

# Ending the War, 1783

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Activity #1: America’s “Olive Branch” to King George III

**Directions:** You are part of a group representing one of four factions: American conciliationists, American radicals, British conciliationists, and British hard-liners. As you read your group’s document answer the following questions:

Question	Answer
When was the document written?	
Who was the principal author? What do we know about him?	
Who was the intended audience?	
What is the main theme of the document?	
What was the motive for writing the document at this time?	
How successfully does the author make his case?	

## Ending the War, 1783

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Activity #1: America's "Olive Branch" to King George III

**Directions:** You are part of a group representing Americans who sought conciliation with Great Britain. Read your group's document and prepare to discuss in a panel format whether reconciliation between Britain and America was possible or desirable at this time.

#### Group 1: American Conciliationists:

Petition from the Continental Congress to the King, July 8, 1775:

<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/contcong/07-08-75.htm>

[Note: Although the Continental Congress unanimously adopted this petition, many agreed to it fully expecting that it would be rejected. This was not the case with its author, John Dickinson (1732-1808). Dickinson was a wealthy landowner from Maryland who became prominent in politics in the colony of Pennsylvania. He became one of the first Pennsylvania leaders to denounce British tax policies in North America, and was elected to the First and Second Continental Congresses. Although an advocate of resistance against what he considered British tyranny, Dickinson was skeptical of outright independence, and genuinely hoped for some sort of reconciliation with Great Britain.]

To the King's most excellent Majesty:

MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,

We, your Majesty's faithful subjects of the colonies new Hampshire, Massachusetts bay, Rhode island and Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the counties of New Castle, Kent, and Sussex, on Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, in behalf of ourselves, and the inhabitants of these colonies, who have deputed us to represent them in general Congress, entreat your Majesty's gracious attention to this our humble petition.

The union between our Mother country and these colonies, and the energy of mild and just government, produced benefits so remarkably important, and afforded such an assurance of their permanency and increase, that the wonder and envy of other Nations were excited, while they beheld Great Britain rising to a power the most extraordinary the world had ever known.

Her rivals, observing that there was no probability of this happy connexion being broken by civil dissensions, and apprehending its future effects, if left any longer undisturbed, resolved to prevent her receiving such continual and formidable accessions of wealth and strength, by checking the growth of these settlements from which they were to be derived.

In the prosecution of this attempt, events so unfavourable to the design took place, that every friend to the interests of Great Britain and these colonies, entertained pleasing and reasonable expectations of seeing an additional force and extension immediately given to the operations of the union hitherto experienced, by an enlargement of the dominions of the Crown, and the removal of ancient and warlike enemies to a greater distance.

At the conclusion, therefore, of the late war [the French and Indian War, 1755-1763], the most glorious and advantageous that ever had been carried on by British arms, your loyal colonists having contributed to its success, by such repeated and strenuous exertions, as frequently procured them the distinguished approbation of your Majesty, of the late king, and of parliament, doubted not but that they should be permitted, with the rest of the empire, to share in the blessings of peace, and the emoluments of victory and conquest. While these recent and honorable acknowledgments of their merits remained on record in the journals and acts of that august legislature, the Parliament, undefaced by the imputation or even the suspicion of any offense, they were alarmed by a new system of statutes and regulations adopted for the administration of the colonies, that filled their minds with the most painful fears and jealousies; and, to their inexpressible astonishment, perceived the dangers of a foreign quarrel quickly succeeded by domestic dangers, in their judgment, of a more dreadful kind.

Nor were their anxieties alleviated by any tendency in this system to promote the welfare of the Mother country. For tho' its effects were more immediately felt by them, yet its influence appeared to be injurious to the commerce and prosperity of Great Britain.

We shall decline the ungrateful task of describing the irksome variety of artifices, practiced by many of your Majesty's Ministers, the delusive presences, fruitless terrors, and unavailing severities, that have, from time to time, been dealt out by them, in their attempts to execute this impolitic plan, or of tracing, thro[ugh] a series of years past, the progress of the unhappy differences between Great Britain and these colonies, which have flowed from this fatal source.

Your Majesty's Ministers, persevering in their measures, and proceeding to open hostilities for enforcing them, have compelled us to arm in our own defence, and have engaged us in a controversy so peculiarly abhorrent to the affections of your still faithful colonists, that when we consider whom we must oppose in this contest, and if it continues, what may be the consequences, our own particular misfortunes are accounted by us only as parts of our distress.

Knowing to what violent resentments and incurable animosities, civil discords are apt to exasperate and inflame the contending parties, we think ourselves required by indispensable obligations to Almighty God, to your Majesty, to our fellow subjects, and to ourselves, immediately to use all the means in our power, not incompatible with our safety, for stopping the further effusion of blood, and for averting the impending calamities that threaten the British Empire.

Thus called upon to address your Majesty on affairs of such moment to America, and probably to all your dominions, we are earnestly desirous of performing this office, with the utmost deference for your Majesty; and we therefore pray, that your royal magnanimity and benevolence may make the most favourable construction of our expressions on so uncommon an occasion. [If your Majesty could see], in their full force, the sentiments that agitate the minds of us your dutiful subjects, we are persuaded your Majesty would ascribe any seeming deviation from reverence in our language, and even in our conduct, not to any reprehensible intention, but to the impossibility of reconciling the usual appearances of respect, with a just attention to our own preservation against those artful and cruel enemies, who abuse your royal confidence and authority, for the purpose of effecting our destruction.

Attached to your Majesty's person, family, and government, with all devotion that principle and affection can inspire, connected with Great Britain by the strongest ties that can unite societies, and deploring every event that tends in any degree to weaken them, we solemnly assure your Majesty, that we not only most ardently desire the former harmony between her and these colonies may be restored, but that a concord may be established between them upon so firm a basis as to perpetuate its blessings, uninterrupted by any future dissensions, to succeeding generations in both countries, and to transmit your Majesty's Name to posterity, adorned with that signal and lasting glory, that has attended the memory of those illustrious personages, whose virtues and abilities have extricated states from dangerous convulsions, and, by securing happiness to others, have erected the most noble and durable monuments to their own fame.

We beg leave further to assure your Majesty, that notwithstanding the sufferings of your loyal colonists, during the course of the present controversy, our breasts retain too tender a regard for the kingdom from which we derive our origin, to request such a reconciliation as might in any manner be inconsistent with her dignity or her welfare. These, related as we are to her, honor and duty, as well as inclination, induce us to support and advance; and the apprehensions that now oppress our hearts with unspeakable grief, being once removed, your Majesty will find your faithful subjects on this continent ready and willing at all times, as they ever have been, with their lives and fortunes, to assert and maintain the rights and interests of your Majesty, and of our Mother country.

We, therefore, beseech your Majesty, that your royal authority and influence may be graciously interposed to procure us relief from our afflicting fears and jealousies, occasioned by the system before mentioned, and to settle peace through every part of your dominions, with all humility submitting to your Majesty's wise consideration whether it may not be expedient for facilitating those important purposes, that your Majesty be pleased to direct some mode, by which the united applications of your faithful colonists to the throne, in pursuance of their common councils, may be improved into a happy and permanent reconciliation; and that, in the mean time, measures may be taken for preventing the further destruction of the lives of your Majesty's subjects; and that such statutes as more immediately distress any of your Majesty's colonies may be repealed.

For by such arrangements as your Majesty's wisdom can form, for collecting the united sense of your American people, we are convinced your Majesty would receive such satisfactory proofs of the disposition of the colonists towards their sovereign and parent state, that the wished for opportunity would soon be restored to them, of evincing the sincerity of their professions, by every testimony of devotion becoming the most dutiful subjects, and the most affectionate colonists.

That your Majesty may enjoy a long and prosperous reign, and that your descendants may govern your dominions with honor to themselves and happiness to their subjects, is our sincere and fervent prayer.

## Ending the War, 1783

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Activity #1: America's "Olive Branch" to King George III

**Directions:** You are part of a group representing Americans who sought complete independence from Great Britain. Read your group's document and prepare to discuss in a panel format whether reconciliation between Britain and America was possible or desirable at this time.

#### Group 2: American Radicals:

Excerpt from Thomas Paine, "Common Sense," 1776: <http://odur.let.rug.nl/~usa/D/1776-1800/paine/CM/sense04.htm>

[Note: Thomas Paine (1737-1809) was probably the most popular writer in America at the time, and his pamphlet "Common Sense," published early in 1776, was enormously influential in generating public support for independence. For more on Paine, visit this site: <http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/B/tpaine/paine.htm>.]

I challenge the warmest advocate for reconciliation, to show, a single advantage that this continent can reap, by being connected with Great Britain. I repeat the challenge, not a single advantage is derived. Our corn will fetch its price in any market in Europe, and our imported goods must be paid for buy them where we will.

But the injuries and disadvantages we sustain by that connection, are without number; and our duty to mankind I at large, as well as to ourselves, instruct us to renounce the alliance: Because, any submission to, or dependence on Great Britain, tends directly to involve this continent in European wars and quarrels; and sets us at variance with nations, who would otherwise seek our friendship, and against whom, we have neither anger nor complaint As Europe is our market for trade, we ought to form no partial connection with any part of it. It is the true interest of America to steer clear of European contentions, which she never can do, while by her dependence on Britain, she is made the make-weight in the scale of British politics.

Europe is too thickly planted with kingdoms to be long at peace, and whenever a war breaks out between England and any foreign power, the trade of America goes to ruin, because of her connection with Britain. The next war may not turn out like the Past, and should it not, the advocates for reconciliation now will be wishing for separation then, because, neutrality in that case, would be a safer convoy than a man of war. Every thing that is right or natural pleads for separation. The blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature cries, 'TIS TIME TO PART. Even the distance at which the Almighty hath placed England and America, is a strong and natural proof, that the authority of the one, over the other, was never the design of Heaven. The time likewise at which the continent was discovered, adds weight to the argument, and the manner in which it was peopled increases the force of it. The

reformation was preceded by the discovery of America, as if the Almighty graciously meant to open a sanctuary to the persecuted in future years, when home should afford neither friendship nor safety....

Men of passive tempers look somewhat lightly over the offenses of Britain, and, still hoping for the best, are apt to call out, 'Come we shall be friends again for all this.' But examine the passions and feelings of mankind. Bring the doctrine of reconciliation to the touchstone of nature, and then tell me, whether you can hereafter love, honor, and faithfully serve the power that hath carried fire and sword into your land? If you cannot do all these, then are you only deceiving yourselves, and by your delay bringing ruin upon posterity. Your future connection with Britain, whom you can neither love nor honor, will be forced and unnatural, and being formed only on the plan of present convenience, will in a little time fall into a relapse more wretched than the first. But if you say, you can still pass the violations over, then I ask, Hath your house been burnt? Hath your property been destroyed before your face? Are your wife and children destitute of a bed to lie on, or bread to live on? Have you lost a parent or a child by their hands, and yourself the ruined and wretched survivor? If you have not, then are you not a judge of those who have. But if you have, and can still shake hands with the murderers, then are you unworthy the name of husband, father, friend, or lover, and whatever may be your rank or title in life, you have the heart of a coward, and the spirit of a sycophant....

It is repugnant to reason, to the universal order of things, to all examples from the former ages, to suppose, that this continent can longer remain subject to any external power. The most sanguine in Britain does not think so. The utmost stretch of human wisdom cannot, at this time compass a plan short of separation, which can promise the continent even a year's security. Reconciliation is was a fallacious dream. Nature hath deserted the connection, and Art cannot supply her place. For, as [English author John] Milton wisely expresses, 'never can true reconcilment [reconciliation] grow where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep.'

Every quiet method for peace hath been ineffectual. Our prayers have been rejected with disdain; and only tended to convince us, that nothing flatters vanity, or confirms obstinacy in Kings more than repeated petitioning.... Wherefore since nothing but blows will do, for God's sake, let us come to a final separation, and not leave the next generation to be cutting throats, under the violated unmeaning names of parent and child....

As to government matters, it is not in the powers of Britain to do this continent justice: The business of it will soon be too weighty, and intricate, to be managed with any tolerable degree of convenience, by a power, so distant from us, and so very ignorant of us; for if they cannot conquer us, they cannot govern us. To be always running three or four thousand miles with a tale or a petition, waiting four or five months for an answer, which when obtained requires five or six more to explain it in, will in a few years be looked upon as folly and childishness. There was a time when it was proper, and there is a proper time for it to cease.

Small islands not capable of protecting themselves, are the proper objects for kingdoms to take under their care; but there is something very absurd, in supposing a continent to be perpetually governed by an island. In no instance hath nature made the satellite larger than its primary planet, and as England and America, with respect to each Other, reverses the common order of nature, it is evident they belong to different systems: England to Europe, America to itself.

I am not induced by motives of pride, party, or resentment to espouse the doctrine of separation and independence; I am clearly, positively, and conscientiously persuaded that it is the true interest of this continent to be so; that every thing short of that is mere patchwork, that it can afford no lasting felicity,

that it is leaving the sword to our children, and shrinking back at a time, when, a little more, a little farther, would have rendered this continent the glory of the earth.

As Britain hath not manifested the least inclination towards a compromise, we may be assured that no terms can be obtained worthy the acceptance of the continent, or any ways equal to the expense of blood and treasure we have been already put to....

But admitting that matters were now made up [to remain tied to Great Britain], what would be the event? I answer, the ruin of the continent. And that for several reasons.

First. The powers of governing still remaining in the hands of the king, he will have a negative [a veto] over the whole legislation of this continent. And as he hath shown himself such an inveterate enemy to liberty, and discovered such a thirst for arbitrary power; is he, or is he not, a proper man to say to these colonies, 'You shall make no laws but what I please.' And is there any inhabitant in America so ignorant, as not to know, that according to what is called the present constitution, that this continent can make no laws but what the king gives leave to; and is there any man so unwise, as not to see, that (considering what has happened) he will suffer [permit] no Law to be made here, but such as suit his purpose. We may be as effectually enslaved by the want of laws in America, as by submitting to laws made for us in England. After matters are made up [in other words, after reconciliation] can there be any doubt but the whole power of the crown will be exerted, to keep this continent as low and humble as possible? Instead of going forward we shall go backward, or be perpetually quarrelling or ridiculously petitioning. We are already greater than the king wishes us to be, and will he not hereafter endeavor to make us less? To bring the matter to one point. Is the power who is jealous of our prosperity, a proper power to govern us? Whoever says No to this question is an independent, for independency means no more, than, whether we shall make our own laws, or whether the king, the greatest enemy this continent hath, or can have, shall tell us 'there shall be now laws but such as I like'....

Secondly. That as even the best terms, which we can expect to obtain, can amount to no more than a temporary expedient, or a kind of government by guardianship, which can last no longer than till the colonies come of age, so the general face and state of things, in the interim, will be unsettled and unpromising. Emigrants of property [that is, property-owners who wish to leave Europe] will not choose to come to a country whose form of government hangs but by a thread, and who is every day tottering on the brink of commotion and disturbance; and numbers of the present inhabitants would lay hold of the interval, to dispose of their effects, and quit the continent.

But the most powerful of all arguments, is, that nothing but independence, i.e. a continental form of government, can keep the peace of the continent and preserve it inviolate from civil wars. I dread the event of a reconciliation with Britain now, as it is more than probable, that it will be followed by a revolt somewhere or other, the consequences of which may be far more fatal than all the malice of Britain.

Thousands are already ruined by British barbarity; (thousands more will probably suffer the same fate.) Those men have other feelings than us who have nothing suffered. All they now possess is liberty, what they before enjoyed is sacrificed to its service, and having nothing more to lose, they disdain submission. Besides, the general temper of the colonies, towards a British government, will be like that of a youth, who is nearly out of his time, they will care very little about her. And a government which cannot preserve the peace, is no government at all, and in that case we pay our money for nothing; and pray what is it that Britain can do, whose power will be wholly on paper, should a civil tumult break out the very day after reconciliation? I have heard some men say, many of whom I believe spoke without thinking, that they dreaded independence, fearing that it would produce civil wars. It is but seldom that

our first thoughts are truly correct, and that is the case here; for there are ten times more to dread from a patched up connection than from independence. I make the sufferers case my own, and I protest, that were I driven from house and home, my property destroyed, and my circumstances ruined, that as man, sensible of injuries, I could never relish the doctrine of reconciliation, or consider myself bound thereby.



## Ending the War, 1783

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Activity #1: America's "Olive Branch" to King George III

**Directions:** You are part of a group representing Britons seeking compromise with the empire's rebellious North American colonies. Read your group's document and prepare to discuss in a panel format whether reconciliation between Britain and America was possible or desirable at this time.

#### Group 3: British Conciliationists:

Edmund Burke, Speech on Conciliation with America, March 22, 1775:

<http://odur.let.rug.nl/~usa/D/1751-1775/libertydebate/burk.htm>

[Note: Edmund Burke (1729-1797) was a prominent British statesman and political thinker. Although he hoped that Britain's American colonies would remain in the empire, he was sympathetic to their grievances. For more on Burke, visit this site: <http://odur.let.rug.nl/~usa/B/eburke/burke.htm>.]

To restore order and repose to an empire so great and so distracted as ours is, merely in the attempt, an undertaking that would ennoble the flights of the highest genius, and obtain pardon for the efforts of the meanest understanding. Struggling a good while with these thoughts, by degrees I felt myself more firm. I derived, at length, some confidence from what in other circumstances usually produces timidity. I grew less anxious, even from the idea of my own insignificance. For, judging of what you are by what you ought to be, I persuaded myself that you would not reject a reasonable proposition because it had nothing but its reason to recommend it.

The proposition is peace. Not peace through the medium of war; not peace to be hunted through the labyrinth of intricate and endless negotiations; not peace to arise out of universal discord, fomented from principle, in all parts of the empire; not peace to depend on the juridical determination of perplexing questions, or the precise marking the shadowy boundaries of a complex government. It is simple peace, sought in its natural course and in its ordinary haunts.

Let the colonies always keep the idea of their civil rights associated with your government [that is, their traditional rights as British subjects]—they will cling and grapple to you, and no force under heaven will be of power to tear them from their allegiance. But let it be once understood that your government may be one thing and their privileges another, that these two things may exist without any mutual relation—the cement is gone, the cohesion is loosened, and everything hastens to decay and dissolution. As long as you have the wisdom to keep the sovereign authority of this country as the sanctuary of liberty, the sacred temple consecrated to our common faith, wherever the chosen race and sons of England worship freedom, they will turn their faces towards you. The more they multiply, the more friends you will have, the more ardently they love liberty, the more perfect will be their obedience. Slavery they can have anywhere. It is a weed that grows in every soil. They may have it from Spain, they may have it from Prussia. But until you become lost to all feeling of your true interest and your natural dignity, freedom

they can have from none but you. This is the commodity of price, of which you have the monopoly [that is, only Britain can provide it]. This is the true Act of Navigation, which binds to you the commerce of the colonies, and through them secures to you the wealth of the world. Deny them this participation of freedom, and you break that sole bond which originally made, and must still preserve, the unity of the empire. Do not entertain so weak an imagination as that your registers and your bonds, your affidavits and your sufferances [permissions], your cockets [seals showing that customs duties have been paid on an item] and your clearances [passages of checks and other bills of exchange through a clearing-house], are what form the great securities of your commerce. Do not dream that your Letters of office, and your instructions, and your suspending clauses are the things that hold together the great contexture of this mysterious whole. These things do not make your government. Dead instruments, passive tools as they are, it is the spirit of the English communion that gives all their life and efficacy to them. It is the spirit of the English constitution which, infused through the mighty mass, pervades, feeds, unites, invigorates, every part of the empire, even down to the minutest member.

Is it not the same virtue which does every thing for us here in England? Do you imagine, then, that it is the Land-Tax Act which raises your revenue? that it is the annual vote in the Committee of Supply, which gives you your army? or that it is the Mutiny Bill which inspires it with bravery and discipline? No! surely, no! It is the love of the people; it is their attachment to their government, from the sense of the deep stake they have in such a glorious institution, which gives you your army and your navy, and infuses into both that liberal obedience without which your army would be a base rabble and your navy nothing but rotten timber.

All this, I know well enough, will sound wild and chimerical to the profane herd of those vulgar and mechanical politicians who have no place among us: a sort of people who think that nothing exists but what is gross and material, and who, therefore, far from being qualified to be directors of the great movement of empire, are not fit to turn a wheel in the machine. But to men truly initiated and rightly taught, these ruling and master principles, which in the opinion of such men as I have mentioned have no substantial existence, are in truth everything, and all in all. Magnanimity in politics is not seldom the truest wisdom; and a great empire and little minds go ill together. If we are conscious of our situation, and glow with zeal to fill our places as becomes our station and ourselves, we ought to auspicate all our public proceedings on America with the old warning of the Church, *Sursum corda* [Latin for “lift up your hearts”]! We ought to elevate our minds to the greatness of that trust to which the order of Providence has called us. By adverting [calling attention to] to the dignity of this high calling, our ancestors have turned a savage wilderness into a glorious empire, and have made the most extensive and the only honorable conquests, not by destroying, but by promoting the wealth, the number, the happiness of the human race.... English privileges have made it all that it is; English privileges alone will make it all it can be.

## Ending the War, 1783

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Activity #1: America's "Olive Branch" to King George III

**Directions:** You are part of a group representing Britons demanding the use of force to ensure the loyalty of the empire's North American colonies. Read your group's document and prepare to discuss in a panel format whether reconciliation between Britain and America was possible or desirable at this time.

#### Group 4: British Hard-liners:

Proclamation by the King [George III] for Suppressing Rebellion and Sedition, August 23, 1775:  
<http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=875>

Whereas many of our subjects in divers parts of our Colonies and Plantations in North America, misled by dangerous and ill designing men, and forgetting the allegiance which they owe to the power that has protected and supported them; after various disorderly acts committed in disturbance of the publick peace, to the obstruction of lawful commerce, and to the oppression of our loyal subjects carrying on the same; have at length proceeded to open and avowed rebellion, by arraying themselves in a hostile manner, to withstand the execution of the law, and traitorously preparing, ordering and levying war against us: And whereas, there is reason to apprehend that such rebellion hath been much promoted and encouraged by the traitorous correspondence, counsels and comfort of divers wicked and desperate persons within this Realm: To the end therefore, that none of our subjects may neglect or violate their duty through ignorance thereof, or through any doubt of the protection which the law will afford to their loyalty and zeal, we have thought fit, by and with the advice of our Privy Council [a group of the king's closest advisers], to issue our Royal Proclamation, hereby declaring, that not only all our Officers, civil and military, are obliged to exert their utmost endeavours to suppress such rebellion, and to bring the traitors to justice, but that all our subjects of this Realm, and the dominions thereunto belonging, are bound by law to be aiding and assisting in the suppression of such rebellion, and to disclose and make known all traitorous conspiracies and attempts against us, our crown and dignity; and we do accordingly strictly charge and command all our Officers, as well civil as military, and all others our obedient and loyal subjects, to use their utmost endeavours to withstand and suppress such rebellion, and to disclose and make known all treasons and traitorous conspiracies which they shall know to be against us, our crown and dignity; and for that purpose, that they transmit to one of our principal Secretaries of State, or other proper officer, due and full information of all persons who shall be found carrying on correspondence with, or in any manner or degree aiding or abetting the persons now in open arms and rebellion against our Government, within any of our Colonies and Plantations in North America, in order to bring to condign punishment the authors, perpetrators, and abettors of such traitorous designs.

Given at our Court at St. James's the twenty-third day of August, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five, in the fifteenth year of our reign.

GOD save the KING.



## Ending the War, 1783

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Activity #2: British Peace Efforts, 1776-1778

**Directions:** Read the following documents and answer the questions that accompany each document.

Using the interactive map of the War in the North

(<http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/neh/interactives/americanrevolution/>), make note of what was going on in the war at the times when each document was written. Be prepared to discuss your answers in class.

Henry Strachey, Memorandum on Meeting between Lord Howe and the American Commissioners, September 11, 1776: <http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=891>

[Note: Lord Richard Howe (1726-1799) was an admiral in the British Navy, and overall commander of British forces in North America. Known for being sympathetic to the American cause—his sister was a friend of Benjamin Franklin—the king authorized him to open peace negotiations with the rebels. Henry Strachey, a British diplomat, served as Lord Howe’s personal secretary.]

Lord [Richard] Howe [the British commander] received the Gentlemen on the Beach—Dr. [Benjamin] Franklin [of Pennsylvania] introduced Mr. [John] Adams [of Massachusetts] and Mr. [Edward] Rutledge [of South Carolina]....

Lord Howe informed them it was long since he had entertained an opinion that the Differences between the two Countries might be accommodated to the Satisfaction of both—that he was known to be a Well Wisher to America—particularly to the Province of Massachusetts Bay, which had endeared itself to him by the very high Honors it had bestowed upon the Memory of his eldest Brother [...]—and that he, Lord Howe should also have the naval Command, in which he had acquiesced—that he had hoped to reach America before the Army had moved, and did not doubt but if their Disposition had been the same as expressed in their Petition to the King [The Petition of July 8, 1775], he should have been able to have brought about an Accomodation to the Satisfaction of both Countries—that he thought the Petition was a sufficient Basis to confer upon—that it contained Matter, which, with Candour & Discussion might be wrought into a Plan of Permanency....

That they [Congress] themselves had changed the ground since he left England by their Declaration of Independency [Independence], which, if it could not be got over, precluded him from all Treaty, as they must know, and he had explicitly said so in his Letter to Dr. Franklin, that he had not, nor did he expect ever to have, Powers to consider the Colonies in the light of Independent States—that they must also be sensible, that he could not confer with them as a Congress—that he could not acknowledge that Body which was not acknowledged by the King, whose Delegate he was, neither, for the same reason, could

he confer with these Gentlemen as a Committee of the Congress—that if they would not lay aside that Distinction, it would be improper for him to proceed—that he thought it an unessential Form, which might for the present lie dormant—that they must give him leave to consider them merely as Gentlemen of great Ability, and Influence in the Country—and that they were now met to converse together upon the Subject of Differences, and to try if any Outline could be drawn to put a stop to the Calamities of War, and to bring forward some Plan that might be satisfactory both to America and to England....

That he thought the Idea of a Congress might easily be thrown out of the Question at present, for that if Matters could be so settled that the King's Government should be reestablished, the Congress would of course cease to exist, and if they meant such Accommodation, they must see how unnecessary & useless it was to stand upon that Form which they knew they were to give up upon the Restoration of legal Government....

Lord Howe then proceeded—that on his Arrival in this Country he had thought it expedient to issue a Declaration [...]—that he had endeavored to couch it in such Terms as would be the least exceptionable [objectionable]—[...] that their Declaration of Independency had since rendered him the more cautious of opening himself—that it was absolutely impossible for him to treat, or confer, upon that Ground [that is, independence], or to admit the Idea in the smallest degree—that he flattered himself if That were given up, there was still room for him to effect the King's Purposes—that his Majesty's most earnest desire was to make his American Subjects happy, to cause a Reform in whatever affected the Freedom of their Legislation, and to concur with his Parliament in the Redress of any real Grievances—that his Powers were, generally, to restore Peace and grant Pardons, to attend to Complaints &c Representations, and to confer upon Means of establishing a Reunion upon Terms honorable & advantageous to the Colonies as well as to Great Britain—that they knew We expected Aid [financial aid; in other words, money] from America—that the Dispute seemed to be only concerning the Mode of obtaining it....

Lord Howe continued—that their Money was the smallest Consideration—that America could produce more solid Advantages to Great Britain—that it was her Commerce, her Strength, her Men, that we chiefly wanted—it is desirable to put a stop to these ruinous Extremities [in other words, the war], as well for the sake of our Country, as yours—when an American falls, England feels it—Is there no way of treading back [in other words, backing off from] this Step of Independency, and opening the door to a full discussion? [...]

Dr. Franklin said [...] that they could not expect Happiness now under the *Domination* of Great Britain—that all former Attachment was *obliterated*—that America could not return again to the Domination of Great Britain, and therefore imagined that Great Britain meant to rest it upon Force—The other Gentlemen will deliver their Sentiments—

Mr. Adams said that he had no objection to Lord Howe's considering him, on the present Occasion, merely as a private Gentleman, or in any Character except that of a British Subject—that the Resolution of the Congress to declare the Independency was not taken up upon their own Authority—that they had been instructed so to do, by all the Colonies—and that it was not in their power to treat otherwise than as independent States—he mentioned warmly his own Determination not to depart from the Idea of Independency, and spoke in the common way of the Power of the Crown, which was comprehended in the Ideal Power of Lords & Commons.

Mr. Rutledge began by saying he had been one of the oldest Members of the Congress—that he had been one from the beginning—that he thought it was worth the Consideration of Great Britain whether she would not receive greater Advantages by an Alliance with the Colonies as independent States, than

she had ever hitherto done—that she might still enjoy a *great Share* of the Commerce—that she would have their raw Materials for her Manufactures—that they could protect the West India Islands much more effectually and more easily than she can—that they could assist her in the Newfoundland Trade—that he was glad this Conversation had happened, as it would be the occasion of opening to Great Britain the Consideration of the Advantages she might derive from America by an Alliance with her as an independent State, before anything is settled with other foreign Powers—that it was impossible the People should consent to come again under the English Government—he could answer for South Carolina—that Government had been very oppressive—that the Crown Officers had claimed Privilege and confined People upon pretence of a breach of Privilege—that they had at last taken the Government into their own hands—that the People were now settled and happy under that Government and would not (even if they, the Congress could desire it) return to the King’s Government—

Lord Howe said, that if such were their Sentiments, he could only lament it was not in his Power to bring about the Accommodation he wished—that he had not Authority, nor did he expect he ever should have, to treat with the Colonies as States independent of the Crown of Great Britain—and that he was sorry the Gentlemen had had the trouble of coming so far, to so little purpose—that if the Colonies would not give up the System of Independency, it was impossible for him to enter into any Negotiation....

After a little Pause, Dr. Franklin suddenly said, well my Lord, as America is to expect nothing but upon total unconditional Submission [...] and Your Lordship has no Proposition to make us, give me leave to ask whether, if we should make Propositions to Great Britain (not that I know, or am authorised to say we shall) You would receive and transmit them. Lord Howe said he did not know that he could avoid receiving any Papers that might be put into his hands—seemed rather doubtful about the Propriety of transmitting home, but did not say that he would decline it—

Question	Answer
What was Lord Howe’s original wish? Why and how did that change?	
Why did Lord Howe not recognize the American delegates as representatives of the Continental Congress?	
According to Lord Howe, what was standing in the way of reconciliation?	
Why did Lord Howe believe that reconciliation was still possible?	

Why, according to Franklin, was a return to British rule impossible?	
What sort of arrangement did Rutledge suggest? What was Lord Howe's response to this?	
What recent events (see interactive map) might have influenced the position that each side took in this negotiation?	

The Continental Congress, Response to British Peace Proposals, June 13, 1778  
<http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=903>

[Note: Henry Laurens (1724-1792) was a wealthy merchant and planter from South Carolina who served as president of the Continental Congress from 1777 to 1778. He left the Congress in 1780 to become a diplomat, and he served as part of the American delegation to the peace negotiations in Paris in 1783. Frederick Howard, the Earl of Carlisle (1748-1825) was a British diplomat who in 1778 was appointed to head a new peace mission to America—although his youth (he was only thirty at the time) and reputation as a playboy caused many in Britain to question the choice.]

To his excellency Henry Laurens, the President [of the Continental Congress], and other Members of Congress.

Gentlemen, With an earnest desire to stop the further effusion of blood and the calamities of war, we communicate to you, with the least possible delay after our arrival in this city, a copy of the commission with which his Majesty is pleased to honour us, as also the acts of parliament on which it is founded; and at the same time that we assure you of our most earnest desire to re-establish, on the basis of equal freedom and mutual safety, the tranquillity of this once happy empire, you will observe; that we are vested with powers equal to the purpose, and such as are even unprecedented in the annals of our history....

We wish not to recall subjects which are now no longer in controversy, and will reserve to a proper time of discussion both the hopes of mutual benefit, and the consideration of evils that may naturally contribute to determine your resolutions as well as our own on this important occasion....

More effectually to demonstrate our good intentions, we think proper to declare, even in this our first communication, that we are disposed to concur in every satisfactory and just arrangement towards the following among other purposes:

To consent to a cessation of hostilities, both by sea and land. To restore free intercourse [passage of people and goods], to revive mutual affection, and restore the common benefits of naturalisation

[citizenship] through the several parts of this empire. To extend every freedom to trade that our respective interests can require. To agree that no military force shall be kept up in the different states of North America, without the consent of the general congress, or particular assemblies. To concur in measures calculated to discharge the debts of America, and raise the value and credit of the paper circulation.

To perpetuate our union, by a reciprocal deputation of an agent or agents from the different states, who shall have the privilege of a seat and voice in the parliament of Great Britain; or, if sent from Britain, to have in that case a seat and voice in the assemblies of the different states to which they may be deputed respectively, in order to attend to the several interests of those by whom they are deputed.

In short, to establish the power of the respective legislatures in each particular state, to settle its revenue, its civil and military establishment, and to exercise a perfect freedom of legislation and internal government, so that the British states throughout North America, acting with us in peace and war, under our common sovereign, may have the irrevocable enjoyment of every privilege that is short of a total separation of interest, or consistent with that union of force, on which the safety of our common religion and liberty depends.

In our anxiety for preserving those sacred and essential interests, we cannot help taking notice of the insidious interposition of a power, which has from the first settlement of these colonies been actuated with enmity to us both [that is, France]. And notwithstanding the pretended date, or present form, of the French offers to America, yet it is notorious, that these were made in consequence of the plans of accommodation previously concerted in Great Britain, and with a view to prevent our reconciliation, and to prolong this destructive war.

But we trust that the inhabitants of North-America, connected with us by the nearest ties of consanguinity [in other words, blood relations], speaking the same language, interested in the preservation of similar institutions, remembering the former happy intercourse of good offices, and forgetting recent animosities, will shrink from the thought of becoming an accession of force to our late mutual enemy, and will prefer a firm, free, and perpetual coalition with the parent state to an insincere and unnatural foreign alliance....

If after the time that may be necessary to consider of this communication, and transmit your answer, the horrors and devastations of war should continue, we call God and the world to witness, that the evils which must follow are not to be imputed to Great Britain; and we cannot without the most real sorrow anticipate the prospect of calamities which we feel the most ardent desire to prevent. We are, with perfect respect; Gentlemen, your most obedient and most humble servants,

Carlisle, W. Eden, G. Johnstone

June 17th, 1778. Congress resumed the consideration of the draft of the letter, in answer to the letter and papers received from the Earl of Carlisle, &c. Commissioners from the King of Great Britain, which was unanimously agreed to, and is as follows:

To their Excellencies the Right Hon. the Earl of Carlisle, William Eden, and George Johnstone, Esqrs. Commissioners from his Britannic Majesty, Philadelphia.



I have received the letter from your Excellencies of the 9th instant, with the inclosures, and laid them before Congress. Nothing but an earnest desire to spare the farther effusion of human blood could have induced them to read a paper, containing expressions so disrespectful to his Most Christian Majesty [the King of France], the good and great ally of these states, or to consider propositions so derogatory to the honour of an independent nation [France].

The acts of the British parliament, the commission from your Sovereign, and your letter, suppose the people of these states to be subjects of the crown of Great Britain, and are founded on an idea of dependence, which is utterly inadmissible.

I am further directed to inform your Excellencies, that Congress are inclined to peace, notwithstanding the unjust claims from which this war originated, and the savage manner in which it hath been conducted; they will therefore be contented to enter upon a consideration of a treaty of peace and commerce, not inconsistent with treaties already subsisting, when the King of Great Britain shall demonstrate a sincere disposition for that purpose. The only solid proof of this disposition will be an explicit acknowledgement of the independence of these states, or the withdrawing his fleets and armies. I have the honour to be, your Excellencies most obedient and humble servant,

HENRY LAURENS, President.

Question	Answer
What were the Earl of Carlisle and his associates willing to offer at this point?	
Knowing what you do about the causes of the war, how did this list meet pre-war American requests?	
What did the British delegates have to say about the American alliance with France?	
What were the British delegates saying in the final paragraph of their message?	
What response did the Continental Congress give to this offer, and why?	

What recent events (see interactive map) might have influenced the position that each side took in this negotiation?	
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## Ending the War, 1783

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Activity #3: The Treaty of Paris, 1783

**Directions:** Read the following excerpts from the Treaty of Paris and complete the chart that follows about the terms of the Treaty.

The Paris Peace Treaty of 1783: <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/diplomacy/britain/paris.htm>

It having pleased the Divine Providence to dispose the hearts of the most serene and most potent Prince George the Third, by the grace of God, king of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, defender of the faith, duke of Brunswick and Lunebourg, arch-treasurer and prince elector of the Holy Roman Empire etc., and of the United States of America, to forget all past misunderstandings and differences that have unhappily interrupted the good correspondence and friendship which they mutually wish to restore, and to establish such a beneficial and satisfactory intercourse between the two countries upon the ground of reciprocal advantages and mutual convenience as may promote and secure to both perpetual peace and harmony... [the two sides] have agreed upon and confirmed the following articles.

#### Article 1:

His Britannic Majesty acknowledges the said United States, viz., New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia, to be free sovereign and independent states, that he treats with them as such, and for himself, his heirs, and successors, relinquishes all claims to the government, propriety, and territorial rights of the same and every part thereof.

#### Article 2: [use the interactive map

(<http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/neh/interactives/americanrevolution/>) to see the boundaries of the United States after the treaty.]

And that all disputes which might arise in future on the subject of the boundaries of the said United States may be prevented, it is hereby agreed and declared, that the following are and shall be their boundaries, viz.; from the northwest angle of Nova Scotia, viz., that angle which is formed by a line drawn due north from the source of St. Croix River to the highlands; along the said highlands which divide those rivers that empty themselves into the river St. Lawrence, from those which fall into the Atlantic Ocean, to the northwesternmost head of Connecticut River; thence down along the middle of that river to the forty-fifth degree of north latitude; from thence by a line due west on said latitude until it strikes the river Iroquois or Cataraquy; thence along the middle of said river into Lake Ontario; through the middle of said lake until it strikes the communication by water between that lake and Lake Erie; thence along the middle of said communication into Lake Erie, through the middle of said lake until it arrives at the water communication between that lake and Lake Huron; thence along the middle of said water communication into Lake Huron, thence through the middle of said lake to the water communication between that lake and Lake Superior; thence through Lake Superior northward of the

Isles Royal and Phelipeaux to the Long Lake; thence through the middle of said Long Lake and the water communication between it and the Lake of the Woods, to the said Lake of the Woods; thence through the said lake to the most northwesternmost point thereof, and from thence on a due west course to the river Mississippi; thence by a line to be drawn along the middle of the said river Mississippi until it shall intersect the northernmost part of the thirty-first degree of north latitude, South, by a line to be drawn due east from the determination of the line last mentioned in the latitude of thirty-one degrees of the equator, to the middle of the river Apalachicola or Catahouche; thence along the middle thereof to its junction with the Flint River, thence straight to the head of Saint Mary's River; and thence down along the middle of Saint Mary's River to the Atlantic Ocean; east, by a line to be drawn along the middle of the river Saint Croix, from its mouth in the Bay of Fundy to its source, and from its source directly north to the aforesaid highlands which divide the rivers that fall into the Atlantic Ocean from those which fall into the river Saint Lawrence; comprehending all islands within twenty leagues of any part of the shores of the United States, and lying between lines to be drawn due east from the points where the aforesaid boundaries between Nova Scotia on the one part and East Florida on the other shall, respectively, touch the Bay of Fundy and the Atlantic Ocean, excepting such islands as now are or heretofore have been within the limits of the said province of Nova Scotia.

**Article 3:**

It is agreed that the people of the United States shall continue to enjoy unmolested the right to take fish of every kind on the Grand Bank and on all the other banks of Newfoundland, also in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence and at all other places in the sea, where the inhabitants of both countries used at any time heretofore to fish. And also that the inhabitants of the United States shall have liberty to take fish of every kind on such part of the coast of Newfoundland as British fishermen shall use, (but not to dry or cure the same on that island) and also on the coasts, bays and creeks of all other of his Britannic Majesty's dominions in America; and that the American fishermen shall have liberty to dry and cure fish in any of the unsettled bays, harbors, and creeks of Nova Scotia, Magdalen Islands, and Labrador, so long as the same shall remain unsettled, but so soon as the same or either of them shall be settled, it shall not be lawful for the said fishermen to dry or cure fish at such settlement without a previous agreement for that purpose with the inhabitants, proprietors, or possessors of the ground.

**Article 4:**

It is agreed that creditors on either side shall meet with no lawful impediment to the recovery of the full value in sterling money of all bona fide debts heretofore contracted.

**Article 5:**

It is agreed that Congress shall earnestly recommend it to the legislatures of the respective states to provide for the restitution of all estates, rights, and properties, which have been confiscated belonging to real British subjects; and also of the estates, rights, and properties of persons resident in districts in the possession on his Majesty's arms and who have not borne arms against the said United States. And that persons of any other description shall have free liberty to go to any part or parts of any of the thirteen United States and therein to remain twelve months unmolested in their endeavors to obtain the restitution of such of their estates, rights, and properties as may have been confiscated....

**Article 6:**

That there shall be no future confiscations made nor any prosecutions commenced against any person or persons for, or by reason of, the part which he or they may have taken in the present war, and that no person shall on that account suffer any future loss or damage, either in his person, liberty, or property; and that those who may be in confinement on such charges at the time of the ratification of the treaty in America shall be immediately set at liberty, and the prosecutions so commenced be discontinued.

**Article 7:**

There shall be a firm and perpetual peace between his Britannic Majesty and the said states, and between the subjects of the one and the citizens of the other, wherefore all hostilities both by sea and land shall from henceforth cease. All prisoners on both sides shall be set at liberty, and his Britannic Majesty shall with all convenient speed, and without causing any destruction, or carrying away any Negroes or other property of the American inhabitants, withdraw all his armies, garrisons, and fleets from the said United States, and from every post, place, and harbor within the same; leaving in all fortifications, the American artillery that may be therein; and shall also order and cause all archives, records, deeds, and papers belonging to any of the said states, or their citizens, which in the course of the war may have fallen into the hands of his officers, to be forthwith restored and delivered to the proper states and persons to whom they belong.

**Article 8:**

The navigation of the river Mississippi, from its source to the ocean, shall forever remain free and open to the subjects of Great Britain and the citizens of the United States.

**Article 9:**

In case it should so happen that any place or territory belonging to Great Britain or to the United States should have been conquered by the arms of either from the other before the arrival of the said Provisional Articles in America [in other words, before the start of peace negotiations in 1782], it is agreed that the same shall be restored without difficulty and without requiring any compensation....

Explain each of the following articles of the treaty in your own words.

Article	What it means
Article 1	
Article 2	
Article 3	
Article 4	

Article 5	
Article 6	
Article 7	
Article 8	
Article 9	

**Essay:** Once you have completed the above chart, write a brief essay explaining which three provisions in the Treaty of Paris you believe are the most important and why. Remember to support your thesis with specific information.