

***George vs. George: The American Revolution as Seen From Both Sides*** by Rosalyn Schanzer. U.S.A.: National Geographic Society, 2004. ISBN 0-7922-7349-4

**Literature Annotation:** This book looks at the two sides of the American Revolution through the eyes of George Washington and King George III. The similarities and differences between the two rulers and their countries are examined.

**Grade Level:** Grade 5

**Duration:** one class period or 50 minutes

**Economic Concepts:** Scarcity and Decision-making; Opportunity Cost; Taxes and the Role of Government; Command Economy and Market Economy

### **Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum (VSC)**

**Economics Standard:** Students will develop economic reasoning to understand the historical development and current status of economic principles, institutions, and processes needed to be effective citizens, consumers, and workers participating in local communities, the nation, and the world.

- 4.A.1.a. Identify the opportunity cost of economic decisions, such as whether or not to buy products on which British taxes were imposed. (Grade 5)
- 4.A.2.c. Analyze how changing from a British colony to an independent nation affected economic resources, production, and economic wants. (Grade 5)
- 4.B.1.b. Describe examples of command decision, such as the imposition of the Stamp Act and the Tea Act. (Grade 5)
- 4.B.1.c. Summarize a market economy and give examples of how the colonial economy exhibited these characteristics such as private ownership and consumer choice. (Grade 5)
- 4.B.2.a. Explain how colonists were forced to change their purchasing habits based on the scarcity of goods imposed by taxes. (Grade 5)
- 4.B.3.a. Compare the trade-offs of British protectionism. (Grade 5)

**Reading Standard:** Students will read, comprehend, interpret, analyze, and evaluate informational texts.

- 1.D.1 Develop and apply vocabulary through exposure to a variety of texts.
- 2.A.4.f. Identify and explain relationships between and among ideas.
- 2.A.4.g. Draw conclusions and make generalizations from text to form new understanding.

### **Lesson Objectives:**

- Students will identify the opportunity cost of economic decisions made by the colonists and British during the American Revolution by evaluating the pros and cons of paying taxes.
- Students will describe examples of command decisions by explaining the imposition of various taxes by Parliament and King George III.
- Students will summarize a market economy during colonial times by giving examples of private businesses and the choices colonists made in the colonial economy.
- Students will analyze how economic resources and production were affected during the American Revolution by identifying the resources that were no longer available and describing the effect the scarcity had on production.

**Economic Vocabulary:**

**market** - an arrangement wherein buyers and sellers can exchange resources, goods, and services. A market is said to exist whenever or wherever a buyer and seller enter into an exchange.

**command economy** - an economic system in which economic decisions to answer the basic economic questions of “what”, “how”, and “for whom” are made by an authority such as a feudal lord or government agency.

**market economy** - an economy in which decisions of “what”, “how”, and “for whom” are decided in markets through the interaction of buyers and sellers.

**decision-making process** - a process used to solve a problem in social studies including; identify a problem, explain the pros and cons of alternate choices, make a decision based on the choices available, and identify the opportunity cost of the choice made

**opportunity cost** - the foregone benefit of the next best alternative when an economic decision is made. If the class chooses to go to the library to work on their computer skills instead of having recess, then the opportunity cost of the choice is having recess.

**scarcity** - the condition that results from the imbalance between relatively unlimited economic wants and the relatively limited resources, goods and services available to satisfy those wants.

**trade** - to engage in the exchange, purchase or sales of resources, goods, or services

**barter** - to trade goods for other goods without using money

**Teacher Materials:**

- Transparency of “Life in England and the American Colonies,” Resource Sheet 1
- Transparency of “Paying Taxes to England-Pros and Cons,” Resource Sheet 2

**Materials for students:**

- One copy of *George vs. George: The American Revolution as seen from Both Sides* by Rosalyn Schanzer
- 1 copy of “Life in England and the North American Colonies,” Resource Sheet 1
- Optional: “A Changing Colonial Economy,” Resource Sheet 3

**Teacher Background:**

There were numerous events leading up to the Revolutionary War that had both economic and political effects on the colonists and the British. The views of both sides of the conflict should be considered and these different perspectives used to evaluate how economic issues affected some of the decisions made by both sides.

**Lesson Development:**

Have students discuss the cover of the book. Ask students to identify the side that each George represents. Then have students read the introduction and discuss why some people thought King George was a “Royal Brute” and other considered him “the Father of the People.” Have students consider whether George Washington was a traitor or “the father of his country.”

**Activities:**

1. Have students read pp. 8-11 and take notes about George Washington and King George on a Venn diagram to compare how they were similar and different.
2. Have students list some of the things that made both Georges similar.
3. Review the information on p. 10 about the Seven Years War and the part fought in North America called the French and Indian War. Have students recall how powerful King George III and Great Britain were after the French gave up their territories. Remind students that fighting a war for that long, and in so many places, had been very expensive for Great Britain.
4. Have students look at the inset on p. 13 to view the British possessions at that time. Have students read the paragraph under the map inset telling about the vast British Empire. Have students think about how far away some of these places were from England and how costly this could have been for the English.
5. Tell students that the British Army and Navy were protecting the colonists. Ask students to identify what the English people might have expected to gain from protecting the colonies. Lead students to realize that there would be trade-offs for the colonists and that they were expected to be loyal British subjects and help the Mother Country.
6. Display the transparency of “Life in England and the North American Colonies,” Resource Sheet 1 and distribute student copies of the same resource sheet. Read pp. 12-13 and record information about London, England life on the transparency.
7. Have students read pp 14-15 and record information about life in the North American colonies in the second column. Have students give examples of some of the jobs and businesses in the North American colonies during the time of George Washington.
8. Explain that most people in the colonies were private business owners and only the unskilled laborers, indentured servants, and slaves did not own some type of business. Have students note that buyers and sellers had numerous choices for goods and services in their community. Also note that in the colonies the colonial governments provided limited goods or services. Protection was one service that Great Britain did provide. There were some British soldiers in forts along the frontier, and there were naval ships on the seas to protect the merchant boats from pirates.
9. Review some of the goods that the American colonists were trading with Great Britain. Discuss the value of these trades both for the colonists and the English.
10. Introduce the vocabulary terms **decision-making process** and **opportunity cost**. Tell students that every decision has positives and negatives and that there are always trade-offs or opportunity costs. Explain that when making a decision the colonists and British people had to go through the process of deciding what to do and they had to consider what might be gained and what was being given up.

11. Have students read pp. 18-22 about Trouble with Taxes. Ask students if the British were fair in expecting the colonists to help pay the war debt. Have students discuss the pros and cons of the taxes. Record some key points of the discussion on “Paying Taxes to England-Pros and Cons,” Resource Sheet 2.
12. Have students discuss the opportunity cost of paying taxes and the opportunity cost of NOT paying taxes. Have students evaluate some of the trade-offs of each decision.
13. Ask students to recall some of the taxes that Parliament and King George III were imposing on them. List these taxes on the board or overhead. Display the vocabulary term **command economy** and have students recall who was making most of the economic decisions for the colonists.
14. Display the vocabulary term **market economy** and discuss the kind of economy that the colonists wanted. Have students identify some of the buyers and sellers in this market. Explain that the colonists wanted to freely trade with England, France, Spain, and all the other colonies rather than be limited by the taxes and laws of England.

**Assessment:**

Choice 1: Have students write a journal entry explaining some of the important decisions that the Colonists and English were making. Have students describe some of the changes that were occurring in the North American colonies because of these decisions. Be sure students give examples of the private businesses and specialized workers that were there and these decisions affected their lives.

Choice 2: Have students complete “A Changing Colonial Economy,” Resource Sheet 3.

**Additional Activities and Resources**

- There are additional sections of the book that may be used to compare the different governments, the Tea Party protests, and the significant battles during the Revolutionary War.

## Life in England and the British North American Colonies

Life in England	Life in the British North American Colonies

## Life in England and the British North American Colonies-Answer Key

<b>Life in London, England</b>	<b>Life in the British North American Colonies</b>
<p>Wealthy people in London:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lived in the biggest city in Europe with 740,000 people</li> <li>• attended masked balls and theatre</li> <li>• gambled at cards, dice and roulette</li> <li>• belonged to lots of clubs</li> <li>• met at coffeehouses, taverns cockfights, chophouses, and pleasure gardens</li> <li>• traveled by horses and carriages</li> <li>• entertained by ballad singers</li> <li>• bought goods from flower sellers and fishmongers on streets</li> <li>• wore fancy white wigs</li> <li>• wore the latest fashions</li> </ul> <p>All people in England:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lived with black rain caused from burning coal</li> <li>• breathed air that had thick, sooty smog</li> <li>• had to be careful because food and drinking water were often unhealthy</li> <li>• saw rowdy mobs and riots that were common</li> <li>• met beggars and pickpockets on streets</li> </ul>	<p>People in the colonies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• had 90% of people living out in the country on farms</li> <li>• had lots of forests, fish, and game as far as the eye could see</li> <li>• had fertile territory with lots of fur, iron, lumber, and grain to make flour</li> <li>• traded for manufactured goods from Great Britain, such as cloth, shoes, furniture, and tea</li> <li>• had major industries of whaling and shipbuilding in port cities of Philadelphia, Boston, and Charleston</li> <li>• had lumber mills, flour mills, factories, firehouses, and colleges</li> <li>• had streets overflowed with oxcarts, horses and carriages, chimney sweeps, sailors, and carriers of wood</li> <li>• had a group of professional, well-educated people who became planters like George Washington, or were merchants, doctors, minister, and lawyers</li> <li>• had a large middle class of farmers, shopkeepers, teachers, craftsmen, and fishermen.</li> <li>• had a group of poor unskilled laborers, indentured servants, and black slaves from Africa</li> <li>• were illegally moving west to land won during the Seven Years War</li> </ul>

### Paying Taxes to England - Pros and Cons

<b>Pros of Paying Taxes to England</b>	<b>Cons of Paying Taxes to England</b>

### Paying Taxes to England - Pros and Cons—Answer Key

<b>Pros of Paying Taxes to England</b>	<b>Cons of Paying Taxes to England</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supports British Army that is helping to stop Indian attacks on the colonists living in the frontier</li><li>• The colonists were loyal subjects and duty bound to the king and the English government</li><li>• Continued protection from other countries</li><li>• Able to buy British goods and enjoy the luxuries like silk and tea</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Colonists were already paying separate taxes to cover their own war debts in the colonies</li><li>• They did not have any representation and that they should not be taxed unless their elected representative voted to pay</li><li>• English interference in the government of the colonies</li><li>• If they pay these taxes, England will keep putting on more taxes</li><li>• Not obeying the King was treason and to defy the king was being a traitor, which was punishable by death</li></ul>

## A Changing Colonial Economy

1. On the lines below, list an important economic decision made by the colonists and an important economic decision made by the English Parliament during the time of George Washington and King George III.

Colonists: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

English Parliament: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Describe some of the changes that were occurring in England's North American colonies because of these economic decisions. Be sure to give examples of the specialized workers in private businesses and explain how these economic decisions affected their businesses and families.

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