Toward Independence: 
Road to the Revolution
Toward Independence: Road to Revolution

- The story begins in the 1750s, when Britain and the colonies fought a war against the French and their Indian allies. The war left Britain with huge debts, and a vast new empire to protect. The British government passed laws placing tighter controls and new taxes on the colonists. Colonists were angered as they, for the most part, had been able to make their own laws and determine their own taxes.

- **Patriots** (also called Whigs) were Americans who believed the colonies had the right to govern themselves.

- **Loyalists** (also called Tories) were colonists who were loyal to Britain and faithful subjects to the king.

- **Neutralists** were colonists who did not wish to take sides.
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Analyze the following image.

• What does the snake appear to represent?
• What do the letters under the snake represent?
• What do you think was the message of the creator of the cartoon?
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- The image first appeared in the May 9, 1754, at the beginning of the French and Indian War in an issue of Ben Franklin’s Pennsylvania Gazette. Franklin considered the American colonies to be dangerously fragmented (not united) and, through this cartoon, hoped to convince the American colonies that they would have great power if they united against the threat of French expansion in North America.

- With the onset of the American Revolution, patriots from across the colonies used Franklin’s "Join or Die" cartoon to promote the cause of independence. The slogan could regularly be seen in the windows of shops, on flags, and in newspapers in order to help sway public opinion.
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• The image first appeared in the May 9, 1754, issue of Ben Franklin’s Pennsylvania Gazette. By the 1750s, France and Great Britain had been arguing for years over the extent one another’s landholdings in the Americas. Franklin considered the American colonies to be dangerously fragmented and, through this cartoon and its accompanying article, hoped to convince the American colonies that they would have great power if they united against the threat of French expansion in North America.

• With the onset of the American Revolution, patriots from across the colonies used Franklin's "Join or Die" cartoon to promote the cause of independence. The slogan could regularly be seen in the windows of shops, on flags, and in newspapers.
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Directions: for each of the following events, briefly explain the event and its effect(s):

1. Stamp Act 1765 (p. 91)
2. Quartering Act 1765 (p. 92)
3. Townshend Acts 1767 (p. 92)
4. Boston Massacre 1770 (p. 93)
5. Tea Act 1773 (p. 95-96)
6. Boston Tea Party 1773 (p. 95-96)
7. Intolerable Acts 1774 (p. 97)
8. First Continental Congress 1774 (p. 98)
1. **Stamp Act (1765)**

   **Explanation:**
   - This British imposed act required colonists to pay for an official stamp (or a seal) whenever they bought paper items, such as newspapers, legal documents, and even playing cards.

   **Effects:**
   - Colonists sent messages to Parliament, refused to buy stamps, and the Sons of Liberty attacked tax collectors. The British government repealed the Stamp Act.
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2. Quartering Act (1765)

Explanation:

• Colonial assemblies had to provide housing, food, and supplies for British troops; to furnish soldiers with candles, bedding, cooking utensils, salt, vinegar, beer and cider.

Effects:

• New York’s assembly refused to give funds for some supplies.
• The British government refused to allow the New York assembly to meet until it complied with the law.
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3. Townshend Acts (1767)

Explanation:

- Laws passed to raise money for Great Britain’s army in the colonies, they placed a duty, or tax, on certain goods the colonists imported from Great Britain.

Effects:

- Samuel Adams, a Boston Patriot, led the opposition and colonists boycotted English goods. Lord North (Prime Minister) repealed the Townshend Acts because the taxes were not raising enough money to cover the losses due to the boycott. However, tea was left out of the repeal.
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4. Boston Massacre (1770)

Explanation:

- Noisy mob threw rocks and ice balls at British soldiers. Someone taunted the troops to “Fire!” One troop was knocked down and the troops panicked and opened fire. Crispus Attacks, an African American, was the first to die. The soldiers would be tried for murder.

Effects:

- John Adams, though a Patriot, argued the troops acted in self-defense. Adams believed that every person had the right to a fair trial.
5. The Tea Act of 1773

Explanation:

- Tea Act lowered the cost of tea sold by British East India Company, and would keep the company from going bankrupt. It also gave the company a monopoly of tea sales in the colonies. Would the British try to control other trades, putting American-owned companies out of business?

Effects:

- Protesters kept the British East India Company from unloading their cargo. The Sons of Liberty unloaded the tea, but not in the way the British had in mind.
5. **Boston Tea Party (1773)**

**Explanation:**
- Radical Patriots, the Sons of Liberty, disguised themselves as American Indians, boarded the ship, and dumped 342 chests of tea overboard from three ships in Boston Harbor.

**Effects:**
- British authorities closed Boston Harbor and passed the Intolerable Acts.
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7. Intolerable Acts (1774)

Explanation:

- King George wanted to take control of the colonies. He closed Boston Harbor to shipping until the tea was paid for. The British government now controlled the government in Massachusetts; a British soldier accused of murder would have his trial in England, not in the colonies; and more British soldiers were sent to Boston.

Effects:

- Sailors, dockworkers, and others lost their jobs. However, the colonies united – many sent food/money to Boston citizens. Virginia called for a meeting of delegates from each colony.
8. First Continental Congress (1774)

Explanation:

- 50 leaders from 12 colonies (Georgia was not present) met in Philadelphia to discuss a peaceful solution to the conflicts with Britain. Patrick Henry was a leader from Virginia who urged colonists to unite as Americans, not as citizens in separate colonies.

Effects:

- A respectful message to King George was sent, urging him to consider their complaints and recognize their rights. They called for a new boycott of British goods until Parliament repealed the Intolerable Acts. In New England local militias called Minutemen were formed – they could be ready to fight in 60 seconds. The King ignored their letter.
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9. Lexington and Concord (1775)

- British troops left Boston to march to Concord, MA to seize gunpowder and weapons. Paul Revere and others rode to warn colonists of the British approach. A shot rang out, and the Minutemen and British troops exchanged fire in Lexington. British troops continued to Concord. British soldiers searched for weapons and gunpowder in Concord. Colonists fought British soldiers at Concord’s North Bridge. Minutemen stood their ground, causing British soldiers to retreat. The British were attacked by Minutemen on their retreat to Boston.
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9. Lexington and Concord (1775)

How did the British miscalculate the colonists? What did these battles show?

• The colonists were uniting. The British miscalculated the colonists by underestimating them. The British were surprised to discover that ordinary people (farmers, merchants, workers, housewives) would fight for their rights. These battles showed that Americans were not only willing to fight for their rights, but they were also willing to die for them.