

The American Revolution

Relevant to

Modules on eighteenth-century Britain, the early United States, slavery, the British Empire

Background

The American Revolution, which took place between 1765 and 1783, transformed the British Empire and created the United States of America. The revolutionaries were angry that they were subjected to taxation by the Westminster Parliament, in which they had no representation; they demanded independence, and eventually went to war with Britain between 1775 and 1783 in order to secure it. The Declaration of Independence, drafted largely by Thomas Jefferson, was adopted by all the colonies in 1776, and formed the foundational document for the new United States.

Professor Stephen Conway, interviewed for 'Monologue for Two', discusses the American Revolution and its impact on Britain, here: <https://moc.media/en/monologue-for-two/2544>.

Questions

- In what ways was the American Revolution an influence on the eventual abolition of the slave trade and then slavery in the British Empire?
- What were the purposes of the American Revolutionaries in producing the Declaration of Independence?
- What impact did the American Revolution have on the British Empire and the British economy?
- Are there any positive legacies of the British Empire?

Further resources

View the Declaration of Independence, and a transcript of the Declaration, here: <https://museum.archives.gov/founding-documents>.