

## Period 3: 1754-1800

AP US History ■ Period 3

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## What we will cover

- 1 The Seven Years' War and Its Consequences
- 2 Taxation Without Representation
- 3 The Ideas Behind the Revolution
- 4 The War and Its Wider Effects
- 5 From Confederation to Constitution
- 6 The New Republic

# 1

## The Seven Years' War and Its Consequences

# The Seven Years' War and Its Consequences

Period 3 runs from 1754 to 1800 – from the outbreak of the Seven Years' War to the end of John Adams's presidency. It contains the Revolution, but the exam treats the Revolution as an *effect*, so start with its cause.

- A **major expansion of territory** 领土大扩张 – France was removed from mainland North America.
- An **enormous war debt** 巨额战争债务, which Britain decided the colonies should help repay.
- **Restrictions on westward movement**, notably the **Proclamation of 1763** 1763 年公告线, intended to prevent costly conflict with American Indians but resented by colonists who wanted the land they had just helped win.

## The Seven Years' War and Its Consequences, continued

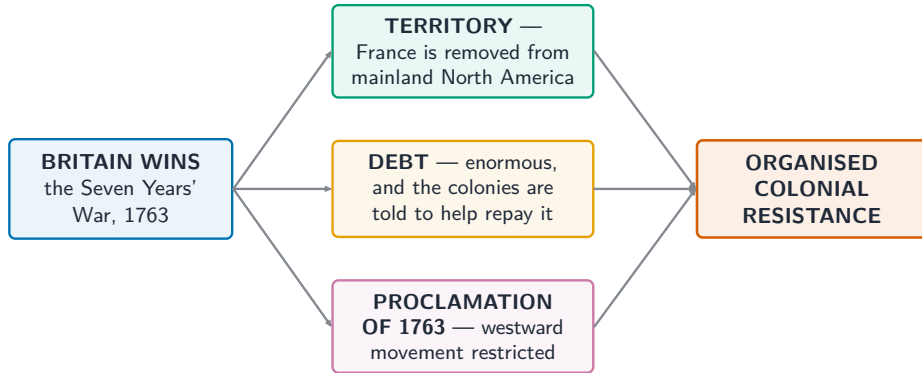
Colonial rivalry between Britain and France intensified in the mid-eighteenth century as a growing colonial population pressed westward. The **Seven Years' War** 七年战争, known in North America as the **French and Indian War** 法印战争, settled that rivalry.

That is the chain the exam wants: victory produced debt and new territory, and managing both required tighter control of the colonies.

## One victory, three consequences, one response

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- An **enormous war debt** 巨额战争债务, which Britain decided the colonies should help repay.
- **Restrictions on westward movement**, notably the **Proclamation of 1763** 1763 年公告线.

# One victory, three consequences, one response, in detail



Winning the war is what created the crisis: the debt, and the cost of holding the new territory, are why Britain began taxing the colonies at all.

# 2

## Taxation Without Representation

# Taxation Without Representation

New British efforts to **collect taxes** 征税 without the consent of colonial assemblies, and to assert imperial authority, provoked organised resistance.

Colonial leaders based their arguments on **the rights of British subjects** 英国臣民的权利, on the **ideals of the Enlightenment** 启蒙思想, and on their own long experience of self-government – the assemblies built up during Period 2.

## Resistance was action as well as argument

### boycotts

non-importation agreements starved British merchants of their American market

### men and women 男女双方

**both** took part – women's spinning and refusal to buy imported cloth made the boycotts work

### crowd action

the Sons of Liberty, tarring and feathering, and the destruction of stamped paper

### military occupation 军事占领

in some regions British troops were quartered among civilians, which turned a tax dispute into a daily grievance

### shortages

colonists faced real hardship, and enduring it **was** the political statement

The AP question is usually about **who participated**. Naming women's role in the boycotts is the difference between a general answer and a specific one.

## Resistance, and the idea underneath it

### Ordinary people

Boycotts of British goods, home manufacture, crowd action and committees of correspondence – **men and women** both took part, some under military occupation.

### Benjamin Franklin

Leaders such as **Benjamin Franklin** energised the movement and carried the colonial case abroad.

### The slogan

**“No taxation without representation”** – Parliament could not tax colonists who elected none of its members.

### The idea

Enlightenment thinking put **individual talent over hereditary privilege** and asserted natural rights and the **sovereignty of the people**.

The slogan is the surface; the claim underneath is that authority comes from the governed, not from birth.

# 3

## The Ideas Behind the Revolution

# The Ideas Behind the Revolution

Two ideas do most of the work in essays:

- **Republicanism** 共和主义 – government rests on the consent of the governed, and citizens must show virtue by placing the public good above private interest.
- **Natural rights** – rights that exist before government, which government is created to protect, and whose violation justifies resistance.

# Republicanism and natural rights are not synonyms

## REPUBLICANISM

## NATURAL RIGHTS

### WHERE POWER COMES FROM

the consent of the governed

rights exist before any government does

### WHAT IT ASKS OF A CITIZEN

virtue — the public good above private  
interest

nothing; the duty falls on the government

### WHAT IT DOES IN AN ESSAY

explains the kind of government they built justifies the decision to resist

They are not synonyms. **Natural rights** licenses the break; **republicanism** explains what was built afterwards

# The ideas, and what the Convention had to compromise

**Enlightenment ideas** 启蒙运动

led American thinkers to emphasise **individual talent over hereditary privilege** 才能重于世袭特权

**the Constitutional Convention** 制宪会议

1787 – a stronger national government built on **compromise** 妥协

**the Great Compromise** 大妥协

a Senate with equal state representation, a House by population

**the three-fifths compromise** 五分之三妥协

counted three of every five enslaved people for representation and taxation

**ratification** 批准 **was contested**

**Federalists** 联邦党人 argued the government was strong enough to govern yet checked enough to be safe; **Anti-Federalists** 反联邦党人 feared it would swallow the states

The Bill of Rights was the price of ratification. Saying *that* – rather than listing its contents – is what the essay question rewards.

# 4

## The War and Its Wider Effects

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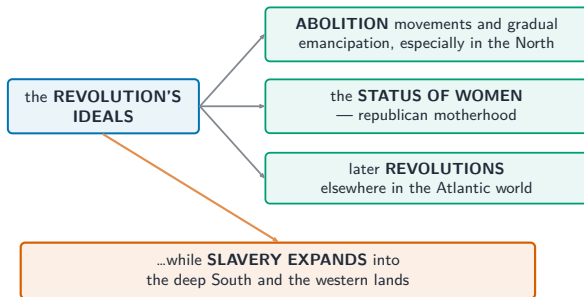
The war for independence succeeded through a combination of colonial resolve, difficult terrain, and crucially **foreign assistance** 外国援助, above all from France.

- They inspired **movements to abolish slavery** 废奴运动, especially in the North, and gradual emancipation laws.
- They raised questions about the **status of women** 妇女地位, expressed in the idea of **republican motherhood** 共和母亲身份 – that women shaped the republic by raising virtuous citizens.
- They influenced later revolutions elsewhere in the Atlantic world.

## The War and Its Wider Effects, continued

At the same time the **expansion of slavery** into the deep South and adjacent western lands continued, alongside rising **antislavery** 反奴隶制 sentiment – a contradiction the course returns to repeatedly.

# The ideals spread, and slavery expanded



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# 5

## From Confederation to Constitution

## The powers that moved, and the ones that did not

After declaring independence, leaders wrote new **constitutions and declarations of rights** 宪法与权利宣言 that reflected republican ideals, generally limiting executive power.

The **Articles of Confederation** 邦联条例 created a deliberately weak central government: no power to tax, no power to regulate commerce, no executive, and no national judiciary.

## Two documents worth naming

### Northwest Ordinance

The Confederation's one real success: it organised western settlement, set out how territories became states, and barred slavery north-west of the Ohio.

### Washington's Farewell Address

**George Washington** urged national unity and warned against political factions and permanent foreign alliances – a warning issued as the first party system was already forming.

Naming a document *and* what it did converts a date into evidence.

# The new republic's first arguments

## the central dispute

under **Washington 华盛顿** and Adams, leaders split over the **national-state balance of power**

## Hamilton's programme

a national bank, assumed state debts – a **broad** reading of federal power

## Jefferson's objection

a strict reading, and an agrarian republic of independent farmers

## the French Revolution 法国大革命

war between France and Britain forced hard choices; the government pursued **neutrality** and diplomatic initiatives

## a national culture 民族文化

developed in art, literature and architecture – **alongside** continued regional variation

## American Indian nations

repeatedly **re-evaluated their alliances 重新评估结盟** with European powers and the new republic

The first party system grew out of a constitutional argument, not a policy one – which is why it was so bitter so quickly.

## Moving west, and the competition it caused

### Migration west

Growing numbers of migrants moved west, intensifying competition over **resources, boundaries, and trade**.

### Shifting alliances

American Indian groups repeatedly **evaluated and adjusted their alliances** with European powers and the new United States as circumstances changed.

### An ambiguous status

The relationship between the federal government and American Indian tribes stayed **ambiguous**, and conflict recurred.

### In the Southwest

Spain expanded its **mission system**, supported by the bonded labour of local American Indians.

Westward expansion is the period's clearest *continuity*: independence changed the government, not the pressure on Native land.

# The powers that moved, and the ones that did not, in detail

|                  | Articles of Confederation                    | The Constitution                                   | Why it mattered                  |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Taxation</b>  | no power to tax;<br>could only request funds | Congress may lay and<br>collect taxes              | <i>war debts went unpaid</i>     |
| <b>Commerce</b>  | no power to regulate<br>trade between states | Congress regulates<br>interstate and foreign trade | <i>states taxed each other</i>   |
| <b>Executive</b> | no president                                 | a single executive<br>with defined powers          | <i>no one could enforce law</i>  |
| <b>Judiciary</b> | no national courts                           | a federal judiciary                                | <i>no way to settle disputes</i> |
| <b>Amendment</b> | unanimous consent<br>of all states           | three-quarters of states                           | <i>reform was impossible</i>     |

After declaring independence, leaders wrote new **constitutions and declarations of rights** 宪法与权利宣言 that reflected republican ideals, generally limiting executive power.

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## The New Republic

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# 7

## **Movement and Conflict in the Early Republic**

## The powers that moved, and the ones that did not, continued

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The **Articles of Confederation** 邦联条例 created a deliberately weak central government: no power to tax, no power to regulate commerce, no executive, and no national judiciary.

# The powers that moved, and the ones that did not (2)

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# 8

## Continuity and Change in Period 3

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The period's reasoning skill is **continuity and change** 延续与变化.

The strongest answers hold both: political institutions changed radically, while slavery, westward expansion, and conflict with American Indians continued and intensified.

## Worked example – describe one effect

**2025 exam, short answer part B:** *“Briefly describe one effect of the Seven Years’ War from 1754 to 1765.”*

- **Full marks:** *“Britain emerged from the war with a large debt, which led Parliament to impose new taxes such as the Stamp Act on the colonies to help pay for imperial defence.”*
- One effect, named – and the **causal link stated**:  
debt → new taxes.
- *“Britain won the war”* is a result, not an effect;  
*“the colonies were angry”* is too vague to credit.

**Describe one effect** is a two-part instruction: say what happened *next*, and say why the war produced it. One sentence can hold both.

## Exam tips

- Learn the causal chain: war → debt and new territory → taxes and the Proclamation of 1763 → colonial resistance → independence.
- Republicanism and natural rights are the two ideas to name; do not just write "Enlightenment ideas".
- For the Constitution, argue from the specific weakness it fixed – no power to tax, no power to regulate commerce, no executive.
- Keep Federalist and Anti-Federalist positions straight, and remember the Bill of Rights was the price of ratification.
- The Revolution's effects on slavery and women are examinable, and both are partial: ideals spread further than rights did.
- On continuity-and-change prompts, give one of each. An answer that only lists changes has answered half the question.

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**Recap**

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## Period 3 – key takeaways

1

### Chain

war → debt → taxes &  
Proclamation → independence

2

### Ideas

name republicanism and natural  
rights

3

### Constitution

fix a named weakness: tax,  
commerce, executive

4

### C&C

ideals spread further than rights  
(slavery, women)

## Check yourself

- 1 What did the Seven Years' War leave Britain with?
- 2 Name the two ideas, not just "Enlightenment".
- 3 Why was the Bill of Rights added?
- 4 On a C&C prompt, what must you give?

**Answers:** debt and new territory ■ republicanism and natural rights ■ the price of ratification  
■ one continuity and one change