



Herb and Lois Walker's

SCRIPTS FOR SCHOOLS

**The American War
of Independence**

By Sue Russell

**Group Reading
5 Short Plays**

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5 Plays On American War of Independence - Americans versus Brits!

Play 1 Summary of the American War of Independence 1775-1783

George Washington (general and president), Samuel Adams (Patriots leader) and Thomas Paine (English writer) versus King George III, Prime Minister George Grenville, and General Charles Cornwallis

Play 2 Boston Massacre March 5th 1770

Samuel Adams (Patriots leader), John Adams (lawyer) and Crispus Attucks (one of the slain);

versus

Captain Preston, British Soldier and Thomas Hutchinson (Lieutenant Governor)

Play 3 Boston Tea Party December 16th 1773

Samuel Adams (Patriots leader), Mohawk Indian (Patriot in disguise) and American merchant;

versus

Rotch (part-owner of tea-ship, Dartmouth), Governor Hutchinson and British merchant (employee of E. India company)

Play 4 Lexington and Concord April 19th 1775

Paul Revere (rider), William Dawes (rider) and Captain John Parker;

versus

General Gage, Major John Pitcairn and Lieutenant Colonel Francis Smith

Play 5 American War of Independence 1775-1783

George Washington, Thomas Jefferson (key writer of Declaration) and Thomas Paine ('propagandist' writer from England); versus General Howe, General Cornwallis and King George III

Play 1: Summary of The American War of Independence 1775 – 1783

Speakers:

King George III

Prime Minister George Grenville

General Charles Cornwallis

George Washington (general and president)

Samuel Adams (Patriots leader)

Thomas Paine (English journalist – emigrated to US)

Adams: *Patriotism!* 'Tis a wonderful thing!

George III: *If, that is, you understand what it means!*
Somebody, not a *million* miles from here, seemed to have *great* difficulty deciding which country *he* belonged to!

Washington: The shame of it! Surely *no-one* could have been uncertain as to what *side* they were on in *our* great War of Independence!

Cornwallis: We had *no* such traitors in *my* army!

Grenville: So who *was* this Judas?

Paine: I think he means *me*!

George III: Yes, you! *Paine* by name and *pain* by nature! If only you'd stayed in your homeland and stayed loyal to England!

Paine: But I didn't!

Adams: No, he came here to Philadelphia and started writing – for our cause!

George III: Huh! '*Common Sense*' indeed! What a name to give a pamphlet – and how *misleading*!

Paine: Not to my many American readers! They could all see how their society was being corrupted!

Cornwallis: *Corrupted?* And how do you work *that* one out?

Adams: Well, let's see. There was that small matter of our 13 colonies having to foot the bill for *your* Seven Years War!

Grenville: And may I remind you on *whose* behalf we fought that war? *Yours*, you ungrateful lot!

Cornwallis: Yes, you'd do well to remember it was the French who were the enemy – not us!

Washington: But you won that war! The French had to surrender their lands and look at what you gained?

George III: A huge national debt, *that's* what!

Adams: And one you thought it only right that *we* should pay!

Grenville: And why not? We still had to defend those frontiers.

Adams: But you didn't let *us* go beyond them *either*!

Cornwallis: And what about the Native Americans, already living in these western territories you wanted to move into?

George III: Yes, come on, Mr. Paine! *You* were big on rights! Or did those rights of yours only apply to *Americans* – or should I say *English settlers* – coz that's how you Americans all started out – or had you conveniently forgotten that?

Paine: I wrote on The Rights of *Man* as you well know! I would *never* stoop to the hypocrisy *you* were famous for!

George III: Huh! Fine words coming from a man who said of his own great leader here (pointing to Washington) "treacherous in private friendship ... and a hypocrite in public life"! So whose side were you on, on *that* occasion!

Cornwallis: Strikes me he really couldn't make his mind up *which* side he was on!

Washington: Anyway. Such personal things cloud the important issues – which were, the future of those 13 colonies. Let's remind ourselves where *they* were.

Adams: Rhode Island and Connecticut.

Paine: Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

Washington: New York and Pennsylvania.

George III: New Jersey and Delaware.

Grenville: Maryland and Virginia.

Cornwallis: North and South Carolina

George III: And last but by no means least, my favourite – *Georgia!*

Grenville: Yes, all doing very nicely. And more than able to fill our coffers back home!

Adams: But aren't you forgetting the type of men and women you were dealing with? We were tough and, unfortunately for you, fiercely independent!

Washington: Yes. We were 'doing very nicely' as you put it, through our own efforts! We had no time for tradition and inherited privilege!

Grenville: Huh! Coming from *you*! I can see why your so called 'friend' Paine said you were a hypocrite! Since when did you prefer politics over farming – and growing rich yourself?

Cornwallis: Here! Here! Don't be telling us you wouldn't have scuttled back to your farm, instead of being a president not once but twice, *if you'd* had the choice!

Adams: So he was shy! Give the man a break! He did his duty and for that we will always be grateful to him.

George III: Father of his country, indeed! Pity *that* father of *his* didn't take the axe to *him* when he cut down that cherry tree!

Cornwallis: What stories these *heroes* come up with to bolster their flagging egos!

Washington: Well, whatever our faults, *we* were *certainly* no match against *you* in the stupidity stakes!

George III: I *beg* your pardon!

Paine: You heard! All that taxation, *then* that Stamp Duty! Did you *really* think we'd just sit back and do nothing?

George III: Huh! And do *you* actually think *I* lost any sleep over whether you liked it or not?

Paine: Maybe you *should* have! And *then* we wouldn't have had to take matters into our own hands!

Grenville: But you *got* your own way! I got 'dropped' and the Stamp Act was repealed!

Adams: But your gracious government still insisted on having absolute right over our colonies! You lot were *never* going to back down!

Cornwallis: So you took it upon yourself to lead that nonimportation movement! And then to organise that scandalous tea party!

Adams: Only after *your* men had killed 5 innocent patriots!

George III: *Innocent?* I don't *think* so!

Paine: What? A few Boston locals chucking a few snowballs around?

Grenville: Well, it was hardly a *massacre!* But I guess a few martyrs for your cause *was* just what you were looking for!

Adams: And then *you* had to go and introduce that duty on tea!

Washington: Making us pay extra for our favourite drink! Talk about *sinking* to the dregs!

George III: But was that *sinking* of 342 chests of tea in the *depths* of Boston Harbourreally the answer?

Cornwallis: Seemed like a *frightful* waste of perfectly good tea, to me!

Grenville: And dressing your accomplices up as Native Americans! What a pantomime – shame it wasn't Christmas!

George III: Well *I* certainly didn't see the funny side of it!

Paine: So we got the Intolerable Acts imposed on us! What a name!

Adams: And how very apt! There was *no* way we were going to tolerate them!

Washington: Yet *more* direct rule! *No* way! That's when we started getting ourselves organised!

Paine: And when those redcoats went looking for trouble– we were ready for them – at Lexington!

Adams: But even *then* we weren't all set on a course for independence. We were *still* ready to negotiate!

Washington: But *would* that great English monarch listen?

Paine: Of course, not! *Far* too arrogant and set in his ways!

George III: Er, *excuse* me! I *am* still here, you know!

Paine: But *not* as king of those colonies for long! They were rapidly changing from dependent colonies to independent states!

George III: No thanks to you!

Paine: Well, it didn't take much to whip up their already defiant mood!

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