



# The war before independence

from the Esri GeoInquiries™ collection for U.S. History

Target audience – U.S. History learners

Time required – 15 minutes

<b>Activity</b>	Discover the first shots of the American Revolution and the battles that occurred before the Declaration of Independence.
<b>C3 Standards</b>	C3: D2.His.1.9-12. Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts. C3: D2.His.2.9-12. Analyze change and continuity in historical eras.
<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students will be able to identify and explain the circumstances surrounding the battles of Lexington and Concord.</li><li>• Students will be able to explain America's military successes and defeats prior to the signing of the Declaration of Independence.</li></ul>

Map URL: <http://esriurl.com/historyGeoInquiry2>

## Ask

### What was the situation like in 1775?

- Click the link above to launch the map.
- Click the button, Bookmarks. Select Ripe for Revolt.
- ? Which visible city is most easterly? [*Boston is visible.*]
- With the Details button underlined, click the button, Show Contents of Map (Content).
- Turn on the layer, Map Notes. Read the Map Note nearest to Boston.
- ? Which event happened in Boston Harbor, and in which year? [*The Boston Tea Party took place in 1773.*]
- Open and read the Map Note in the bay.
- ? Why would Britain close the Port of Boston? [*Britain sought to punish Boston for the Tea Party.*]

## Acquire

### Why did the British march to Concord?

- Click the Bookmarks button and select the First Shots bookmark.
- Use the Measure tool to help answer the following questions.
- ? Is Lexington or Concord located farthest west of Boston? [*Concord is farther west.*]
- ? How far outside of Boston is Concord? [*It is 18-20 miles.*]
- Open and read the Map Note near Concord.
- ? Why did General Gage send troops to Concord? [*Gage wanted to capture weapons and disarm the militia.*]

## Explore

### Where did the first battles occur?

- Turn off the layer, Map Notes. Turn on the layer, Battles.
- Hover on the layer name, Battles. Click the button, Filter. Set filter: April\_1775 is YES.
- Turn on the layer, The Regulars Are Coming! . Click the map features to answer these questions.
- What do the blue lines represent? [*They represent early warning by Revere, Dawes, and Prescott.*]
- What do the red lines represent? [*They represent the British route and retreat.*]
- ? Where did the fighting start? Who won? [*It started at Lexington; the British won.*]
- ? Which side won the Battle of Concord? [*The Americans won.*]
- ? How many casualties did each side experience? [*There were 78 American casualties and 250 British.*]

more 

## Analyze

### Was there significant fighting before the Declaration of Independence?

- Choose the Early Battles bookmark, and filter the Battles layer so that BEF\_DOI is set to YES (making battles occurring before the Declaration of Independence visible).
- ? Were there many battles before the Declaration of Independence? *[Yes.]*
- ? What factors influenced the location of these battles? *[Important waterways, forts, and areas around Boston were influential factors.]*
- ? Which battle happened farthest north? Who won? *[Quebec happened farthest north; Britain won.]*
- Click the Bookmark button and choose the December 1776 bookmark.
- Turn on the Map Notes layer. Read the Map Note located south of Philadelphia.
- ? When was the Declaration signed? *[It was signed on July 4, 1776]*

## Act

### How did the Declaration of Independence impact the war?

- Zoom out to see all battles.
- Filter Battles so that DOI\_6MO is set to YES (displaying battles six months after the Declaration).
- ? Which city experienced the most fighting? *[New York experienced the most fighting.]*
- Open and read the Map Note north of Philadelphia.
- ? Why did Thomas Paine write these words? *[He wrote them to inspire the U.S. Army.]*
- Click the battle located directly over Trenton.
- ? What was the name of this battle and when did it occur? *[It was Trenton, Christmas Night.]*
- This battle was important because it improved U.S. morale, and soldiers re-enlisted.
- ? What challenges were faced by each side at the end of 1776? *[America had a young army, a lot of land, and no navy. Britain had a lot of land and coastline to control, with England 3,000 miles away.]*

### MEASURE

- Click Measure.
- Click the Distance button.
- Click the map, and release the button.
- Drag your mouse, and then click to draw a vertex.

### FILTER

- Filtering is only available for certain map layers.
- Click Filter icon, beneath map layer name (in Content pane).
- Set Filter parameters.

## Next Steps

### DID YOU KNOW?

ArcGIS Online is a mapping platform freely available to public, private, and home schools. A school subscription provides additional security, privacy, and content features. Learn more about ArcGIS Online and how to get a school subscription at <http://www.esri.com/schools>.

### THEN TRY THIS...

- Aggregate (Count and Sum) the number of early battles by state, and then create a thematic map to show which state experienced the most battles during this part of the war.
- Create a 20-mile buffer around the major cities and count the number of battles that occurred in these areas.



### TEXT REFERENCES

This map has been cross-referenced to material in chapters from leading US History high school texts.

- *American History: A Survey* by Brinkley — Chapter 5
- *The Americans* by McDougal Littell — Chapter 6
- *History Alive! The United States Through Industrialization* by TCI — Chapter 4