

To Declare Independence or Not: Colonial Town Hall Meeting

A colonial town meeting was often called if there was a persisting problem or dilemma that needed to be resolved. Many colonial towns called meetings to discuss what could be done about the divisions that had developed between England and the colonies. These discussions often became heated debates centering on whether or not to declare independence from England. Some colonists – Loyalists -- viewed England as their mother country, and could not think of rebelling against it or their king. Others – Patriots -- viewed themselves and the colonies as being a totally separate country from England. Then there were some colonists – Neutrals -- who did not know what to do about the question of independence.

It is now time for our class to have a town meeting to discuss whether or not the colonies should declare their independence. Each class member will be given a role of Patriot, Neutral, or Loyalist to play during our town meeting. It will be the responsibility of each class member to assume and support the ideology of the role they are given during the town meeting – you must pretend to be the character you're given.

The two goals of our town meeting will be to:

1. Decide whether or not the colonists should declare independence.
2. Try to sway the neutral colonists to the Loyalist or Patriot side.

Each class member must accomplish the following to best help us decide whether or not to declare independence.

- ⊕ Five typed reasons supporting your character's beliefs. Neutrals will have six typed questions – three to ask Patriots and three to ask Loyalists.
- ⊕ A two-sided poster. One side will depict propaganda (a picture or pictures) relating to your character's beliefs and a catchy slogan. The other side will be your typed reasons. Neutral colonists will make a poster with half of one side depicting the Loyalist view and the other half depicting the Patriot view. The other side will be your six questions.
- ⊕ Participate in the town meeting by speaking out and supporting their character's ideals three or more times.

All characters should use their book, handouts, video notes, and any other resource possible to prepare for this assignment. Let's have fun deciding whether or not we should declare our independence.

This assignment is worth 50 points. The rubric on the back of this page will be used to determine your grade for this assignment.

Extra Credit can be earned by dressing up for your role or by making creative slogans or propaganda!!☺