

America at the Cusp of Revolution

Today's lecture and video detail the events between the first shots at Lexington Green, and the drafting of the Declaration of Independence

Answer one of the following questions for Monday. You can either write two paragraphs or create strong, descriptive notes. Everyone will be required to share their responses with the class.

This assignment is worth 20 points.

1. George Washington was chosen to lead the Continental Army, and Thomas Jefferson was assigned the duty of writing the Declaration of Independence. Both men were from Virginia.

How could you describe Jefferson's and Washington's assignments as *political* decisions, instead of being based only on their abilities?

2. The Battle of Bunker Hill saw the Americans at an advantage because they were on the top of the hill, and the British were below.

Why is this an advantage? How can you explain, after watching this video, the modern use of the expression "high ground"?

3. Washington was from Virginia (a state filled with slave-run plantations) and found his army populated with black soldiers. The institution of slavery was defended by white people, who claimed they were naturally and scientifically "better" than black people.

With this in mind, how do you think Washington felt when he saw his army had black soldiers?

4. Thomas Paine wrote that "virtue and ability are not hereditary".

What does this mean in plain language? How was this a break from previous British thought?

5. Some considered Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* an appeal only to regular, common people, yet the patriots were mostly wealthy landowners.

Do you think the rich colonists agreed with Paine, or felt threatened by him? Why or why not?

6. Abigail Adams wrote her husband, John, that "all men will be tyrants if given the chance".

Do you think the patriots were hypocrites because their definition of "liberty" excluded blacks, women, and children? Why or why not?