

A Boston Teapot

Summary

"A Boston Teapot" is a five-character play about a grandmother's story of the Boston Tea Party—a story told in part by the people who lived it.

Meet the Players

Character	Reading Level
Grandma	6.5
Kimiko	4.2
Paul Revere	4.2
Samuel Adams.....	3.1
Dr. Thomas Young.....	3.7
Crowd (several students).....	4.3

Fluency Focus

Reading with Word Accuracy

Comprehension Focus

Making Connections

Vocabulary

disguised
loyal
Parliament
shipment
unite
volunteer
wharf

Set the Stage

Teacher Read Aloud *page 59*

This selection is about the Townshend Acts and American colonists' protests against these taxes. Read the selection aloud. As you do, model word accuracy by pronouncing words correctly.

Get Ready

Vocabulary *page 60*

Use this page to introduce vocabulary. Discuss the Vocabulary Think Tank question, asking students to list three qualities of a loyal person.

Fluency and Comprehension Warm-Ups *pages 60–61*

Review these pages with students. Use the following for students who need additional help with the concepts:

- **Reading with Word Accuracy** If fluent readers encounter unfamiliar words, they look up their pronunciation and meaning. Look at paragraph 3 of the Read Aloud. Point out the word *Massacre*. Check a dictionary to learn the pronunciation and meaning.

- **Making Connections** When you read, you make connections between what you are reading and what you already know. Think about the Read Aloud selection. What is one thing you already knew about colonial protests? How does that idea connect to this selection?

Read Aloud Tip

Introduce the fluency focus of **reading with word accuracy**. Explain that fluent readers try to identify and figure out difficult words before reading. To do this, they might look for word parts they know to help them decode the word, or they might look up the word in a dictionary. Invite students to skim paragraph 1 and find two words that they want to figure out before reading.

A Boston Teapot *pages 62–68*

Independent Practice

Set up the groups and assign each student a part. Then have students read through their assigned parts once before small group practice begins.

Small Group Practice

Assemble the groups. You may want to use the following rehearsal schedule. Each rehearsal, which should involve a complete oral read-through, has an activity to guide students.

1. First Rehearsal: Challenge students to preview the play to identify clues that tell when the action switches from modern times to 1773. Have them create the signs described in the stage directions. Then invite students to read together for the first time.

2. Vocabulary Rehearsal: Ask students to locate the vocabulary words used in the play and write each one on a separate index card. Then have students take turns choosing and displaying a card, reading the word aloud to the group, and using it in a sentence.

3. Fluency Rehearsal: Reading with Word Accuracy Point out the Fluency Tip on page 65. Designate one student as the dictionary reader. Have group members scan their parts for unfamiliar place names. Then have the dictionary reader locate the place names in the dictionary's geographical index and pronounce them aloud for others to echo-read.

4. Comprehension Rehearsal: Making Connections Have students work in their groups to create a chart that organizes facts they know about the American Revolution. Encourage students to identify the source of the specific facts whenever possible: from the play, from other sources. Challenge groups to list at least three facts for each column. Use the Facts Chart on page 10.

5. Final Rehearsal: Observe this rehearsal, focusing on students' word accuracy. For example, do students reading the colonists' parts correctly pronounce the many proper nouns in their lines?

Performance

This is your opportunity to sit back, relax, and enjoy the performance. Encourage students to have fun while performing!

Curtain Call *pages 69–70*

Assign these questions and activities for students to complete in a group or independently.



Vocabulary Tip

For more vocabulary practice, have students discuss the following:

- Have you ever been a **volunteer**? What did you volunteer to do?
- Name a time when all the students of this school **unite**. What is their purpose?
- When have you been **disguised**? Why did you wear a disguise?

A Boston Teapot

Set the Stage

Teacher Read Aloud

In the 1700s, it took about two months to sail a ship between England and the American colonies. The colonists started thinking of themselves as separate from England. England did not allow the colonies to elect a representative to Parliament. So when Parliament wanted to tax the colonies, the colonists didn't like it.

In 1767, Parliament passed a set of taxes called the Townshend Acts. The colonists protested. Some of the protests became violent. In Boston, mobs broke windows of stores where English goods were sold. In 1768, England sent soldiers to Boston. The colonists resented the soldiers.

On March 5, 1770, a crowd started shouting at the soldiers. One of the soldiers fired his gun into the crowd. Then eight more soldiers fired. Five colonists died in what came to be known as the Boston Massacre. Two months later the people of Boston learned that on March 5, Parliament had repealed, or gotten rid of, the Townshend Acts.

In this play, you will learn more about another protest against English taxes, the Boston Tea Party. Use the vocabulary and warm-ups to help you get ready.

Get Ready

Vocabulary

Read and review these vocabulary words to prepare you for reading this play. Say these words to yourself. Then say them each aloud two times.

disguised—wearing a costume to change the way one looks

loyal—faithful; devoted

Parliament—a representative body having the power to make laws in England

shipment—delivery of goods

unite—to bring together for a common purpose

volunteer—one who freely chooses to do something

wharf—a pier or dock where ships tie up and load or unload goods

VOCABULARY THINK TANK

Are you loyal
to your friends?
How?

Fluency Warm-Up

Reading with Word Accuracy

It is hard to read smoothly and fluently if you do not know the words. Fluent readers read all the words in a story. They learn how to pronounce the words with **accuracy**. They look up unfamiliar words in a dictionary or glossary. If a sentence doesn't make sense, they go back and check that they read all the words correctly.

Remember you need to learn how to pronounce all difficult words, names of people, and names of places. And don't ever skip words.

FLUENCY PRACTICE

Practice reading these sentences aloud. Do not skip words.

1. They did not like "taxation without representation."
2. Samuel Adams was a leader in Boston, Massachusetts.
3. Parliament made laws in England.

Get Ready

Comprehension Warm-Up

Making Connections

When you think about how one story is like another story, you are **making connections**. You can connect ideas from one book with other things you know.



You can connect what you are reading to another book you have read. You can connect what you are reading to something that has happened to you. You also can connect what you are reading to something happening in the world.

COMPREHENSION TIP

Ask yourself questions like these when you read.

1. How does this story remind me of other stories I've read?
2. How do my feelings compare to this character's feelings?
3. How do the events in this story fit with what I know about the world?

Readers' Theater

Presents

A Boston Teapot

by

Carol M. Elliott

Cast

(in order of appearance)

Grandma

Kimiko

Paul Revere

Samuel Adams

Dr. Thomas Young

Crowd



GRANDMA: Hello, Kimiko. What are you studying?

KIMIKO: Social studies. We're reading about the Boston Tea Party. But Grandma, I don't understand it. Why did Native Americans want to throw tea into Boston Harbor?

GRANDMA: I think you misunderstood what you read. The men who took part in the Boston Tea Party were **disguised** as Native Americans, but they were really colonists.

KIMIKO: Why were they disguised?

GRANDMA: So they wouldn't get into trouble for destroying the tea. It is one of the best-kept secrets of all time. No one knows who all was there.

KIMIKO: Now that sounds interesting. It's hard to keep a secret. Tell me more. Why did they destroy the tea? Didn't they like tea?

GRANDMA: *(laughs)* Yes, they liked tea, but they didn't want to have to pay a tea tax.

KIMIKO: But everybody has to pay taxes.



GRANDMA: Yes, but the difference is today we elect the people who make the laws for things like taxes. We have a say in how things are done, but the colonists did not have a say. They did not like “taxation without representation.”

KIMIKO: So there were no colonists in **Parliament?**

GRANDMA: Right, the members of Parliament represented the people of England. But the people in the colonies were not allowed to have someone represent them in Parliament.

KIMIKO: I bet the colonists didn’t like that.

GRANDMA: They didn’t. But when England needed money, Parliament decided the colonists should pay taxes on tea. Everyone drank tea, so everyone would pay the tax. England decided only one company could bring tea to America, and only special merchants could sell the tea.

PAUL REVERE: (*holding up sign that says “Boston, 1773”*) News has come from New York and Philadelphia. A group calling itself “The Mohawks” sent a letter to each merchant. It said that anyone who helped with the tea would receive an “unwelcome visit” from the Mohawks.



SAMUEL ADAMS: Without tea merchants, there will be no one to receive or sell the tea.

PAUL REVERE: Yes, so the cities are refusing any **shipments** of tea.

SAMUEL ADAMS: We must convince our tea merchants in Boston to do the same.

DR. YOUNG: That won't be easy. Two of our merchants are sons of the governor. Governor Hutchinson is **loyal** to England.

KIMIKO: Let me guess. The colonists couldn't convince the Boston tea merchants, right?

GRANDMA: No, they couldn't. So the colonists decided to resist and return any shipments of tea.

(Paul Revere holds sign saying "November 28, 1773.")

SAMUEL ADAMS: *(writing a letter)* We must join forces. We must **unite** to resist England. England has given us only one choice. We can choose to be slaves of England and accept the tea and the unfair tax. Or we can resist like free people.

FLUENCY TIP

Make sure you know how to pronounce the names of the places in this play. Use a dictionary to help you.



PAUL REVERE: *(running in)* The moment of truth has come. A tea ship named the *Dartmouth* has entered the harbor.

SAMUEL ADAMS: We can't let them unload the tea.

PAUL REVERE: We can put off the unloading for twenty days. Then the officers will step in and force the unloading.

SAMUEL ADAMS: We'll need guards on the *Dartmouth*. Get 25 **volunteers** to board the ship each evening. They must prevent any attempt to bring the tea on land.

DR. YOUNG: Yes, and send your letter with the fastest riders. Let's have a meeting as soon as possible.

(Paul Revere holds sign saying "Special Town Meeting.")

SAMUEL ADAMS: *(speaking to crowd of thousands)* We must stop the unloading of the ship. We must refuse to pay the tax. We must not give in to England!

CROWD: *(cheering)* Yes! Yes!



PAUL REVERE: The owner of the ship says he cannot send the ship back without England's OK. If he did, the British would seize his ship. The king would then own his ship.

DR. YOUNG: There may be only one way to get rid of the tea. We may have to dump it overboard.

CROWD: Yes!

SAMUEL ADAMS: We must try to return the tea first.

GRANDMA: For the next 16 days, the colonists tried everything they could to return the tea to England. During that time, two more tea ships arrived.

KIMIKO: They were running out of time.

GRANDMA: Yes. They must have been planning the "tea party." On the evening of December 16, 1773, there was another town meeting.

(Paul Revere holds sign saying "Special Town Meeting.")

PAUL REVERE: If nothing is done, tomorrow the officers will seize the tea and bring it on land. The tax then must be paid.

DR. YOUNG: I wonder how tea mixes with salt water.



CROWD: Yes!

PAUL REVERE: We must not be seen as a mob.
We must not hurt anyone or take
anything other than the tea.

CROWD: Boston Harbor a teapot tonight!
The Mohawks are coming!

GRANDMA: Suddenly the meeting was over, and
a crowd was headed to the **wharf**.
Some were disguised as Mohawks
and were carrying hatchets.

KIMIKO: My book says they chopped open the
tea chests. Then they dumped the tea
into the sea.

SAMUEL ADAMS: No one must ever know who was
at the tea party. They could hang
for this.

DR. YOUNG: Let us think of happier thoughts
tonight. Look, the job is nearly done.
The crowd is breaking up and going
home. A little tea was spilled. That
is all.

SAMUEL ADAMS: Yes, but who knows
what happens next
because of this
tea party?

FLUENCY TIP

Don't skip any
words. If you did,
look them up now
since you have read
the whole play.

Comprehension

Write your answer to each question on the lines below.

1. Why do the colonists refuse to pay the tax on tea?

2. Why do some participants in the Boston Tea Party disguise themselves?

3. What does "taxation without representation" mean?

4. Why do you think the colonists first try to return the tea to England?

5. Whose side are you on? Parliament's or the colonists? Why?

6. What is one answer to Samuel Adams's question: ". . . what happens next because of this tea party?"

7. What event in the play reminds you of something in your life?

Vocabulary

Write the number of a vocabulary word on the line before its meaning.

1. unite _____ Place where ships unload
2. loyal _____ Goods sent by ship, train, or mail
3. shipment _____ One who offers to do something
4. wharf _____ True to another
5. disguised _____ Come together for a purpose
6. volunteer _____ Lawmaking body of England
7. Parliament _____ Wearing a costume

Extension

1. What would you have done if you were living in Boston at the time of the Boston Tea Party? With a partner, discuss what each of you would have done and why.
 - Would you have gone to the town meetings?
 - Would you have taken part in the “tea party”?
 - Would you have watched?
2. With a partner, do some research on what it was like to live in Boston in the 1770s. What kinds of jobs did people have? What did they wear? What did they eat? Present your findings to the class.