

Set the World on Fire

The Seven Years' War, 1754–1763

Unit 3

3.1 Contextualizing Period 3

3.2 The Seven Years' War (The French and Indian War)

“Why do not you and the French fight in the old country, and on the sea? Why do you come to fight on our land?”

Native council speakers at Kuskusky, in the Ohio Country

Christian Frederick Post's journal, September 1, 1758

What the exam expects

Briefly describe one effect of the Seven Years' War from 1754 to 1765.

The war cost Britain so much that Parliament began taxing the colonies to raise revenue. The **Treaty of Paris (1763)** removed France from the mainland, but the **British war debt** nearly doubled. To make colonists pay part of the cost of the troops Britain kept in America, Parliament passed the Sugar Act in 1764 and the Stamp Act in 1765.

Why did Britain issue the Proclamation of 1763, and how did colonists and Native nations respond?

Britain issued the **Proclamation of 1763** during **Pontiac's War** to calm the frontier, closing the land west of the Appalachians to settlers. Native nations supported the line, while colonists resented losing land they thought they had won and kept pushing west.

Evaluate the extent to which the Seven Years' War marked a turning point in American relations with Great Britain.

The war was a turning point because its debt pushed London to end **salutary neglect**, enforce its trade laws, and tax the colonists. No colony approved the 1754 **Albany Plan of Union**, yet in 1765 nine colonies met to resist the Stamp Act. Even so, most colonists still called themselves loyal British subjects.

Evaluate how far mercantilism changed the British North American economy from 1660 to 1775.

Mercantilism made the colonial economy far more commercial, though it stayed mostly agricultural. The **Navigation Acts** gave colonial shipbuilders and merchants a protected market inside the empire, and the Atlantic trade in tobacco, sugar, and enslaved people boomed. Colonists also smuggled freely while Britain looked away, so the crackdown after 1763 hit an economy used to bending the rules.

Don't mix these up

- ✗ "After the war, Britain pulled its troops home and opened the West to settlers." Britain did the opposite, keeping about 10,000 troops in America and closing the land beyond the Appalachians to settlement.
- ✗ "The Proclamation Line of 1763 divided British colonists from French settlers." France had already lost its mainland empire, and Britain drew the line between colonists and Native nations to stop frontier wars like Pontiac's.
- ✗ "The war shrank Spain's claims in North America." Spain lost Florida to Britain but gained Louisiana and New Orleans from France, so its claims on the continent grew.

Study list

	What it was	Why it matters
Mercantilism 1600s–1700s	The economic theory that colonies existed to make the mother country rich by shipping it raw materials and buying its manufactured goods.	Most colonists accepted Parliament's right to regulate their trade, but after 1763 they denied its right to tax them for revenue.
Navigation Acts 1651–1696	Parliament's trade laws that made colonists ship goods in English or colonial vessels and sell tobacco, sugar, and other listed goods only to England or its colonies.	After 1763 Britain stopped winking at smuggling and enforced them with customs officers and admiralty courts that sat without juries.
Salutary neglect 1720s–1763	Britain's long habit of loosely enforcing its trade laws and letting colonial assemblies run local affairs and tax their own voters.	Decades of running their own affairs made colonists treat Britain's tighter control after 1763 as an attack on their rights.
Ohio River Valley 1750s	The region colonists called the Ohio Country, in today's western Pennsylvania and Ohio. France, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and the Six Nations all claimed it, though Lenape, Shawnee, and Mingo people lived there.	Virginia speculators pushed into the valley as France built forts to hold it, and the clash started the war in 1754.
Benjamin Franklin 1754	The Philadelphia printer and scientist who drafted the Albany Plan and printed <i>Join, or Die</i> , a cartoon of a snake in eight pieces urging the colonies to unite.	The printer who urged union against France in 1754 became a leading Patriot and in 1778 signed the alliance with France.
Seven Years' War French and Indian War 1754–1763	The last of four Anglo-French wars since 1689, stretching from the Ohio Valley to Europe, West Africa, and India. Britain defeated France and its Native allies, and later Spain.	With France gone, colonists needed British protection less just as a debt-ridden Britain began to demand more from them.
Iroquois Confederacy Haudenosaunee 1754	The six-nation league of upstate New York, from the Mohawk in the east to the Seneca in the west. Britain called the Albany Congress mainly to hold them as allies.	The Six Nations kept their independence by playing Britain and France against each other, a strategy that ended with France's defeat.

	What it was	Why it matters
Albany Plan of Union 1754	Franklin's plan for a joint colonial government that could raise troops and taxes for defense, under a president-general the Crown would appoint. Delegates from seven colonies adopted it at the Albany Congress.	Although the plan died, the Albany meeting set a precedent for the congresses that resisted Parliament in 1765 and 1774.
Neolin c. 1761	The Lenape prophet who preached in the Ohio Valley that Native peoples should give up European goods and alcohol and live apart from the colonists.	Pontiac turned Neolin's religious message into a call for Native nations to unite and drive the British out in 1763.
Treaty of Paris (1763) 1763	The peace with France and Spain that gave Britain Canada, Spanish Florida, and French lands east of the Mississippi except New Orleans. France had already given Louisiana, with New Orleans, to Spain.	Britain now claimed the Great Lakes and Ohio Valley, though the Native nations who lived there had signed nothing at Paris.
British war debt 1763	Britain's national debt, which climbed from about £75 million to about £133 million during the war. London also chose to keep about 10,000 troops in America.	London believed the colonists had gained most from the war, so Parliament made them help pay through the Sugar and Stamp Acts.
Pontiac's War Pontiac's Rebellion 1763–1766	A war in which the Odawa leader Pontiac and allied Great Lakes and Ohio nations, angry at settlers on their land and at cuts in diplomatic gifts, captured eight British forts.	Native nations were still strong after France's defeat, and their war hurried Britain into issuing the Proclamation of 1763 that October.
Proclamation of 1763 Proclamation Line 1763	King George III's order barring colonial settlement and private land purchases west of the Appalachians and reserving that land for Native nations.	Britain meant it to prevent more frontier wars, but it denied colonists the western land they expected from victory.
Paxton Boys 1763–1764	Armed frontier settlers from Paxton, Pennsylvania, who murdered 20 peaceful Conestoga people living under the colony's protection, then marched on Philadelphia demanding frontier defense and more assembly seats.	Like Bacon's rebels in 1676, they attacked Native people and then turned on an eastern government they accused of ignoring the frontier.

Also in the film

Tanaghrisson 1754	Seneca leader the English called the Half King, who led Washington's men to Jumonville's camp in May 1754.
Hendrick Theyanoguin 1754	Mohawk leader who told the Albany Congress that the governors of Virginia and Canada were quarreling over Six Nations land.
Fort Necessity 1754	Washington's stockade in western Pennsylvania, which the French, avenging Jumonville, forced him to surrender on July 3.
Shingas 1755	Lenape leader who raided frontier farms after, by his account, Braddock told him no Native people would inherit the land.
Edward Braddock 1755	British general who marched two regiments on Fort Duquesne and died after a smaller French and Native force routed them.
William Pitt 1757–1761	British minister who poured money, ships, and troops into conquering Canada and ran up much of the war's debt.
Treaty of Easton 1758	Pennsylvania's promise of no settlement west of the Alleghenies, after which most Ohio nations left the French alliance.
Battle of Quebec (1759) 1759	British general James Wolfe's victory over the French under Montcalm, which cost both men their lives and won Britain Quebec.

Short-answer practice

“And We do hereby strictly forbid, on Pain of our Displeasure, all our loving Subjects from making any Purchases or Settlements whatever, or taking Possession of any of the Lands above reserved, without our especial leave and Licence for that Purpose first obtained.”

George III, Royal Proclamation of 1763, October 7, 1763

- (a) Briefly describe ONE result of Britain’s victory in the Seven Years’ War that led the Crown to issue the order in the excerpt.

- (b) Briefly explain ONE way Native nations challenged British authority in the Great Lakes and Ohio Country in 1763.

- (c) Briefly explain how ONE group of British colonists responded to the restriction in the excerpt.

Mercantilism

1600s–1700s

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Navigation Acts

1651–1696

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Salutary neglect

1720s–1763

Set the World on Fire

Ohio River Valley

1750s

Set the World on Fire

Benjamin Franklin

1754

Set the World on Fire

Seven Years' War

French and Indian War

1754–1763

Set the World on Fire

Iroquois Confederacy

Haudenosaunee

1754

Set the World on Fire

Albany Plan of Union

1754

Set the World on Fire

Neolin

c. 1761

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Treaty of Paris (1763)

1763

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Parliament's laws that kept colonial trade inside the empire, in English or colonial ships.

Strict enforcement after 1763 angered colonial merchants and smugglers.

The belief that colonies existed to make the mother country rich through controlled trade.

Parliament wrote it into law in the Navigation Acts.

The disputed upper Ohio Valley, where Virginia and France collided in 1754 and the war began.

Colonial expansion there threatened French trade and Native independence.

Britain's habit of loosely enforcing trade laws and leaving colonial assemblies to run local affairs.

Its end after 1763 set off colonial resistance.

The global war in which Britain drove France off the North American mainland.

Victory left Britain in debt and colonists less dependent on it.

Philadelphia printer who drafted the Albany Plan and printed *Join, or Die* in 1754.

Printers revived the snake against Parliament in 1765 and 1774.

Franklin's plan to unite the colonies under one government for their common defense.

No colony approved it, since each guarded its own taxing power.

The six-nation league of upstate New York that played Britain and France against each other.

France's defeat in 1763 left them only one empire to bargain with.

The peace that gave Britain Canada, Florida, and French lands east of the Mississippi except New Orleans.

France lost its entire empire on the North American mainland.

Lenape prophet who urged Native peoples to reject European goods and ways.

His teaching inspired Pontiac's War against the British.

British war debt

1763

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Pontiac's War

Pontiac's Rebellion

1763–1766

Set the World on Fire

Proclamation of 1763

Proclamation Line

1763

Set the World on Fire

Paxton Boys

1763–1764

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The 1763 war in which Pontiac's Native alliance attacked British forts around the Great Lakes and Ohio Valley.

Britain answered by closing the land beyond the Appalachians to settlers.

Britain's national debt, which the war nearly doubled to about £133 million.

Parliament passed new taxes so the colonies would share the cost.

Pennsylvania frontiersmen who massacred peaceful Conestoga people in 1763 and marched on Philadelphia in 1764.

Backcountry anger at eastern elites flared again with the Regulators and Shays's Rebellion.

The king's ban on colonial settlement west of the Appalachian Mountains.

Colonists ignored it and counted it among their grievances against Britain.

Model answers

- (a) Briefly describe ONE result of Britain's victory in the Seven Years' War that led the Crown to issue the order in the excerpt.

Victory gave Britain a vast interior where Native nations still held most of the land. In the Treaty of Paris (1763), France gave up Canada and its lands east of the Mississippi except New Orleans. To avoid costly wars with those nations, the Crown barred settlement beyond the Appalachians.

- (b) Briefly explain ONE way Native nations challenged British authority in the Great Lakes and Ohio Country in 1763.

In May 1763 the Odawa leader Pontiac and allied nations, angry at settlers and at General Amherst's cuts to diplomatic gifts, went to war against Britain. They captured eight forts and besieged Detroit and Fort Pitt.

- (c) Briefly explain how ONE group of British colonists responded to the restriction in the excerpt.

Virginia land speculators such as George Washington treated the line as temporary and kept staking claims west of the mountains. For them the Proclamation became a lasting grievance against British rule.