct tax

**Colonial Reaction:**
- Sons of Liberty
- Harassed stamp distributors
- Boycotted (a collective refusal to use, buy or deal with) English goods
- Stamp Act Congress issued a Declaration of Rights and Grievances (9 legislatures)
Stamp Act: British Response

- Parliament repealed the Stamp Act
  - Boycotts so successful not one stamp was ever sold
- Declaratory Act – asserted Parliament’s right to make laws that “bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever”
The repeal in the General Discussion of Miss America Stamp.
1767: The Townshend Acts

**British Action:**
- Put tax on goods such as paper, glass, paint, and tea
- Revenue raised would be to pay salaries of British officials in the colonies

**Colonial Reaction**
- Organize new boycott of goods
- Protest “No taxation without representation”
- Demonstrations and clashes between colonists and soldiers
- Women get involved in protests
Press Release

Write a press release as if you were a British official explaining why the new British policy of strict control and taxation is necessary.
March 3, 1770: The Boston Massacre
1772: Committees of Correspondence formed

- Started by Samuel Adams
- Used to pass information between the colonies
- It was a secret organization
1773: Tea Act

Parliament repealed Townshend Acts except for the tax on tea
- In the first year the taxes raised 295 pounds, but the cost of sending British troops to Boston was 170,000 pounds

Allowed the East India Tea Company to sell tea without the tax to make it cheaper
- Had been hurt badly by the boycotts
Dec. 16, 1773: Boston Tea Party
Spring 1774: The Intolerable Acts

- Designed to punish the colonists for Tea Party
- Closed the port at Boston
- Brought British soldiers to England for trials
- No town meetings allowed in Massachusetts – Boston under military rule
  - Trying to isolate Massachusetts, but only strengthened the colonies unity
1774: First Continental Congress

- Met in Philadelphia
- All colonies had representatives except Georgia
- Divided on the issue of declaring independence
- Sent Declaration of Rights and Grievances to King George III
  - Defended colonies’ right to run their own affairs
  - Supported the protests in Massachusetts
April 19, 1775

- Shot heard round the world fired at the Battle of Lexington
- Start of the revolutionary war

Watch this short video about the “shot heard round the world”: http://earlyamerica.com/shot_heard.htm