



Paul Revere and the Boston Massacre

Propaganda & the American Revolution



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Grade Level	8th Grade	Time Frame	2-3 class period(s)
Subject	Social Studies	Duration	100 minutes
Course	U.S. History		

Essential Question

How do we know what really happened in the past? How did Patriots use propaganda to influence colonists against British rule?

Summary

Propaganda often plays a significant role in influencing populations, especially in times of crisis. In this lesson, students will build their knowledge about Paul Revere's role in the American Revolution and how he used propaganda to influence colonists' opinions through his engraving of the Boston Massacre. Students will discern how Paul Revere intentionally misrepresented the roles of the colonists and British regulars in his engraving.

Snapshot

Engage

Students look at two posters and a political cartoon from different wars and think about what they have in common.

Explore

Students are introduced to the topic of propaganda during the American Revolution. Students watch a brief video and participate in an opinion line to consider whether they would have been able to rebel against their own government.

Explain

Students use an H Chart strategy to compare and contrast the facts about the Boston Massacre and a propaganda engraving of the event by Paul Revere. They determine what impact Paul Revere's engraving may have had on colonists.

Extend

What would a loyalist's viewpoint be? What would a patriot's viewpoint be? Students use the facts from the Boston Massacre to persuade others to their side. They create a propaganda poster or a public speech using the facts of the Boston Massacre to persuade others to their side.

Evaluate

The H Chart and the propaganda poster or propaganda speech can be used as assessments of this

lesson.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards (Social Studies Practices (8th Grade))

8.1.3G: Boston Massacre

8.1.5A: points of views of the Patriots and the Loyalists

Attachments

- [Boston Massacre Engraving - Spanish.docx](#)
- [Boston Massacre Engraving - Spanish.pdf](#)
- [Boston Massacre Engraving .docx](#)
- [Boston Massacre Engraving .pdf](#)
- [Boston Massacre H Chart - Spanish.docx](#)
- [Boston Massacre H Chart - Spanish.pdf](#)
- [Boston Massacre H Chart.docx](#)
- [Boston Massacre H Chart.pdf](#)
- [Facts About the Boston Massacre reading - Spanish.docx](#)
- [Facts About the Boston Massacre reading - Spanish.pdf](#)
- [Facts About the Boston Massacre reading.docx](#)
- [Facts About the Boston Massacre reading.pdf](#)
- [Paul Revere and the Boston Massacre.pptx](#)

Materials

- Teacher slides (attached)
- "Facts About the Boston Massacre" handout (attached, one per student)
- "H Chart" handout, (attached, one per pair of students)
- "Boston Massacre Engraving" handout (attached, one per pair of students, printed in color)
- Notebook paper
- Highlighters
- Chart tablet paper or poster paper

Engage

Display **slide 3** and read the lesson's guiding questions aloud. Tell students that today we will focus on one event and how it influenced colonists to rebel against the British.

Display **slide 4** and introduce an [I Think/We Think](#) strategy. Tell students to get out a sheet of notebook paper and fold it in half, "hot dog" style (lengthwise). This forms two columns. Label the top of the left column, "I Think." Label the top of the right column, "We Think." Ask students to independently think about the pictures on slide four and answer two questions about these pictures: "What do they have in common?" and "What was their importance?" Give students five minutes to write a response to each of these questions in the "I Think" (left) column.

Assign students to pairs and have them compare their "I Think" answers. Together, ask them to come to a consensus about what they think about the images and the answers to the questions. They should write their shared understanding and response to each of the questions in the "We Think" (right) column of their notebook paper. These answers should look somewhat different than the individual statements. Allow ten minutes for this activity.

Ask groups to share out their "We Think" answer to the first question only: What do these images have in common? The responses should indicate they are all images displayed to the public during wartime. Call on groups randomly to respond to the second question: *What was their importance?* Responses to this question should indicate that the images' importance was that they intended to persuade the public to act in a certain way during wartime.

Teacher's Note: Scaffolding Class Discussion

If groups struggle with answering the second question, deliberately share information about each image and then ask the question again. The first image is a campaign poster that wanted young men to enlist in World War I. The second, first published around 1754, is a political cartoon by Ben Franklin that urged colonies to unite against the French and Native Americans in the French and Indian War. The World War II campaign poster aimed at convincing ordinary Americans to ration and make sacrifices for the war effort.

Continue to **slide 5**. Explain that this type of persuasion, promoting only one point of view, is called propaganda. Read the definition on the slide aloud. Tell students that the political cartoon, "Join, or Die" was circulated again in newspapers in 1765 to unite colonists for a second time—against the British.

Explore

Explain to students that prior to the American Revolution, from around the 1760s–1770s, people considered themselves British subjects. During this time, rebelling against Britain was like trying to overthrow their own government. While colonists did not like British taxes and laws that limited their freedoms, many would still not go so far as to talk about revolution. Colonists worked within the laws by petitioning Parliament with their grievances about unfair practices. Some colonists thought this was enough, although laws or acts were not always changed for the better. Three types of colonists emerged during this decade—patriots, loyalists (those still "loyal" to Britain), and colonists who decided to remain neutral for the time being. There was division among these three groups of people, who were living closely with each other in many towns and villages, that made tension very high.

Display **slide 6**. Ask students this question: "If you were a colonist in the 1770s, would you be willing to overthrow your own government?" Allow students to think about this for a moment and to reference the "opinion line" shown on the slide, which illustrates a range by which students can rank their response to this question. Draw an imaginary opinion line across the room. On one side of the room, point and say, "This is where the ones and twos line up." Point to the middle of the room and say, "This is where the undecided or neutral (the threes) line up." Then point to the opposite side of the room and say, "This is where people would more likely participate in a revolution (or fours and fives)." Ask students to line up across the room according to what they think they might really do. Elicit opinions and reasoning from various students at different points in the line regarding why they chose their stance.

Teacher's Note: Optional Video

Optional: If time permits, you can share a portion of this [video](#), referenced on slide seven. Show only the first 1:26 minutes, in which the narrator discusses the many types of colonists that existed in the colonies and how each one may or may not have joined the American Revolution. The remainder of the video examines the in-depth motivations of different colonists and is more detailed than is necessary for this lesson. The URL for this YouTube video is also listed in the resources below and in the notes on slide seven.

Explain

Tell students that these divisions among colonists also existed in Boston in the spring of 1770. Pass out the reading, "The Facts of the Boston Massacre" and introduce a [CUS and Discuss](#) reading strategy. Display **slide 8**, which shows students how to annotate their reading using the CUS and Discuss method. Allow time for students to read the facts about the Boston Massacre and use this annotation strategy. (*Note: This reading is a compilation of information from several reliable sources.*)

After students have completed the reading, lead a whole-class discussion about the topic. Start with any starred items (questions or confusion) that students may have. Discuss these together and offer clarification. Next, have students share out some of the main ideas. Ask students to give their reasoning for why they chose their main ideas. Main ideas will differ among students. You may wish to list three or four on the board as they are shared out in class.

Now, assign students to working partners and transition to slide nine. Pass out a copy of the [Paired Texts H Chart](#) to each pair of students and have them put their names on it. Display **slide 9**. Using their CUS and Discuss main ideas and supporting details, ask partners to write a brief summary about the reading (25 words or less) on the left side of the Paired Texts H Chart. Show **slide 10** to give students a visual example of the H Chart and allow time for the paired summary writing.

Move to **slide 11**, which displays Paul Revere's engraving, "Bloody Massacre Perpetuated in Kings Street in Boston" and facts about its creation. You may also pass out a color copy of the engraving (attached) to pairs of students. Explain that Paul Revere purposely created this engraving of the Boston Massacre to persuade colonists to the side of the patriots. With their partner, ask students are to look for differences between Revere's engraving and the facts from the reading. Students should list on the right side of the H Chart all of the differences they can find between the engraving and the reading, as illustrated on **slide 12**.

Once student pairs have completed both sides of the Paired Text H Chart, direct them to the question in the middle (or "bridge") of the chart. This is called the "third text." The question posed for their third text writing is: "What impact do you think that Paul Revere's engraving had on the colonists?" Have students work together to write a response on the bridge of the H chart.

Teacher's Note: H Chart Activity And Answer Key

As each section of the H Chart is completed, you may have students stop and share out information that they have placed on the chart. Many historians have pointed out the differences between Paul Revere's engraving and the facts of the event. Information on this [website](#), by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, can be used as an "answer key" for the students' H Chart findings. The full site URL is located in the resources below.

Extend

Display **slide 13** and place students in groups of three or four. Assign groups as loyalists or patriots so that both perspectives are represented.

Using the Boston Massacre fact sheet, have students work together in their groups to create a propaganda poster in favor of the patriots or in favor of the loyalists, according to which perspective they were assigned. Students may need extra paper, markers, or other art supplies to create their posters and complete this extension. Allow time for presentations.

Optional activity instead of the poster: The teacher can number students off as either a one or two. Ones are loyalists and twos are patriots. The teacher asks students to write a persuasive (propaganda) speech in favor of the loyalists or patriots. Emphasize that they should demonstrate their understanding of the facts about the Boston Massacre in their speech.

Teacher's Note: Optional Activity (Instead Of Posters)

If you prefer, you may have students work individually to write a persuasive (propaganda) speech instead of creating a poster. If so, facilitate this activity by having students number off as either a one or two. Assign one number to patriots and the other to loyalists. Ask students to write a persuasive (propaganda) speech in favor of the perspective that matches their number. Emphasize that they should demonstrate their understanding of the facts about the Boston Massacre in their speech.

Evaluate

The completed Paired Texts H Chart and the propaganda poster (or optional propaganda speech) are assessments for this lesson.

Teacher's Note: Displaying Student Work

To add a layer of incentive for students to create quality propaganda posters, consider displaying their work for others to see. Knowing that their peers, teachers, and others in their school will see their work can incentivize the quality of work done by the students.

Resources

- Boston massacre (n.d.) Wikipedia.org. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boston_Massacre
- Boston massacre engraving by Paul Revere (2007). Paul Revere heritage project. Retrieved from <http://www.paul-revere-heritage.com/boston-massacre-engraving.html>
- Eds., History.com (2018). Boston massacre. History.com. Retrieved from <https://www.history.com/topics/american-revolution/boston-massacre>
- K20 strategies (n.d.) CUS and discuss. Retrieved from <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/d9908066f654727934df7bf4f5073969>
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- Paul Revere's engraving-explained (2008). Boston massacre historical society. Retrieved from <http://www.bostonmassacre.net/gravure.htm>
- Paul Revere's engraving of the Boston massacre, 1770. (2019). History now. The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American history. Retrieved from <https://www.gilderlehrman.org/content/paul-reveres-engraving-boston-massacre-1770>
- Would you have joined the American Revolution (2018). YouTube video. PBS digital studios. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XNqVKV465CM>