The Boston Tea Party
December 16, 1773
Terms to Know:

Monopoly – to be the only one selling a product

Surplus – to have too much of an item

Smugglers – people who import an item (illegally) without paying a tariff

Black Market – Buying something illegally obtained or supplied

Patriot – A complimentary term for a person who fights for his or her country.

Congress – a gathering of people for a single purpose.
The aftermath of the Boston Massacre…

Paul Revere…made a woodcut.

Sam Adams…riled up the people.

Tom Hutchinson…withdrew the soldiers.

Crispus Attucks…died provoking an attack.

John Adams…defended the British soldiers.

The soldiers…were tried and acquitted.

Lord North…repealed all but the tax on tea, setting the stage for the Boston Tea Party.
Lord North’s Symbolic Act

On the same day as the Boston Massacre,
Lord North repealed all but one of the Townshend Acts, the one on tea. A new Tea Act gave a monopoly to the British East India Company.

This company had such a surplus of tea that prices with the tax were actually less than the price before the law, but the colonists hated the principle of the thing.

So they continued to buy from smugglers on the black market, refusing to be coerced into saving money.

Things were at a standstill until a patriot club called the “Sons of Liberty” were convinced by Sam Adams to try a new approach.
The Boston Tea Party

On December 16, 1773, patriots under Sam Adams boarded a ship belonging to the East India Co. and dumped 342 chests of tea overboard.

They were dressed as Native Americans, which fooled nobody, and met with no resistance. The biggest loss was the cost of the tea.

Similar “tea parties” in other states then followed, multiplying the loss of the tea for the company. (in Maryland, the “Peggy Stewart Tea Party” was named after the tea ship burned by colonists.)
234 Boston Boys throwing tea into the harbour
British Reaction – “the Intolerable Acts”

Angry at the colonial actions, the English passed a series of laws designed to punish Boston. These were called the Intolerable Acts by the colonists. These laws:

• Closed the port of Boston until the cost of the tea was repaid to the East India Company.
• Banned elections, and gave only the king the right to appoint government officials.
• Allowed British officials to be tried in England instead of in the colonies.
• Allowed British soldiers to be housed in private houses if no other quarters were available.
The American Counter-reaction

The First Continental Congress met in fall of 1774 to publicly air their grievances. They did little more than talk and plan.

The Second Continental Congress met in spring of 1775 to take action. They chose to authorize an army, hired George Washington as the first general, created money, and talked about Independence!

What had happened in this one year?

- Patrick Henry
- Paul Revere
- Lexington and Concord
- Bunker Hill
Modern “Tea Parties”

A recent (2008) political movement has associated itself with the Boston Tea Party. They claim to be against taxes and “big government.” They were arguably the largest force in the last election.