



Prompts for Baseline Writing Assessment

LIFE IN YOUR HOMETOWN

Written Response

Directions: You have lived a significant portion of your life in the area where you attend school. It is a place that must be familiar to you, but very different to other young people who live in faraway places. In writing to someone who lives far away or to a leader in your community, share some of what you know well about your hometown. Choose *one* of the following options for writing about what you know.

1. Imagine that you are writing to a young student who lives in another state. Tell the story of what the people of your hometown have experienced, including a significant event and the town's reaction to the event. Tell the story in the sequence as it happened. What was the important event? How did the event affect families? How did the event affect the community as a whole? As you would in writing any good story, be sure that your story has these important elements:
 - A clear sense of the setting so that the reader can imagine what your hometown is like.
 - Characters who are brought to life so that a reader can imagine them, including hearing what they say and how they say it.
 - A series of events that are easy to follow in sequence so that a reader can see the connections among the events.
 - A sequence of events that follows a central conflict in a pattern that leads to a climax, dramatic moment, or resolution.

Note: Be sure to share your plan and your draft with other writers so that you can know how your story affects them and so that you have corrected any errors in order to make your story as clear as possible.
2. Describe a situation that you would like to see changed in your town. Write to the mayor, to the chief of police, to a member of the town council, or to the city manager to explain what you don't like and how you would like to see the situation changed. As with any persuasive letter sent to an authority, you will want to choose your language carefully and make sure that your letter contains the following elements:
 - An introduction to remind the community leader about the central problem that concerns you. This introduction will include your briefly stated recommendation about what should be done to make matters better.
 - Detailed description of the harms that people now suffer or could suffer because of the current conditions in your town. Show that these harms are more than an inconvenience and that people are, or can be, seriously hurt.

Appendix A: Prompts for Baseline Writing Assessment

- Description of actions taken if residents of your town have already taken some actions to improve the situation and explanation of why they have not been good enough to relieve the problem.
- Summary of what you see as the big problem facing your town and statement on the actions you would like to see to change the situation for the better.

Note: Be sure to share your plan and your draft with other writers so that you can know how your letter affects them and so that you have corrected any errors in order to make your letter as clear as possible.

3. Imagine that a young student named Leufeng Teng now lives in the city of Hangzhou, China. The Teng family plan to move to your hometown, because the mother has accepted an important job in a city near you. Although everyone in the family has studied English, the family members have never visited the United States. They are eager to learn about their new home, and will rely on you to tell them what it is like to live in your hometown. Your letter to Leufeng Teng should have the following elements:
- An introduction that acknowledges that you know what the reader wants to know.
 - A detailed description of what living in your hometown is like. Your descriptions should share the important features of the town and some memorable events from recent history. Your reader will be unfamiliar with much of what you have experienced and will need to know in detail what your life is like.
 - Highlights of both the positive experiences and the potential, as well as any significant difficulties.
 - A summary that recalls why you are writing, and how you value your hometown.

Note: Be sure to share your plan and your draft with other writers so that you can know how your letter affects them and so that you have corrected any errors in order to make your letter as clear as possible.

4. Leufeng Teng, a young student from Hangzhou, China, plans to move to your hometown with the rest of the Teng family. This means that Leufeng will have to adjust to a new school, one that is very different from schools in Hangzhou. In a letter to Leufeng, explain how your school operates. Describe the daily routine, as well as any special events or unique features of your school. Help Leufeng imagine what it will be like to become a member of your class. You could also illustrate by recalling a memorable day of school or special assembly. Your letter to Leufeng Teng should have the following elements:
- An introduction that acknowledges that you know what the reader wants to know.
 - A detailed description of the usual routines and special features of your school. Perhaps it would help to mentally “walk through” a typical school day.
 - A detailed description of some memorable day of school or special assembly, with appropriate commentary about what made it memorable or special.
 - A summary statement that says briefly how your school functions and encourages, or warns, the reader about what to expect at your school.

Note: Be sure to share your plan and your draft with other writers so that you can know how your letter affects them and so that you have corrected any errors in order to make your letter as clear as possible.

Key Features for Speaking and Listening

Trait	Proficiency Level	Target for Improvement
Cooperates with members of a team to prepare remarks during a larger forum.		
Summarizes a problem as a means for initiating discussion.		
Accurately paraphrases the contribution of the previous speaker as a means for linking elements of a discussion.		
Supports general claims by citing representative examples or information drawn from multiple sources, including the contributions of peers.		
Interprets information to show how it relates to, and supports, a claim.		
Recognizes and evaluates appropriately the arguments expressed by others during discussion.		
Uses language that is appropriate for the audience, the context, and the recognized purpose for discussion.		

Traits: The descriptions of the target features of speaking and listening align with the Common Core State Standards.

Proficiency Levels:

- 5 = Consistently exhibits this trait.
- 4 = Often exhibits this trait.
- 3 = Sometimes exhibits this trait.
- 2 = Seldom exhibits this trait.
- 1 = Does not exhibit this trait.

Target for Improvement: A speaker, peer, or teacher can specify the targets for improvement.

Key Features for Writing

Trait	Proficiency Level	Target for Improvement
Frames a problem to reveal to an audience the need for the current discussion and for the writer's illumination about an area of doubt.		
Conveys a proposition or general claim about a debated issue or area of doubt.		
Supports general claims by citing representative examples or information drawn from multiple sources.		
Interprets information to show how it relates to, and supports, a claim.		
Recognizes and evaluates appropriately the arguments expressed by others.		
Organizes a discussion in a way that logically follows from the purpose of the composition.		
Establishes coherent ties across the composition—from sentence to sentence and paragraph to paragraph.		
Uses language that is appropriate for the audience and the given purpose for addressing that audience.		

Traits: The descriptions of the target features of writing align with the Common Core State Standards.

Proficiency Levels:

- 5 = Consistently exhibits this trait.
- 4 = Often exhibits this trait.
- 3 = Sometimes exhibits this trait.
- 2 = Seldom exhibits this trait.
- 1 = Does not exhibit this trait.

Target for Improvement: A speaker, peer, or teacher can specify the targets for improvement.

Letters of Support to Delegations at Legislative Hearing

Dear Mohawk Delegation Members,

You have been selected to speak to members of a legislative committee that will be considering a bill for reparations for Native Americans. The Mohawk community is relying on you to present an accurate picture of our civilization prior to the arrival of the European settlers who ultimately formed the United States of America using our land. We trust that you will make clear the devastation the settlers on our ancestral lands inflicted upon our culture and people. Careful preparation for the hearing is crucial, and we hope that you research and prepare to speak on the following points:

- As you are well aware, the Mohawk developed a complex society occupying the land in what is now known as New York. We were part of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy (the people building a longhouse) with language ties to the Iroquois peoples. *I urge you to please describe accurately the area we occupied prior to the arrival of White people.*
- We have always valued unity, which is evident in our motto “One Heart, One Mind, One Law.” We joined with other tribes of our area and formed a Five Nation Confederacy—the Iroquois Confederacy. Please be prepared to describe our government structure and emphasize that it was this structure that was used as a model when uniting the 13 colonies as an independent nation.
- The stereotype of Native Americans is that of an unsophisticated people with primitive religious beliefs. The Mohawk built an impressive society stressing cooperation and consideration of others. Our understanding of the land and resources allowed the Mohawk tribe to thrive. *Please offer a description of the highly developed structure of our culture.*
- Our ancestors were tricked into signing treaties that we did not understand, and the promises made in those treaties were not honored. The first settlers to our land, mostly from Great Britain, represented written treaties dishonestly. We were asked to sign treaties we could not read and trusted the government representatives when they translated the meaning to us. We lost a lot of land to this deceitful practice.
- *Please remind the committee that members of our community were removed from the land inherited from our ancestors.* After the American Revolutionary War, the new government made no attempt to keep settlers from invading our land. Our belief in owning land in common was eradicated and we were forced onto reservations with small plots of land assigned to each family.

The Mohawk Nation has worked to adapt to the hardships forced upon us while striving to maintain our cultural heritage. We expect the United States Department of the Interior to recognize our cultural significance, the role we played in helping early settlers to survive, and our right to sovereignty. This right has been granted in many treaties throughout our history, but in word only. We expect the United States government to recognize and enforce this promise and repair the damage we have endured for generations.

Sincerely,
Mingan LePage

Dear Nez Perce Delegation,

I am pleased that you will represent the Nimi'ipu people, commonly referred to as Nez Perce. We need your help in providing testimony to the members of the legislative committee charged with making the decision on a bill for reparations for Native Americans. It is vitally important that you are well prepared for this important duty. We count on you to express an accurate picture of our rich cultural history. Before addressing the committee it will be important to research and understand the history of our people. Please be sure to address the following points:

- Prior to the arrival of the white men, we lived in communities along the Columbia, Clearwater, Snake, and Salomon rivers located in the northwest region of the United States that is now the state of Idaho and part of Montana. We survived in this unforgiving landscape through our skills at fishing and hunting, and through our knowledge of native plants safe for consumption. *Please describe the area we occupied prior to the arrival of the settlers from the East.*
- Non-Native settlers have characterized our culture as primitive and derided our way of life. Our Nez Perce had a rich cultural history, which included many of the same elements common to many civilizations. *Please offer a description of the highly developed structure of our culture.*
- Our ancestors lived in small, independent communities. While the village chief was an important judge for village problems, no tribal member was bound to his decisions. The Nez Perce respected each person's autonomy and did not force group consensus to problems on any one individual. *Please be prepared to describe our government structure.*
- During their expedition west, Louis and Clark met Nez Perce and were extremely impressed with Nez Perce intelligence, honesty, and friendship. Our ancestors were equally impressed with stories of large cities to the east. They could not envision harm coming to them from the white men. *Please relate the situation that brought missionaries to Nez Perce land with the intent to indoctrinate our ancestors to their foreign religious beliefs.*
- *Please remind the committee that members of our community were removed from the land inherited from our ancestors.* Although some of this land was sold to settlers, many other settlers just took land, stating that because the Nez Perce were not farmers, they were not using the land to its full potential. We lost much of our ancestral land in this way.
- Nez Perce tribe members suffered terribly from viral diseases previously unknown to this community. While it is true that initially the spread of disease was

unintentional, after the discovery of gold, miners did intentionally try to spread smallpox throughout the tribe in an attempt to eradicate the Nez Perce. *Please inform the committee of the numerous atrocities committed by the newcomers that led to the destruction of the Nez Perce lands and life style.*

The Nez Perce sought to maintain peace with the White settlers even as they were illegally taking over tribal land. They worked to rein in the anger and frustration of tribal members who wanted revenge for these losses. We are relying on you to convey our proud history and our suffering at the hands of the government representatives and White settlers.

Sincerely,
Tooyalakekt Clearwater

Dear Powhatan Delegation Members,

I understand that you will soon be appearing to provide expert testimony to the members of the legislative committee considering a bill for reparations for Native Americans. I hope that you will prepare carefully for your appearance before the committee by researching the history of our people. It is important that there is someone reliable to tell the accurate story of the Powhatan tribes. I offer as a reminder that as a Nation of Native Peoples we have been victims of many wrongs, cruelties, and injustices. When you testify, please keep the following in mind:

- Europeans had many reasons to explore the Northeast coast of North America. They were looking for wealth, a passage to Asia, and a desire to convert the “savages” to Christianity. England had lagged behind the other European nations in getting a foothold in this new continent and with their landing at Jamestown in 1607 they hoped to make up for lost time. Soon after their arrival they were met by Indians of the powerful Powhatan Confederacy. *Please describe the civilization that the English settlers found at Jamestown. Be sure to include information on the Confederacy that was lead by Chief Powhatan.*
- The interaction between the settlers at Jamestown with the Powhatan provides a preview of the majority of Native American and settler interactions that would follow through the 18th century, an initial period of friendship was followed by violent conflict and war. *Please tell the story of the initial interactions between the Powhatan and the colonists at Jamestown.*
- The story of the Powhatan has been overshadowed by the story of Pocahontas. With the 1995 release of the Disney movie *Pocahontas*, the myth of the Indian maiden was perpetuated and our history was distorted beyond recognition. *Please share the true story of Pocahontas.*
- *Please remind everyone that the Powhatan tribe members were infected by previously unknown viral diseases.* The English settlers brought diseases like measles and smallpox with them when they crossed the Atlantic Ocean and entered into our lands. Since we had not known these diseases, we had no immunity and no treatment. The Powhatan confederacy in 1607 had numbered more than 14,000 people in 20 tribes and by 1644 only 5,000 remained. Hundreds of our people died from the viruses. Europeans regarded the catastrophe as “God’s work.” Everyone must know the details about this sad episode in our history.

- By 1720 there were only about 2,000 Powhatans left. In 1609, Chief Powhatan raised the question “*Why will you destroy us, who supply you with food?*” Without the Powhatan, England and Jamestown would certainly have failed. *Please be prepared to tell the story of how we were forced into treaties and pushed into small reservations that destroyed our culture and left the Europeans as masters of the Northeast by 1800.*

Victory over the Powhatan made the Europeans bold. A clear pattern for Indian removal was set that would soon spread across the American continent. We are the native people of this land, descendants of an ancient confederation that at one time included over 30 nations. For more than a thousand years we lived along the coastal areas of the mid-Atlantic. Although most of our lands are now occupied by others, many of the Powhatan of the original confederacy still survive. Today we reside on just 350 acres of state land in New Jersey as part of the Powhatan-Renape Nation. **Please tell our story completely, accurately and compellingly.**

Sincerely,
Thomas Dale

Sample Constructed Letters and Primary Source Texts

Gentlemen:

But what still heightens our apprehensions is, that these unexpected Proceedings may be preparatory to new Taxations upon us: For if our Trade may be taxed why not our Lands? Why not the Produce of our Lands & every thing we possess or make use of? This we apprehend annihilates our Charter Right to govern & tax ourselves—It strikes at our British Privileges, which as we have never forfeited them, we hold in common with our Fellow Subjects who are Natives of Britain: *If Taxes are laid upon us in any shape without our having a legal Representation where they are laid, are we not reduced from the Character of free Subjects to the miserable State of tributary Slaves?*

We therefore earnestly recommend it to you to use your utmost Endeavors, to obtain in the Genl Assembly all necessary Instructions & Advice to our Agent at this most critical (Juncture); that while he is setting forth the unshaken Loyalty of this Province & this Town—its unrivald Exertions in supporting His Majestys Governmt & Rights in this part of his Dominions—its acknowlegd Dependence upon & Subordination to Great Brittain, & the ready Submission of its Merchants to all just & necessary Regulations of Trade, he may be able in the most humble & pressing Manner to remonstrate for us all those Rights & Privileges which justly belong to us either by Charter or Birth.

Most Sincerely,
Samuel Adams

EXCERPT: LETTER FROM A PENNSYLVANIA FARMER

Any act of Parliament that requires us to perform any singular action or service that has any monetary value attached to it is, in reality, “a tax upon us for the expense that accrues in complying with it.”

If anyone is going to be honest with themselves about what they are looking at here they “must perceive that a dreadful stroke is aimed at the liberty of these colonies.” Anything that affects one of these colonies affects them all. If Parliament is allowed to disrespect the constitutional rights of the Colony of New York, it will not have any problem doing the same to any other colony. If the colonies don’t stick together on these issues it is sending the clear message to Parliament that it can go ahead and run roughshod over these English liberties. Parliament’s strategy is to divide and conquer. We are much stronger when we stand together. This is why “*I earnestly wish, that all the rest may, with equal ardor, support their sister.*”

Freedom of expression, when it comes from a place of strength, balance, and moderation, is what is needed. It is the least that we can do to have our own elected representatives ask our agents in England to “represent to the King’s ministers their sense of the suspending

act, and to pray for its repeal.” We should have stepped up and supported New York so that when it is needed we have the right to expect that they will do the same for us.

TO THE BETRAYED INHABITANTS OF THE CITY AND COLONY OF NEW YORK

My dear fellow-citizens and countrymen,

We have been striving since the end of the recent war to preserve our freedom, which to an Englishman is as dear as life itself. But the Assembly here in New York has compromised that freedom by voting to accept the conditions of the Quartering Act. This means that the state government, represented by the Assembly, must collect money from the residents of this state to support the presence of British troops in our colony. This comes at a time when we labor under the burden of taxes and attempt to recover from the economic woes that the recent war has visited upon us.

We should be more like our fellow colony of South Carolina, which has resisted this new outrage. To pay for the garrisoning of British soldiers in our colony will require the expenditure of thousands of pounds each year. Why should we be paying for the billeting of English troops when there is no war to fight within our colony? Our granting money to the troops, by itself, acknowledges the authority that Parliament has to take money out of our pockets without our consent.

We should look to the example of the South Carolina Assembly. For if they did right (which every sensible American thinks they did) in refusing to pay the billeting money, surely we have done wrong, very wrong, in giving it. But our Assembly says that they do their duty in granting money to the troops. And I doubt not but the ministry will let us know it is to our cost; for it will furnish them with arguments and fresh courage. Is this a grateful retaliation to that brave and sensible people, for the spirited and early notice they took of the suspending act? No, it is base ingratitude, and betraying the common cause of liberty.

And what makes the Assembly’s granting this money the more grievous, is, that it goes to the support of troops kept here not to protect but to enslave us. This consideration alone ought to be sufficient to induce a free people, not to grant the troops any supply whatsoever, if we had no dispute with the mother country, that made it necessary not to concede anything that might destroy our freedom; reasons of economy and good policy suggest that we ought not to grant the troops money.

What I would advise to be done is, to assemble in the fields on Monday next. After this is done, go in a body to your members, and insist on their joining with the minority, to oppose the bill; if they dare refuse your just requisition, appoint a committee to draw up a state of the whole matter, and send it to the speakers of the several houses of assembly on the continent, and to the friends of our cause in England, and publish it in the news-papers, that the whole world may know your sentiments on this matter, in the only way your circumstance will admit. And I am confident it will spirit the friends of our cause and chagrin our enemies. Let the notification to call the people be so expressed, that whoever absents himself, will be considered as agreeing to what may be done by such as shall meet;—and that you may succeed, is the unfeigned desire of A SON OF LIBERTY.

Alexander McDougall

VIRGINIA STAMP ACT RESOLUTIONS

Resolved, that the first adventurers and settlers of His Majesty's colony and dominion of Virginia brought with them and transmitted to their posterity, and all other His Majesty's subjects since inhabiting in this His Majesty's said colony, all the liberties, privileges, franchises, and immunities that have at any time been held, enjoyed, and possessed by the people of Great Britain.

Resolved, that by two royal charters, granted by King James I, the colonists aforesaid are declared entitled to all liberties, privileges, and immunities of denizens and natural subjects to all intents and purposes as if they had been abiding and born within the Realm of England.

Resolved, that the taxation of the people by themselves, or by persons chosen by themselves to represent them, who can only know what taxes the people are able to bear, or the easiest method of raising them, and must themselves be affected by every tax laid on the people, is the only security against a burdensome taxation, and the distinguishing characteristic of British freedom, without which the ancient constitution cannot exist.

Resolved, that His Majesty's liege people of this his most ancient and loyal colony have without interruption enjoyed the inestimable right of being governed by such laws, respecting their internal policy and taxation, as are derived from their own consent, with the approbation of their sovereign, or his substitute; and that the same has never been forfeited or yielded up, but has been constantly recognized by the kings and people of Great Britain.

Resolved, therefor that the General Assembly of this Colony have the only and exclusive Right and Power to lay Taxes and Impositions upon the inhabitants of this Colony and that every Attempt to vest such Power in any person or persons whatsoever other than the General Assembly aforesaid has a manifest Tendency to destroy British as well as American Freedom.

Proposed by Patrick Henry, Virginia House of Burgesses

LETTER EXCERPT: ABIGAIL ADAMS TO JOHN ADAMS

My Dear Friend,

I desire you would Remember the Ladies, and be more generous and favourable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the Husbands. Remember all Men would be tyrants if they could. If perticular care and attention is not paid to the Laidies we are determined to foment a Rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any Laws in which we have no voice, or Representation.

That your Sex are Naturally Tyrannical is a Truth so thoroughly established as to admit of no dispute, but such of you as wish to be happy willingly give up the harsh title of Master for the more tender and endearing one of Friend. Why then, not put it out of the power of the vicious and the Lawless to use us with cruelty and indignity with impunity. Men of Sense in all Ages abhor those customs which treat us only as the vassals of your Sex. Regard us then as Beings placed by providence under your protection and in immitation of the Supreem Being make use of that power only for our happiness.

Adieu. I need not say how much I am Your ever faithfull Friend.

Abigail

Be a History Sleuth

What Historians Do

When we open a history textbook in school, it is easy to think that the story of events as they appear in the book is the one true story. But historians disagree often about what happened and about the significance of what happened. This is especially true when someone tells the history of the events that led to a war.

In the case of the American Revolution, the British and American views of events differed quite a bit. In looking back at those events in the 1700s, a careful historian would consider both views of the events and decide in the end what is the most accurate way to report what really happened.

Your Job as a History Sleuth

On the attached pages, you will find letters exchanged between two cousins, one an American living in Boston and the other his English counterpart living in Manchester, England. Your job as a history sleuth is to *judge the extent to which each writer accurately represents the events that led to the War for Independence or American Revolutionary War.*

Procedures:

Your job as a history sleuth will involve your own independent work and your work with a partner. Here are the steps to take:

1. First you will need to read the two letters and study carefully the pictures that the letter writers have included. You should underline, highlight, or otherwise notate the documents just as you would in studying anything important.
2. Meet with a partner to determine the accuracy of the reports in the two documents. That means that you will discuss the following questions:
 - Based on your own experience as an Elmtown resident, where do you see an *accurate* portrayal of events?
 - Based on your own experience as an Elmtown resident, where do you judge that the letter writers have *inaccurately* portrayed events, by distorting the facts, by exaggerating, or by inappropriately assigning motives and blame?
 - If it is possible that both writers are both accurate and inaccurate to some extent, how can you blend both views together to tell the true story of events? *How can you determine the truth?*
3. Use the graphic organizer (attached) to plan a written judgment about *what really happened* that could have led to the Revolutionary War.

BRITISH VIEW

Dear Cousin Thomas,

Here in England we have paid close attention to news that has come from America, and we are appalled and confused by the many rabble rousers there who insist that the King has been anything but kind and indulgent with them. I hope that you will appreciate my review of events and will resist the temptation to join with the so called “sons of liberty” who advocate treason and deny their true English heritage.

First, we hear of resistance to paying taxes of the most reasonable and modest sort. Certainly the Americans pay far fewer taxes than those paid by subjects in England. The Americans benefited from the British victory in the French and Indian War. The War left the King with a massive debt. Without military protection, the colonists remain vulnerable to other powers and to attacks from the Indian tribes that allied with the French. As true Englishmen and subjects to the King, the Americans have an obligation to contribute to reducing the national debt and to paying for the maintenance of the military forces in the colonies.

The Americans who insist on expanding their land holdings to the west are intruding into Indian lands. This upsets the Indians, who have led vicious attacks on various settlements in the colonies. Consider the series of attacks led by Pontiac of the Ottawa tribe in taking several English forts and settlements and slaughtering the occupants. The threat from the native inhabitants is real and serious. Considering the danger to the colonists, the King has been wise to prohibit expansion into western lands.

If the Americans want military protection, they have to expect to contribute to the maintenance of the military in the colonies. If the Americans resist paying the taxes necessary to raise money to support the military, then they should be willing to find appropriate shelter for them. This is the idea behind the Quartering Act. The Act did not place soldiers in private homes, but expected towns to find unoccupied buildings where the soldiers could be housed.

Americans complain about paying taxes “without representation.” The Americans are no different from their counterparts in England. Many communities in England have no representatives in Parliament, including the great cities of Manchester and Birmingham. In fact, few Englishmen actually have representation in Parliament. The people of England rely on the wisdom and the essential compassion of the King and Parliament to enact laws and to follow practices that they intend for the general welfare of the people. The same principle applies to the King’s subjects who live in the colonies.

Some of your fellow colonists, like Samuel Adams, made much of the killings that occurred in Boston, and they labeled the unfortunate killings as the “Boston Massacre.” I understand that the soldiers were greatly outnumbered and were driven to the breaking point by a mob of people who threw rocks, oyster shells, and chunks of ice at the guards. Unfortunately, when one Bostonian approached a soldier with a cudgel, the soldier fired his weapon. Clearly, as the enclosed illustration shows, Captain Preston ordered his men not to fire. Your own John Adams proved in court that only one of the soldiers acted inappropriately, and the rest were blameless. What would you do if a mob of threatening ruffians were hurling rocks and insults at you?

Here in England we have been baffled by the colonists’ strong reaction to the Stamp Act. You will recall that it has been common for years in England for us to pay for stamps to be affixed to documents, deeds, and other legal papers. The American reaction has been nothing short of outrageous. You are probably familiar with the attacks on the property of Chief

Justice Hutchinson of your province. A mob associated him with the imposition of the stamp tax and they absolutely destroyed his beautiful home. The mob tore his house apart, stole or destroyed every piece of furniture, every item of crockery, and every article of clothing. They took or destroyed every book from his substantial library. They destroyed his handwritten history of the colony. They even chopped down every fruit tree on the property. You can hardly call these people “sons of liberty” who are sensitive to the freedom of their neighbors.

Of course, these attacks have become more and more commonplace. We have found the descriptions of attacks on customs agents and stamp commissioners appalling. In some instances, men representing the King have been tarred and feathered. We have heard of instances in which customs agents have been dangled from “liberty trees.” You can see from the illustrations below that these agents of the King have been treated in the most abominable way. Sensitive to the danger to his loyal subjects, the King was compelled to ask Parliament to repeal the Stamp Act.

We have received news recently that a mob of your fellow Bostonians illegally boarded commercial ships in Boston Harbor. Many of the mob disguised themselves as members of a native tribe. Once on board, the members of the mob broke open crates of expensive tea and tossed it into the water. The destroyed property was worth tens of thousands of pounds. The mob’s reaction stems from their refusal to pay the appropriate tax on tea.

We regret that the King has closed Boston Harbor. Although this action is justified, we recognize that it will strike a terrible economic blow to the town and the province. But these perilous times call for drastic action. Soldiers now have to search homes and ships to find smuggled property, including weapons and munitions that might be used against the army of the King.

The most regrettable aspect of this persistent ugliness is that it is quite unnecessary. We recently read the testimony from Richard Ostwald, an Englishman returning from Massachusetts. He reported the situation in this way to Parliament: “No people in the world live more comfortably than the people of America. They are the happiest farmers. The climate is good and hitherto the taxes have been easy. The provisions [food] are under half the value [price] of England. I thought it happy the tenants of this country don’t know it. It would soon depopulate England.”

It is hard to see the basis for your discontent and your resistance to the reasonable wishes of the King. We hope only that you will come to your senses and reject any sentiment toward independency.

Yours, fondly,
Brian

VIEW FROM BOSTON

Dear Cousin Brian,

I understand that you feel obliged to honor and obey your King. That is the appropriate thing to do. But you assume that your state in living in Manchester, England, is the same as living in Massachusetts. While you might consider us both British subjects, there is a world of difference in how we have been treated by the King and Parliament.

While the war between Great Britain and France has left the King with a sizeable debt, the responsibility to pay the war debt should not fall to the colonists. A good many men

living in the colonies served in the British army during that war, but it was not a colonial war. It was a war between France and Great Britain, fought both in Europe and in America.

The King has maintained an army in the colonies, claiming that the presence of the military is necessary to protect the colonists against invasion from foreign powers and from the native tribes. We judge that each colony is capable of forming its own militia, under the direction and support of the legislature in each colony. With such an arrangement for self-governance, the residents of a colony 3,000 miles from London can decide for themselves what their needs for protection are, and can impose their own taxes as necessary.

Under the current arrangement, we have no one to represent us in Parliament, where the members who do not know us, nor the conditions under which we live, impose taxes and otherwise assault our liberty. The King and Parliament have imposed a series of taxes of the most injurious kind. The tax on sugar and molasses means more than restricting our ability to sweeten our tea in the morning. They are items needed for important commerce in the colonies. As you probably know, the manufacturing of rum is an important industry here, and molasses is a necessary ingredient in the process. The imposition of taxes threatens business.

You acknowledge that the Stamp Act was a most unfortunate legislation, and we are happy that the King rescinded it. This form of taxation on documents and printed matter of all sorts did more than increase the price of newspapers and playing cards, which residents could decide not to purchase. It was the King's way of gathering "hard currency" for his treasury. Some enterprises, like the legal professions and real estate, could not function without the purchase of the odious stamps. You need to realize that the colonists have very little in the way of "hard currency." There is no single currency used to transact business, and a person's wealth is calculated more by the amount of land he owns than by the amount of money in a bank.

This brings us to another sensitive subject—the restriction on settling lands at the far western reaches of our colony. The American colonists and their ancestors have endured many hardships and have invested their lives in settling the colony because they understood there would be both opportunity and freedom. Again, a man's wealth is defined by the amount of land he owns. I dare say that most Americans own more land than the typical resident of London or Manchester or Birmingham. The King's restriction inhibits our opportunities in a way that we have never experienced before. We are no mindless mob crowded into cities, but free people with almost unlimited possibilities for advancing our fortunes, freedom, and happiness. The acts of the King and Parliament threaten both our freedom and our fortune.

You are quick to defend the actions of the British soldiers who gunned down residents in Boston. You can see the drawing of the scene that our local silversmith Paul Revere managed to preserve. It is unfortunate that the violence occurred, but we can blame it only on the growing tension from the presence and quartering of the soldiers within our communities. We see these soldiers as the King's and Parliament's agents put here to intimidate residents to conform to the orders of the monarch and his legislature. To add to the insult, communities have been forced to pay for the quartering of the soldiers in the colonies. This is nothing more than the imposition of an indirect tax, because we pay for the cost of the soldiers.

More recently we have faced a series of taxes that your Chancellor Mr. Townshend has masterminded. These taxes on lead and glass and tea and other necessary items add to the increased cost of daily living. As I said before, a man's wealth comes in the form of his land and not in the coins in his pocket. Colonists have a hard time paying these taxes and find it intolerable that the Parliament and the King have imposed these taxes without the consent of the people who must pay the taxes.

Appendix F: Be a History Sleuth

It seems that every day our condition worsens. The King has now closed Boston Harbor, making it impossible for businesses to function and for the residents to access the goods they need for their normal living. The soldiers and other agents of the King can board and search American ships without a warrant. They can enter private homes looking for weapons, and they can take away men suspected of treason, and hold them in the most nightmarish prison ships without trial. At sea, sailors from the King's navy have impressed Americans and forced them to serve aboard the British ships. You can see from the illustration above how these cruel actions have terrorized innocent people and dissolved families.

You can see from my examples how we suffer in many ways in the colonies. I trust that you can appreciate our discontent and our effort for relief.

Sincerely,
Thomas

History Sleuth: Planning an Evaluation of Two Perspectives

Issue	British View	American View	Accurate View and How You Know
The right of the king and Parliament to impose taxes			
The necessity and burden of taxes, considering specific taxes			
The presence of British military in America			
The cruel treatment of residents of the colonies			
The exercise of freedom for American colonists			

Random Occurrences

6. **Typhoid Fever:** Typhoid fever has hit the colony and threatens Elmtown. Symptoms include high fever, swelling, and sometimes skin rashes. To avoid the spread of the fever, it is important that residents take great precaution in handling food and drinking only water that has been boiled. Drinking tea regularly instead of plain water would be a proper precaution.
7. **Accident:** A member of your family has fallen from a horse and has broken a leg. The leg will have to be set without benefit of anesthesia.
8. **Lockjaw:** A member of your family cut herself while helping with the cutting of shingles for the roof of a shed. She has experienced stiffness in the jaw and neck, and in muscles throughout the body. If the condition worsens, spasms may occur, and there is no known treatment.
9. **Influenza:** A member of your family has suffered for days with influenza, accompanied by fever, congestion, and nausea. The illness is contagious and poses a threat to the rest of the town. For infants, older residents, and those with respiratory trouble, the influenza infection can be life-threatening.
10. **Burn Victim:** A family member suffered a severe burn on her hands and arms when grease from the stove splashed on her. She has been treated with salves and clean compresses, but she will not be able to work and contribute to the household for weeks.
11. **Mumps:** Several children in town have contracted mumps. This viral infection has caused swelling in the parotid glands, near the ears. The children also have high fevers. The only treatment is to make the children comfortable and wait for the virus to pass.
12. **Yellow Fever:** Yellow fever has struck some residents of a neighboring town. The victims have high fevers, vomiting, and nosebleeds. No one knows how the fever spreads, although some people suspect that it spreads through insect bites. There is no truly effective treatment, except to consume plenty of liquids, especially tea, which has been boiled.
13. **Smallpox:** One resident of Elmtown is showing symptoms of smallpox, which can cause blindness and even death in some cases. The smallpox virus causes some symptoms similar to those of influenza, but blisters on the skin also accompany it. Smallpox is highly contagious. To avoid it, avoid contact with anyone with the disease.
14. **Consumption:** A member of your family suffers from a persistent, uncontrollable cough, fevers, night sweats, and weight loss. These are all symptoms of consumption, a highly contagious condition. Typically a person is treated through a regimen of fresh air and healthy eating.

Appendix G: Random Occurrences

15. **Scurvy:** It appears that many of the residents of the town are suffering from fatigue, bleeding gums, and spots on the skin, all symptoms of scurvy. British sailors believe you can combat this condition with the consumption of fresh fruit.
16. **Indian Raid:** Residents have reported that members of the Narragansett tribe have raided the town and stolen five head of cattle.
17. **Loyalist Spy:** There is reason to believe that there has been a loyalist spy in the midst of the confidential proceedings of the Elmtown town hall meetings. The danger is that this spy will report any talk of rebellion, and residents of the town could be arrested or executed for treason.
18. **Mr. Franklin:** Mr. Benjamin Franklin, a very influential resident of Boston, is traveling to London to meet before a committee of Parliament, who have accused him of circulating letters that are damaging to the Parliament. Mr. Franklin did share with the Massachusetts General Assembly a number of letters written by a member of Parliament and condemning the people of Boston. Mr. Franklin might be in serious trouble.
19. **Vandalism of Property:** A group of Hessian soldiers, probably influenced by the consumption of too much rum at the town inn, rampaged through the quiet streets of Elmtown, breaking windows, setting small fires, and threatening residents. Since these men speak only German, no one could reason with them to stop.
20. **Confiscation of Weapons:** British regular soldiers have entered, without warrant, into your home and have confiscated your musket. Although guns are rather expensive, most families have at least one gun for their personal protection and for hunting. You insisted on your loyalty to the king, but the soldiers confiscated the weapon anyway.
21. **Arrest of a Young Town Resident:** British regular soldiers have arrested the oldest of the children in your family, claiming that this resident was serving as a messenger for rebels who were plotting against the British army. No one is certain where the young person is being held.
22. **Barn Burning:** Mercenary soldiers serving under orders of British officers have burned down your storage building because they suspected that someone was hiding stores of weapons to serve local “minutemen.” They found no weapons.
23. **Closing of the Newspaper:** British regular soldiers have closed the local newspaper, claiming that the operator was printing materials, including pamphlets and broadsides, that defamed the king and stirred rebellious sentiments among the townspeople. The soldiers smashed the expensive printing press so that it could not be used again.
24. **Disbanding of Town Assemblies:** Following the orders of General Gage, British soldiers have advised the residents of the town that they are not to assemble as a deliberative body to discuss responses to the actions of the king and Parliament. General Gage considers such groups as nests of traitors and anarchists. This ban means that open town hall meetings are no longer possible.
25. **Crime Spree:** Residents have reported several instances of crime in the town. These crimes include the theft of property, robbery by masked bandits on the outskirts of town, battery, and assault. In addition, residents have reported several cases of public intoxication, and have claimed that much of the recent crime spree connects to excessive liquor consumption, which the townspeople should curb. Since the only “police force” the town has is a few part-time volunteer constables, the residents have to rely on one another to protect against crime and to bring criminals to justice.
26. **New Imports Set New Fashions:** Since recent boycotts have reduced consumption of British goods, townspeople have begun to wear fashions designed in France and Spain.

This clothing in some instances is radically different from the customary fashions from England, and some residents feel a bit self-conscious wearing these new styles.

27. **Flour Shortage:** While local farmers have learned to produce maize (*corn* refers to any kind of grain), the town imports the kind of wheat flour that they like to use for cakes and more refined breads. The king has ordered restrictions on the nearest port, so it has been hard for the local shopkeeper and innkeeper to find wheat flour. For the time being, the townspeople will have to make do with the inferior flour made from dried corn from last year's harvest, supplemented with other grains from the area.
28. **Tainted Milk:** Town residents have reported incidents of nausea and vomiting after consuming milk produced by local cows, and they have referred to this response as "milk sickness." Some residents suspect that the cows have wandered from their usual pastures and have foraged on poisonous plants and have transferred the toxins to the milk. One recommendation calls for farmers to keep more diligent watch on the diet of their cows.
29. **Floods:** The meltoff of winter's snow and ice, along with the arrival of heavy spring rains, have swollen rivers and streams to the point where they threaten to overflow their banks and flood the town. Before disaster strikes, the town could work together to try to build up berms to divert the water around the town.
30. **Tornado:** A tornado has passed close to the town, generating high, swirling winds that have torn off roofs and damaged several properties in a variety of ways. There is a lot of work to clean up the debris and repair the homes and other structures, including the town hall.
31. **Blackbirds:** Enormous flocks of hungry blackbirds have descended on the town and the surrounding fields. The blackbirds threaten to consume the newly planted seeds on the local farms, and they have generally made a mess of the community. Townspeople have offered a variety of plans to frighten them away, including the firing of guns at regular intervals, which will also disturb the tranquility of the town.
32. **High Winds:** The high winds that have accompanied spring storms have torn shingles off of the roofs of many homes in the area, and the flying debris has injured residents and livestock.
33. **Spring Snow:** An unusual and unexpected deep spring snowstorm has made it temporarily impossible to travel around the town or to neighboring towns. The town has come to a standstill and will remain immobile until the snow melts, which could add to the spring rains to cause flooding in the area.
34. **Torrential Rains:** Heavy spring rains have turned unpaved streets and roads into quagmires. Walking through town is like wading through a vat of oatmeal. It has become impossible to drive a wagon through the town. Most commerce has stopped. When the roads dry, they will be filled with ruts and ridges that will be difficult to negotiate.
35. **Ocean Surge:** A storm at sea has caused a significant surge in the ocean level, driving powerful waves against the shore and pitching boats about like corks in a barrel. For the time being, this weather threatens all those who make their living on the ocean.
36. **Bedbug Infestation:** Many town residents seem sleep-deprived and crabby. With the arrival of warmer weather, there has been an infestation of bedbugs that torment residents in their sleep. People have tried a variety of means to extricate the pests, including beating their bedding and filling their homes with smoke.

Writing About What You Have Learned

WRITING ABOUT WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED 1

Drawing from your experiences as a postwar traveler, *write a report on the overall effect that the American Civil War had on people, the land, and hopes for the future.* Based on what you now know about the destruction and suffering that resulted from the war, explain how the war would have short-term and lasting effects on the following:

- **The Welfare of Individual Families:** After the war is over, how will people continue to suffer from injuries, disease, loss of loved ones, and loss of property?
- **Sectional Rivalries:** How will the war affect the attitudes of the people from the North and the South?
- **The Economy:** How will the war affect the economy, for good and for bad, in the coming years?
- **The Government:** How will the war affect the way that power is distributed between the central government in Washington, DC, and the individual states?
- **Hope for Freedmen:** How will the war affect African Americans, especially those who had suffered under slavery?
- **Technology, Medicine, and the Military:** How did the war advance knowledge about modern machines, medical practices, and military tactics?

You now know more about the American Civil War than most citizens in the United States. Imagine that you are writing your report for the benefit of those who know very little about the war and are eager to learn how its effects might still be with us today. It is easy for people who don't know much about the war to think that when the war was over in 1865, everything immediately returned to normal. Draw from your travel journal and from your letters for details to show a reader the specific effects of the war.

WRITING ABOUT WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED 2

In his Second Inaugural Address, President Lincoln anticipated the end of the war, victory for the Union, and the reuniting of the states. He feared, however, that lasting bitterness over the effects of the war would influence some leaders to seek revenge and punishment directed toward the Southern states. Even members of Lincoln's own Cabinet wished to let the South suffer without support for their recovery. In contrast, President Lincoln expressed his hope that the victors would hold "malice toward none," and "charity for all." He hoped that the nation would "do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace." In

other words, he urged all citizens to set aside anger and hatred and to act in the kindest way to help everyone recover from the devastating effects of war.

President Lincoln had planned to help in every way possible so that the Southern states could recover quickly from the war. They needed economic relief; assistance in rebuilding; help in restoring order in many places; and aid in rebuilding institutions like schools, universities, hospitals, and courts of law, which we now take for granted.

President Lincoln's plan faced a significant challenge when the president was assassinated. His vice president, Andrew Johnson, assumed the office of president and then had to decide what he would do about the South.

In a letter to President Andrew Johnson, appeal to him to follow Lincoln's plan for reconstruction of the South, or to take a different course of action. Your appeals should take the following topics into account:

- How will the whole country be affected if business, factories, farming, and transportation do not recover quickly in the South?
- How will the whole country be affected if all citizens do not recognize the value and dignity of each fellow citizen?
- How will the whole country be affected if citizens in the South receive no help in recovering from the physical and emotional damage that war causes?
- How will the whole country be affected if there is long-lasting resentment and feelings of separation between regions (North and South) of the one nation?

WRITING ABOUT WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED 3

Your travel journal is a rough narrative that tells the story of someone's attempt to travel home after the war. The travel experiences reveal times of trouble, and perhaps adventure. The journal story also would reveal to readers in the future what it was like to live through the Civil War. The story reveals many of the effects of the war.

Turn your travel journal into a complete story of the trip home from Appomattox. The story will have at least five episodes (the five stages in the journey, with five travel challenges). Your journal represents some rough notes for a complete story. For you to rewrite your journal entries so they become a complete story, your narrative should have the qualities that we commonly associate with all good stories:

- The story has some central conflict or tension (e.g., the challenge to make it home).
- There are distinct characters, and probably a main character whom the readers can care about.
- There is enough descriptive detail for the reader to imagine the characters, setting, and action.
- The events of the story follow in a logical order, probably following the sequence of the travel episodes.
- The story has dialogue.

Possible Challenges on the Road Home

1. The direct path would cross a swamp full of snakes, mud, brambles, and other dangers and discomforts. Avoiding the swamp will delay your team by 2 days.
2. You and your team have run out of food. You can take food away from local landowners, or you can take the time to hunt and forage for food. Hunting and foraging will delay you by a day.
3. You come across an enemy who is suffering from a fever and requires some attention if he or she is going to survive. If you assist this person by providing water and cold compresses to reduce the fever, your team will be delayed by 1 day.
4. You recognize some unarmed stragglers from the opposing army. You attribute your recent misery and the deaths of many of your friends to the actions of these enemy soldiers. You can attack them, which might offer some vengeful satisfaction, or avoid them. Your avoidance will delay you 1 day.
5. You have an opportunity to steal horses from a small group of soldiers who were your recent enemies. If you take the horses, you will leave them to travel on foot, but you will cut 3 days from your journey.
6. You carry with you a letter that a dying soldier asked you to deliver to his family. His home is a bit off your return route and would delay your journey by 1 day.
7. Your route home passes close to Evertide Plantation, which has the most spectacular home to survive the war. You will probably never have another opportunity to view this fine example of antebellum architecture, but the visit will delay you by 1 day.
8. You happen upon a 6-year-old child who has become separated from his or her family in the recent chaotic attempts by families to evacuate the war zone. You could help the child find his or her family or place the child with a sympathetic local, but the assistance would delay you by 2 days.
9. You have run out of fresh water. A rough map of the area indicates that approximately 10 miles to the west you can find a spring that will supply abundant fresh water. If you don't seek water now, you put yourself in danger of dehydration before you can find another source of water. The trip to the spring will delay your group by 1 day.
10. You have learned that hiding nearby is a gang of robbers who have been preying on dislocated families and stealing their few valuables. Armed as you are, you could easily capture the robbers and bring them to justice, but this action will delay you by 2 days.
11. As you pass through the Smith Grove Plantation, the place where hundreds of slaves had been brutally mistreated at the hands of Filbert Bowes and his cruel overseer, Gordon Knotts, you learn that Bowes and Knotts have been stricken by milk sickness and need medical attention. If you help them, the attention to their recovery will delay you by 2 days.

Appendix I: Possible Challenges on the Road Home

12. As you travel near the Swine Ford Plantation, you learn that another group of freedmen are eager to travel north but would require your assistance for guidance and safety. To wait for this other group would delay you by 2 days.
13. You discover hiding in a patch of bushes a former teacher who had been tarred and feathered for teaching slaves how to read and write. His wounds make it difficult to travel and he must continue to remain in hiding for fear that other vigilantes will capture and kill him. Your assistance will delay you 2 days.
14. A dying Confederate officer, delirious with fever and pain, told you that when he feared that the approaching Union Army would overrun his former home, he buried much of his remaining fortune in the woods behind his house near the town of Amelia Court House. His fortune included a valuable collection of gold coins, expensive jewelry, and some money in U.S. currency. If you follow his directions in order to find the treasure, you will be delayed by 1 day.
15. Your study of a rough map around Appomattox and Petersburg suggests that there are two railroads in the area: the Richmond and Danville line, and the Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac Railroad. You judge that if you walk away from the direct path to your destination, you can reach one of the railroad lines. If the railroad is still running, it would be possible to hitch a ride, which would speed your journey home and make travel much easier. Of course, you can't be sure that the railroad tracks are not damaged, or that the trains are actually running. If you walk to the nearest railroad tracks, you will be delayed by 1 day.

Random Problems for Road from Appomattox

1. A violent thunderstorm hits. You need to seek shelter to be safe from lightning, high winds, soaking rains, and hail. After you find shelter, you wait for the storm to pass delays you until evening, when it is too dangerous to travel. Your wait delays you for 1 day.
2. Your team of travelers lose their way. In the aftermath of many battles in the area, there are no signposts that point the way to towns or mark roads. You realize that you have wandered far from your intended route. To get back to the right way of traveling will delay you 2 days.
3. The members of your group have drunk water from a stream. You didn't know that the water was flowing downstream from a hog farm where animal waste seeped into the water. Your entire group has been stricken with a nasty bacterial infection that has many of the symptoms associated with influenza. Your illness incapacitates everyone, delaying you 3 days until you can recover well enough to travel.
4. Far to the northeast, torrential rains have hit the land and swelled the streams and rivers far above their usual levels. To proceed on your journey, you will need to cross a river. You had planned to cross at a location where the water was shallow enough to allow you to wade across. Now that the river is much deeper, you must wait until the water recedes to its normal level. The wait delays you 2 days.
5. One member of your group thought that he or she detected former Confederate States of America president Jefferson Davis and his companions escaping through the woods in an effort to avoid capture. Your group attempts to catch up with the former leader, but after hours wandering in the woods, you find no one. The search delays you for 1 day.
6. One member of your team falls while you are struggling over some rocky terrain. The traveler twists an ankle severely, making it impossible to walk. The only possibility is to wait until the swelling goes down and the terrible pain subsides. The wait delays you 2 days.
7. Running low on food, your group forages in the area for nuts, seeds, and other edible vegetation. One person enthusiastically offers some fresh mushrooms, assuring the group that they are edible. Although the mushrooms are not lethal, they are poisonous, which sickens the group, causing nausea and muscle cramps. The illness is so bad that the group is delayed 2 days.
8. A ragtag band of former soldiers wanders the area looking to loot the remains of destroyed homes and businesses. They have robbed belongings from soldiers who lie dead on the field of battle. It is a desperate bunch. They attack your group, leading to a pitched battle that occupies you for most of a day. By the time you have discouraged the attack, night has fallen, and you are delayed by 1 day.

Appendix J: Random Problems for Road from Appomattox

9. You discover a pig that has apparently wandered off from a farm where recent battles have caused the farmer to seek safety and neglect the livestock. Your group hasn't eaten a decent meal in days. You track down and kill the pig and have a sumptuous barbecue. The meal is leisurely and refreshing, but the indulgence has delayed you 1 day.
10. A local farmer advises you about a shortcut to a road that will bring you home faster. It turns out, however, that the farmer has deceived you and sent you along a path that will delay you by 1 day.
11. Mistaking a hiding porcupine for a harmless weed, one member of your group kicks it and ends up with a shin full of painful quills. You delicately remove all the quills, but the traveler's leg is too painful to allow walking. You have to wait 1 day until the pain subsides enough to allow further travel.
12. You hear thunder and see lightning in the distance, although no rain is falling where you travel. One member of the group refuses to go on because he or she has a paralyzing fear of lightning. This group member reports that several family members have already been killed by lightning, and he or she fears that it is inevitable that he or she will experience the same fate. Your group finds shelter in a cave and spends the rest of the day watching for the lightning to pass. The wait delays you 1 day.

Resources for Students and Teachers

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