

Document Group 6A

Directions for Jury #6:

- Read your grievance. Decide as a group what it is accusing the King of and record that information on your Evidence Worksheet.
- Read each of your primary and secondary sources. Complete the Primary Source Analyzing Sheet that goes with it and then record which side it seems to support on your Evidence Worksheet. This will go quicker if your jury divides the sources and then shares the information gathered as a group.
- Share all collected information and discuss which side is MORE supported by the evidence given.
- On your evidence Worksheet, come up with your final verdict. Did the Colonists have a valid reason for including this grievance in the Declaration of Independence, or did the King have valid reasons for committing this “crime?” Is the grievance GUILTY or NOT GUILTY of falsely accusing the King? Be sure to use evidence from your sources to support your answer.

Excerpt from the Declaration of Independence:

Grievance #6:

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian savages whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages and conditions.

Primary Sources:

- Dunmore’s Proclamation offering freedom to slaves
- Reactions to Dunmore’s Proclamation
- Proclamation of 1763

Secondary Sources:

- History of US “A Taxing King”

Document Group 6B

Dunmore's Proclamation

I do hereby . . . declare all indented servants, Negroes, or others [belonging to the Rebels,] free, that are able and willing to bear arms, they joining His Majesty's Troops, as soon as may be, for the more speedily reducing the colony to a proper sense of their duty, to His Majesty's crown and dignity.

John Murray, Earl of Dunmore,
Royal Governor of Virginia
7 November 1775

Summary of Dunmore's Proclamation

- Earl of Dunmore fled to British ship following removal of gunpowder from Magazine
- Dunmore issued proclamation freeing slaves to join British forces
- Proclamation created mistrust between masters and slaves
- Fear of slave revolt spread throughout Virginia
- Martial law declared

Dunmore issued proclamation November 15, 1775

June 8, 1775, in the wake of strong colonial protests following his removal of gunpowder stored in the public magazine, John Murray, fourth Earl of Dunmore and the last royal governor of Virginia, fled Williamsburg for the ship H.M.S. Fowey. November 15, after a series of raids on Norfolk, Dunmore issued a proclamation decreeing martial law and declaring "all indentured Servants, Negroes, or others (appertaining to Rebels) free, that are able and willing to bear Arms, they joining his Majesty's Troops."

Taken together, the proclamation and Dunmore's military actions had several important implications that contributed to the inevitability of war.

Proclamation intensified mistrust

First, the proclamation intensified a growing distrust between masters and slaves by offering freedom to those slaves willing to fight for the king. The fear of slave revolts ran deep among white Virginians. Although the colony had been spared a major uprising, other colonies had not. Virginians considered the possibility to be very real, because they frequently experienced passive resistance, such as work slowdowns and feigned illness, from their slaves. If the slaves actually acted on Dunmore's promise, Virginians knew they would be hard-pressed to meet the threat.

Martial law declared

Second, Dunmore declared martial law. This reminded Virginians that, since the king's standard had been raised, all persons capable of bearing arms were to come forward and swear their loyalty to the king. Those not doing so were presumed traitors subject to execution and the confiscation of their property. The proclamation also noted that King George III had declared the colonies in open rebellion, upping the stakes and polarizing the colony into two camps, loyal and rebel.

Proclamation reminded moderates of the ideals of freedom

Moderate burgesses had acted as an effective brake on their more hot-tempered compatriots at earlier flash points, and Dunmore hoped that they would do so again, but he misjudged the effect of the proclamation. For some, Dunmore's offer of freedom to the slaves was seen as one more attack on private property. For others, the social disruptions inherent in the emancipation proclamation were far worse than anything proposed by the more radical Virginians. In the end, the proclamation reminded the moderate leadership that they believed in the same ideals as did the radicals. It also brought them to a point the radicals had been pressing for some time: that protection of these ideals was worth fighting for.

Virginia's Response to Dunmore's Proclamation in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 13 December 1775

WILLIAMSBURG, November 29.

* * *

Lord Dunmore's cruel policy begins at length to be discovered by the blacks, who have lately deserted from him to a considerable number. When his Lordship first went down to Norfolk he gave great encouragement to unwary Negroes, but, such was his baseness, some of them, it is confidently said, he sent to the West Indies, where these unfortunate creatures were disposed of to defray his Lordship's expences; and others, such as he took any dislike to, he delivered up to their masters, to be punished. Since the troops under Col. Woodford's command began their march, Lord Dunmore issued a proclamation inviting the slaves of rebels, as he pleased to say, to repair to his standard. A considerable number at first went to him, but upon their masters taking the oath of allegiance, they were immediately told they must return. Some runaways, however, remained, but these were kept constantly employed in digging entrenchments in wet ground, till at length the severity of their labour forced many of them to fly. Those that were left behind have made several attempts to get off, but such is the barbarous policy of this cruel man, he keeps these unhappy creatures not only against their will, but intends to place them in the front of the battle, to prevent their flying, in case of an engagement, which, from their utter ignorance of firearms, he knows they will do.

Last Tuesday night a party of men, chiefly blacks, from a tender, came up to Mr. Benjamin Wells's, at Mulberry island, pillaged his house of every thing valuable, such as bedding, wearing apparel, liquors, a watch, the stock of poultry, and carried off two negroe girls. They told Mrs. Wells, that they had orders to burn the house; which they would certainly have put in execution, had it not been for her earnest entreaty to spare it that time, as she had some sick children in bed, who must perish in the flames.

Dec. 2. Since Lord Dunmore's proclamation made its appearance here, it is said he has recruited his army, in the counties of Princes Anne and Norfolk, to the amount of about 2000 men, including his black regiment, which is thought to be a considerable part, with this inscription on their breasts:—"Liberty to Slaves."—However, as the rivers will henceforth be strictly watched, and every possible precaution taken, it is hoped others will be effectually prevented from joining those his Lordship has already collected.

* * *

Nine Negroes (two of them women) who had been endeavouring to get to Norfolk in an open boat, and put ashore on Point Comfort, were fired upon by some persons in pursuit, taken, and brought here on Thursday; two of the fellows are wounded, and it is expected the rest will soon be made examples of.

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From Newspaper Response, the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 13 December 1775, in Accessible Archives CD ROM, Folio III (1766–83).

After Orders, Headquarters near York, 25 October 1781.

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It having been represented that many Negroes and Mulattoes the property of Citizens of these States have concealed themselves on board the Ships in the harbor; that some still continue to attach themselves to British Officers and that others have attempted to impose themselves upon the officers of the French and American Armies as Freeman and to make their escapes in that manner, In order to prevent their succeeding in such practices All Officers of the Allied Army and other persons of every denomination concerned are directed not to suffer any such negroes or mulattoes to be retained in their Service but on the contrary to cause them to be delivered to the Guards which will be establish'd for their reception at one of the Redoubts in York and another in Gloucester. Mr. David Ross will have the superintendency and will give passes to enable them to return to their Masters or where that is not practicable will have directions to make other provision for them. Any Negroes or mulattoes who are free upon proving the same will be left to their own disposal. The Gentlemen of the American Army who have made return to the Orderly Office of negroes in their possession agreeably to the Order of the 9th. instant are desired to deliver them to the above mentioned Mr. David Ross this day or tomorrow.

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From George Washington, *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources 1745–1799*, vol. 23, ed. John C. Fitzpatrick (Washington, DC: GPO, 1937), pp. 264–65.

Document Group 6E

The Royal Proclamation - October 7, 1763

**BY THE KING. A PROCLAMATION
GEORGE R.**

Whereas We have taken into Our Royal Consideration the extensive and valuable Acquisitions in America, secured to our Crown by the late Definitive Treaty of Peace, concluded at Paris [French and Indian War] the 10th Day of February last; and being desirous that all Our loving Subjects, as well of our Kingdom as of our Colonies in America, may avail themselves with all convenient Speed, of the great Benefits and Advantages which must accrue therefrom to their Commerce, Manufactures, and Navigation, We have thought fit, with the Advice of our Privy Council. to issue this our Royal Proclamation, hereby to publish and declare to all our loving Subjects

And whereas it is just and reasonable, and essential to our Interest, and the Security of our Colonies, that the several Nations or Tribes of Indians with whom We are connected, and who live under our Protection, should not be molested or disturbed in the Possession of such Parts of Our Dominions and Territories as, not having been ceded to or purchased by Us, are reserved to them. or any of them, as their Hunting Grounds.--

And We do further declare it to be Our Royal Will and Pleasure, for the present as aforesaid, to reserve under our Sovereignty, Protection, and Dominion, for the use of the said Indians, all the Lands and Territories [west of the Appalachian Mountains].

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.

And. We do further strictly enjoin and require all Persons whatever who have either wilfully or inadvertently seated themselves upon any Lands within the Countries above described. or upon any other Lands which, not having been ceded to or purchased by Us, are still reserved to the said Indians as aforesaid, forthwith to remove themselves from such Settlements.

And whereas great Frauds and Abuses have been committed in purchasing Lands of the Indians, to the great Prejudice of our Interests. and to the great Dissatisfaction of the said Indians: In order, therefore, to prevent such Irregularities for the future, and to the end that the Indians may be convinced of our Justice and determined Resolution to remove all reasonable Cause of Discontent, We do. with the Advice of our Privy Council strictly....require that no private Person ... make any purchase from the said Indians ...

Given at our Court at St. James's the 7th Day of October 1763. in the Third Year of our Reign. GOD SAVE THE KING