



### **BOSTON PORT ACT 250 DBQ LESSON PLAN**

Grade Level – 9-12th Grades

**Lesson Purpose** - This Boston Port Act Document-Based Question Lesson is designed to assist students in learning about the events of the Boston Port Act and its aftermath. Each excerpt from the original document and accompanying questions will help students to understand a “piece of the history” during these historic times 250 years ago. After the lesson, students will be able to give their opinion on how they would feel in Boston in 1774 after this Act took place. This lesson will also let students know that we are beginning to go through and remember the events of the birth of the United States 250 years ago, leading up to the Semiquincentennial celebration on July 4, 2026!

**Alabama Standards Met** – 10th Grade US History I – Standard 3 – Trace the chronology of events leading to the American Revolution, including the French and Indian War, passage of the Stamp Act, the Boston Tea Party, the Boston Massacre, passage of the Intolerable Acts, the Battles of Lexington and Concord, the publication of Common Sense, and the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

**Historical Context** - March 31, 2024 will be the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Boston Port Act. The Boston Port Act legalized a complete blockade of the port of Boston – nothing would be allowed in or out of the harbor or the city. No food. No fuel. No supplies. The Act’s intent was to punish the citizens of Boston through starvation and cold until they “behaved better.” Enforced by British soldiers, the Act remained in place until Boston repaid to the Crown all the money that was lost in the Boston Tea Party.

**Directions** – Read the excerpts from the Port Act and answer the questions that follow.

### **BOSTON PORT ACT EXCERPTS**

#### **Great Britain: Parliament - The Boston Port Act: March 31, 1774**

“An act to discontinue, in such manner, and for such time as are therein mentioned, the landing and discharging, lading or shipping, of goods, wares, and merchandise, at the town, and within the harbour, of Boston, in the province of Massachusetts Bay, in North America.”

“....in which commotions and insurrections certain valuable cargoes of teas, being the property of the East India Company, and on board certain vessels lying within the bay or harbour of Boston, were seized and destroyed”

“That from and after the first day of June, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-four, it shall not be lawful for any person or persons whatsoever to lade put, or cause or procure to be laden or put, off or from any quay, wharf, or other place, within the said town of Boston, or in or upon any part of the shore of the bay ..... or in or upon any island, creek, landing place, bank, or other place, within the said bay or headlands, into any ship, vessel, lighter, boat, or bottom, any goods, wares, or merchandise whatsoever, to be transported or carried into any other country, province or place whatsoever, or into any other part of the said province of the Massachusetts Bay, in New England; or to take up, discharge, or lay on land, or cause or procure to be taken up, discharged, or laid on land, within the said town, or in or upon any of the places aforesaid, out of any boat, lighter, ship, vessel, or bottom, any goods, wares, or merchandise whatsoever, to be brought from any other country, province, or place, or any other part of the said province of the Massachusetts Bay in New England”

“ And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That whenever it shall be made to appear to his Majesty, in his privy council, that peace and obedience to the laws shall be so far restored in the said town of Boston, that the trade of Great Britain may safely be carried on there, and his Majesty’s customs duly collected, and his Majesty, in his privy council, shall adjudge the same to be true, it shall and may be lawful for his Majesty, by proclamation, or order of council, to assign and appoint the extent, bounds, and limits, of the port or harbour of Boston..”

“... nothing herein contained shall extend, or be construed, to enable his Majesty to appoint such port, harbour, creeks, quays, wharfs, places, or officers in the said town of Boston, or in the said bay or islands, until it shall sufficiently appear to his Majesty that full satisfaction hath been made by or on behalf of the inhabitants of the said town of Boston to the united company of merchants of England trading to the East Indies, for the damage sustained by the said company by the destruction of their goods sent to the said town of Boston.....”

### QUESTIONS

1. **Why did the King and Parliament issue the Port Act?**
2. **What were the main parts of the Port Act? What did it do?**
3. **When would the Port Act start?**
4. **When would the Port Act end?**
5. **What effect do you think this Act had on the town of Boston and its' citizens?**
6. **How do you think this Act made the people of Boston feel towards the King and Parliament?**
7. **How would you feel if you were a citizen in Boston during this time? Why?**
8. **How would you feel if you were the King (George III) and the colonists in Boston had destroyed 342 chests of tea? Why? What would you do?**
9. **Who do you think was “right” in this conflict? The King or the citizens of Boston? Explain.**