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***Please refer to the Pennsylvania Standards Aligned System website: (***[***http://www.pdesas.org/module/sas/curriculumframework/SocialStudiesCF.aspx***](http://www.pdesas.org/module/sas/curriculumframework/SocialStudiesCF.aspx)***)***

***for information on the Pennsylvania Curriculum Framework for Social Studies. You will find much of the information about PA Academic Standards, essential questions, vocabulary, assessments, etc. by navigating through the various components of the Curriculum Framework.***

**LESSON / UNIT TITLE: The Boston Massacre - British and Colonial Perspectives**

**Teacher Name(s): Brad Laidacker, Paul Roman**

**School District: Montgomery Area School District**

**Building: Middle School**

**Grade Level: 8th**

**Subject: American History I**

**Time Required: 80 minutes**

**Lesson/Unit Summary *(2-3 sentence synopsis)*:**

The purpose of the lesson is to identify the causes leading up to the Boston Massacre. Students will discuss the different perspectives in the Massacre, (Colonists, English). They will also examine the trial of Thomas Preston in an attempt to answer the question: Was he justified in what he did using the different perspectives of the events of that night?

**Essential Questions for Lesson/Unit**

How did colonists react to British policies?

**Pennsylvania Academic Standards Addressed in Lesson/Unit**

***(Include standards numbers and standards statements.)***

8.3. A. Contributions of individuals and groups

8.3. B. Analyze and interpret historical sources

8.3. C. Analyze Continuity and Change

8.1. C. Analyze the fundamentals of historical interpretation

**Lesson/Unit Objectives**

1. Students will be able to identify the causes of the Boston Massacre.
2. Students will be able to describe the events of the Boston Massacre.
3. Students will be able to interpret different accounts of the events to determine the appropriate point of view.
4. Students will be able to analyze evidence presented by the defense and prosecution teams to draw a conclusion as to whether the British Commander was justified in using deadly force in that situation.

**Vocabulary/Key Terms for Lesson/Unit**

Traitor

Massacre

Riot

Treason

Patriots

Loyalists

Boycott

Sons of Liberties

Boston Tea Party

Lobsterbacks/Redcoats

Tyranny

**Historical Background for Teachers / Research Narrative**

(***Insert a 2-3 page abstract that details your research on the lesson/unit topic. This is where you get to share your scholarship with your peers. You should provide enough information that a teacher could potentially teach the lesson/unit and answer general questions based on studying your narrative.***

**Background:** Throughout the 1760s, Boston was anxious and apprehensive. During the early part of 1770, these feelings quickly turned into hostility and aggression. Various fights and disagreements between the colonists and British sympathizers caused tensions to mount during the beginning of 1770. However, on March 5, 1770 these tensions turned into bloodshed. This fateful night quickly became referred to as the “Boston Massacre”.

**What Caused the Tension?** In 1766, the Great Britain's Parliament lost the Stamp Act battle. However, they were determined to show the colonies that they had control. In 1766, Great Britain's Parliament passed a new decree that made it officially clear that they had the right to pass laws in regard to the colonies. In 1777, they passed a variety of new laws, including a tax on lead, tea, glass, and paper. This left the colonies outraged and many people refused to pay these taxes. British officials called upon military troops to help them enforce the new tax laws.

On March 5, 1770 the events came to a head in the city of Boston. The Massacre was the 1770, pre-Revolutionary incident growing out of the anger against the British troops sent to Boston to maintain order and to enforce the [Townshend Acts](http://www.stamp-act-history.com/townshend-act/1767-june-29-townshend-revenue-act/). Competition for jobs was high in this port city, partly due to an influx of several thousand British soldiers, many of whom were looking for part-time work to occupy their off-duty hours. There had been sporadic fights and arguments between off-duty British enlisted men and Boston workers for some time. On this night, a 19-year-old British sentry outside the Boston Customs House was being taunted by a small group of snowball-wielding boys. An argument ensued, which drew the attention of a group of local men coming out of a nearby tavern. The dispute escalated and soon a noisy crowd confronted the sentry outside of the customs house and a squad of British soldiers was dispatched to disperse the crowd. After these events, at some point a musket was discharged, possibly by accident or other soldiers believed they had been ordered to fire. This ended in five colonists being killed and others wounded.

**The “Boston Massacre” Trial**

The British captain, Thomas Preston, and his men were tried for murder, with Robert Treat Paine as prosecutor, John Adams and Josiah Quincy as lawyers for the defense. Preston and six of his men were acquitted; two others were found guilty of manslaughter, punished, and discharged from the army. The next five years preceding the start of the Revolution gave Patriots many chances to put in practice the lessons learned during the Boston Massacre.

(Show a picture of the Incident)

**Official Trial Manuscript excerpts**

Written by Stephen C. O'Neill, Supreme Judicial Court Historical Society

"The law shall have its course. I will live and die by the law."

**--Lieutenant-Governor Thomas Hutchinson**

“March 5, 1770. British Private Hugh White stands sentry duty in the snowy, moonlit street before the Custom House. Moments before, he had sent a local boy running off, bruised and crying, after an exchange of words. Now, facing an angry crowd of civilians, White calls for help. Captain Thomas Preston and seven soldiers respond. Bells ring out nearby from the Old Brick Church, normally the town's fire alarm. On the dark street, people are shouting ‘Where's the fire?’ adding to the confusion and tension. At the Custom House the crowd presses in, began to throw ice and rocks, taunting the soldiers, damning them to fire their muskets, knowing that soldiers are forbidden to shoot without orders from a civil magistrate. Private Hugh Montgomery is knocked down, and someone yells ‘Fire!’ The soldiers shoot into the crowd, killing five and wounding six.”

Thomas Hutchinson, the acting governor, rushes from his North End home, past blood-stained snow, into the chambers of the Old State House. Civilian leaders of Boston pressure him to remove the soldiers from the city to prevent further violence. Hutchinson steps onto a balcony to address the large crowd still in the street. "The law shall have its course. I will live and die by the law."

The Boston Massacre resulted from British soldiers of the Fourteenth and the Twenty-ninth Regiments occupying Boston as a police force for two years. They were quartered in private homes and public buildings. Soldiers were even taking extra jobs around the town. Tension and hostilities grew between civilians and soldiers until it finally erupted on the night of the Massacre.

The trials for the Captain and for the eight enlisted men, two of the longest trials in Colonial history, are a landmark in American legal history. It was the first time a judge used the phrase "reasonable doubt." The hearsay testimony of Massacre victim Patrick Carr was allowed in court because it was given on his deathbed. And a Medieval relic, the Benefit of Clergy, was used by two soldiers found guilty of manslaughter to escape the death penalty.

**The Accused Soldiers of the Twenty-ninth Regiment**

Captain Thomas Preston, Corporal William Wemms, James Hartigan, William McCauley, Hugh White, Matthew Kilroy, William Warren, John Carrol, Hugh Montgomery

**The Superior Court of Judicature**

The British soldiers were tried before the Superior Court of Judicature, the highest court in Massachusetts. As English subjects, they had a right to a fair trial by jury and competent defense counsel. Loyalists wanted the soldiers pardoned, but were prosecuting in the King's name. Patriots wanted the soldiers found guilty, but also wanted to show Boston as fair.

"Queen Street Courthouse, built 1769. Conjectural Plan."

**Judges of the Superior Court of Judicature**

Chief Justice Benjamin Lynde, Jr., described as a "nervous" man; he was a political moderate who served less than three years as chief justice.

Justice Edmund Trowbridge, a meticulous and learned judge, he was responsible for suggesting the use of the Benefit of Clergy during the trials. He became a reluctant Patriot during the Revolution.

Justice John Cushing, another political moderate, he retired the following year after serving twenty-four years on the bench.

Justice Peter Oliver, a fierce and outspoken loyalist, he became chief justice after Lynde, only to be impeached by the Massachusetts House of Representatives. He was exiled with other Loyalists in 1776.

Lieutenant-Governor Thomas Hutchinson was chief justice of the Superior Court, but declined to preside at the trials. Benjamin Lynde, Jr. of Salem became the acting chief justice. Lynde tried to resign his position twice before the trials began. He and the remaining three justices of the court presided at the trials in full bottomed wigs and scarlet robes for the capital crime of murder.

Indictments were drawn up in the weeks following the Massacre by Attorney General Jonathan Sewall. Hutchinson pressured Lynde to delay the date for the trials as long as possible, hoping the agitation in Boston would die down. In the meantime, Attorney General Sewall stepped away from his responsibility and refused to prosecute the soldiers.

**Counsel for the Prosecution**

Samuel Quincy, a Loyalist and the Solicitor General for the colony, was appointed as special prosecutor for the trials. Samuel was the handsome and urbane older brother of defense lawyer Josiah Quincy Jr. Samuel Quincy left Massachusetts with the British in 1776 and died in exile in England in 1789.

Robert Treat Paine, a Patriot and lawyer from Taunton, Massachusetts, was asked by the town of Boston to prosecute the soldiers. Paine was a prominent attorney who was later elected to the Continental Congress and signed the Declaration of Independence. He also became the first Attorney General for Massachusetts and a justice of the Supreme Judicial Court.

**Counsel for the Defense**

John Adams, a Patriot, was the foremost Boston attorney of the time. Adams became instrumental in the cause for independence as a representative to the Continental Congress. He signed the Declaration of Independence, became a commissioner to France, the first Vice-President, and second President of the United States.

Robert Auchmuty, Jr., a Loyalist, was the judge of the Vice-Admiralty Court. He agreed to serve as attorney for Preston on the condition that John Adams be co-counsel. Auchmuty died in exile in London in 1788.

Josiah Quincy, Jr., a fervent Patriot and Samuel Quincy's younger brother. His efforts on behalf of the Patriot cause and his badly cocked eye earned him the nickname "Wilkes," after John Wilkes, a politically radical English lawyer with a crossed eye. Quincy died of tuberculosis returning from a mission to England in 1775.

Sampson Salter Blowers, a Loyalist, served as attorney only for Rex v. Wemms, et al. He was later exiled and became the Chief Justice of Nova Scotia.

"My dear Son,

"I am under great affliction, at hearing the bitterest reproaches uttered against you, for having become an advocate for those criminals who are charged with the murder of their fellow-citizens. Good God! Is it possible? I will not believe it..."

"Your anxious and distressed parent, Josiah Quincy."

"Honored Sir,

"...I refused all engagement, until advised and urged to undertake it, by an Adams, a Hancock, a Molineux, a Cushing, a Henshaw, a Pemberton, a Warren, a Cooper, and a Phillips...I dare affirm, that you, and this whole people will one day REJOICE, that I became an advocate for the aforesaid "criminals," charged with the murder of our fellow citizens."

"I am, truly and affectionately, your son, Josiah Quincy Jun."

**Rex v. Preston**

British Captain Thomas Preston came to trial on October 24, 1770. He had been held in jail for seven months since the Massacre. His attorneys needed to prove that he had not issued the command to fire. The prosecution had to prove that he did, and was therefore responsible for the five deaths.

**Jury**

The venire (jury pool) ran out before the jury was fully impaneled. Five talesmen (onlookers picked as jurors) were picked from among the court spectators. The talesmen DeBlois, Dumaresque, Hill, Wallis, and Barrick were merchants and strong Loyalists, certainly not about to convict one of the King's officers. Only two of the twelve jurors were from Boston. The jury was packed in Preston's favor.

**Witness testimony for the Crown**

William Wyat: "I saw about 100 People in the Street huzzaing, crying fire, damn you fire....The Officer then stamped and said Damn your bloods fire be the consequence what it will. Immediately the first Gun was fired."

Daniel Calef: "I looked the Officer in the face when he gave the word and saw his mouth. He had on a red Coat, yellow Jacket and Silver laced hat, no trimming on his Coat. The Prisoner is the Officer I mean."

**Sources:**

*Cicero: History beyond the Textbook* website: <http://cicerohistory.com/>

Summary of events: <http://www.bostonmassacre.net/plot/index.htm>

British viewpoint: [www.bostonmassacre.net/british.htm](http://www.bostonmassacre.net/british.htm)

Colonial viewpoint: [www.earlyamerica.com/review/winter96/massacre/massacretext.htm](http://www.earlyamerica.com/review/winter96/massacre/massacretext.htm)

Trial Summary: [www.bostonmassacre.net/trial/trial-summary1.htm](http://www.bostonmassacre.net/trial/trial-summary1.htm);

<http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/5492884/summary_of_the_boston_massacre_1770.html>

**Instructional Prodedures and Activities**

***(List/describe the step-by-step sequence of procedures and learning activities.***

1. Have the students read article on the Boston Massacre (student handout 1)
2. In pairs, create a list of colonial disagreements that led to the hostility that night.
3. Display a picture created by Paul Revere portraying the event. What do you see that proves the colonist point of view? What details were left out of the picture?
4. Think/pair/share activity: The teacher will distribute three handouts to the class.
   1. The first two will be two different accounts of the event British/Colonial (handout 2/3)
   2. Students will receive a list of questions (handout 4)
   3. The students will then read the accounts and answer the questions to provoke some critical thought about what they learned.
5. Students will work in pairs to discuss what they read. Each pair will consist of a Colonist and Loyalist perspective. Also discuss the Paul Revere picture and identify the missing details based on your reading.
6. Students will then share their accounts with the other groups to come up with a consensus of what took place during that night.
7. After discussing both perspectives and the picture in groups, students will use ARTIST to analyze the two different perspectives.
8. Students will write a response to determine whether the British commander, Thomas Preston was justified in using deadly force that night.

**Suggested Strategies for Differentiating Instruction**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | 1. Think, pair, share 2. ARTIST 3. If needed, group reading |

**Assessment of Student Learning (Formative and Summative)**

Question and answer during the discussion (formative)

Written response about Preston (Summative)

**Materials and Resources**

***(Include text, supplementary resources, primary source documents, websites, handouts, charts, maps, etc.)***

*American Nation* Textbook

Student Handouts 1-4

Picture of Paul Revere’s Boston Massacre

ARTIST Form

**Author(s) of Unit/Lesson Plan**

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