

Name _____



The Stamp Act

By Jane Runyon

England was ruled by King George III. You might think that he could do anything he wanted, but that is not true. In 1688, the British people supported a bloodless revolution that got rid of the king they had, King James II, and replaced him with William of Orange and his wife, Mary. Have you ever heard of the College of William and Mary in Virginia? It was named after this king and queen. To make sure that the revolution was completed without any further trouble, the people made a deal with the new monarchs. The agreement took a great deal of power away from the king and queen and gave it to **Parliament**. Parliament was a governing body representing the people of England. This was called a Glorious Revolution because of the ease with which the transfer of power took place. King George had to abide by the same rules which were set up after this revolution.

The English treasury was in bad shape. Money had been spent faster than it was being brought in. One of the causes for the spending drain on the treasury was the colonies. It took money to pay the troops being used to protect the colonies. It took money to pay the English governors who had been assigned to the colonies. It took money to fight wars against the French and the Indians in the colonies. King George reasoned that if money was being spent on the colonies, then the colonists needed to be paying for these services. It would be much easier to convince Parliament to tax the colonists than to try to get more money from the already poor English citizens.

One of the taxes which King George devised was called the Stamp Act. This tax would require colonists to pay an extra amount of money for every printed piece of paper the colonists used. That would include newspapers, playing cards, pamphlets, legal documents, and advertisements. The Stamp Act was passed by Parliament in 1765. The colonists did not take kindly to this act at all. They believed that they were still British citizens and that the **Magna Carta**, written in 1215, had given all British citizens protection against unfair taxes. Many colonists voiced their displeasure with this new tax. Some even went as far as to tar and

feather agents of the king who tried to collect the money for this tax. Acts such as this sent a strong message back to the king. The Stamp Act lasted only one year before Parliament **repealed** it.

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Questions

- _____ 1. Through what means was Parliament able to gain power from the king?
- A. Declaration of Independence
 - B. Magna Carta
 - C. King William and Queen Mary
 - D. Glorious Revolution
- _____ 2. British citizens were given protection from unfair taxes by what?
- A. King George
 - B. Glorious Revolution
 - C. Parliament
 - D. Magna Carta
- _____ 3. What did the Stamp Act tax?
- A. Letters
 - B. Printed paper
 - C. Stamps
 - D. Colleges
- _____ 4. King George III had more power than Parliament.
- A. False
 - B. True
- _____ 5. King George said the colonists deserved to be taxed because the British protected them.
- A. True
 - B. False
- _____ 6. The British fought against France in the French and Indian War.
- A. False
 - B. True

