

Roots of American Democracy

TOPIC SUMMARY

The English colonists brought to North America a history of thought that included civil rights and common law. The colonists were influenced by Enlightenment leaders who believed that people were born with natural rights. In the mid-1600s, three groups of colonies developed along the east coast of North America. Each group's location helped determine its characteristics. New England developed into a place of trade and industry. The Middle colonies developed more agriculture, but also included ports, sawmills, and mines. The Southern colonies developed large-scale agriculture. After the French and Indian War, colonists began resisting British control over their affairs. The resulting protests led to the Revolutionary War. The Declaration of Independence and Articles of Confederation later established the United States as an independent country.

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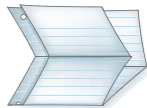
FOLDABLES™ Study Organizer

Sequencing Information Study Foldable This Foldable will help students sequence information about the roots of American democracy.

Step 1 Fold the paper in half from side to side.



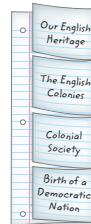
Step 2 Turn the paper and fold it in half and in half again.



Step 3 Cut only the top layer of the paper along the fold lines.



Step 4 Label each tab as shown.



Reading and Writing
Write details under the tabs of the sequence of events that unfolded as democracy developed in America.

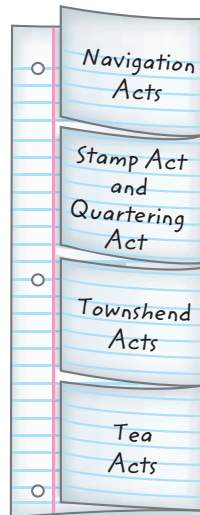
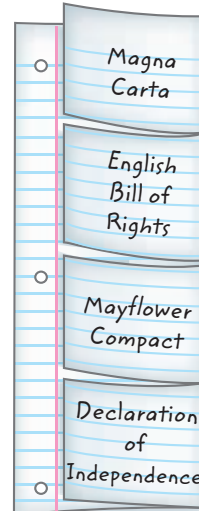
TOPIC ACTIVITY IDEAS

Examining

Have students use the Sequencing information Study Foldable to examine the sequence of events that led to the birth of America. Have them write *Our English Heritage*, *The English Colonies*, *Colonial Society*, and *Birth of a Democratic Nation* on the tabs as shown above. Have them write facts about each on the back of the tabs. Have students use the Foldable to examine the process by which British citizens became colonists and, later, citizens of a new nation. Then have students note in each of the four Foldable categories the development of important laws related to citizenship. Tell students to note which laws were passed by the British government and which were created by the colonists for the purpose of governing themselves.

ANALYZING

Using this Foldable, have students identify four historical documents that helped outline the rights and responsibilities of American citizens. Beneath each tab, students should list details about each document, such as the date the document was created and the rights that it established. Ask students to identify new rights that were defined in each of the documents.



SEQUENCING

Have students use the Foldable to examine some of the events that led to the American Revolution. Students should list one event that led to the Revolution on each of the four tabs. Beneath each tab, students should briefly list the effects of that event on the colonies. Lead a class discussion about the cumulative effects of Britain's colonial policies.

Student Study Tip

To help students remember the sequence of events, have them focus on the relationships between actions. For example, the Boston Tea Party was a response to the Tea Act. The Intolerable Acts, in turn, were a response to the Boston Tea Party. Seeing these connections can help students remember and understand the order of events.