Lesson: Stamp Out the Stamp Act

(To follow Amplify CKLA 1, Knowledge 10: A New Nation, Lesson 2: A Taxing Time)

At a Glance	In this lesson, students learn about colonial protests against taxes (which were on imported goods) and compare those protests to the colonial reaction to the Stamp Act (which was a tax on printed paper).
Primary Focus Objectives	• Students will read a non-fiction selection about Stamp Act protests. • Students will analyze a historic image about the Stamp Act protest in Portsmouth. • Students will complete a simulation about the Stamp Act tax.
Formative Assessment	• Group discussion • Stamp design
Standards	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.1.4 Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.1.2 Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.
Materials	• Focus Text: Timeline of New Hampshire History • Infographic: Stamp Act Mark • Stamp page per student and masking tape • Plastic counters
Time Needed	Two 30-40 minute class sessions
Learning Activity	1. **Read the Focus Text.** Remind students about a timeline's purpose. Project the timeline and scroll to the entry for the 1765 Stamp Act protests. Read the entry together. Connect the events described to previously learned material about the Boston Tea Party. *(15 minutes)* 2. **Read the infographic.** Project or distribute the infographic. Read the text as a whole group or in reading groups. Use the Notice and Wonder prompts to discuss the contents with students. *(20 minutes)* 3. **Place the stamps.** Give a page of stamps to each student and challenge them to place stamps on objects made of paper throughout the classroom. *(10 minutes)* 4. **Complete the simulation.** Give students time to place their stamps. Throughout the day, collect the tax from students each time they need to use one of the stamped items. Reflect about the experience as a whole group. *(20 minutes)*

Educator Rationale and Answer Guide

Connection to Amplify	In this lesson, students extend their understanding of the reasons for the Boston Tea Party to the Stamp Act protests. People in many colonies protested the Stamp Act, including in New Hampshire. Students examine a timeline and an infographic, using both visual and written information to build an understanding of both the Stamp Act and colonists' reaction to it. A simple simulation helps students experience the concept of a tax on necessary items.
Read the Focus Text	If students have not worked with a timeline, begin by reinforcing the purpose of a timeline. Explain that the Moose on the Loose timeline shows important events in New Hampshire history and important events happening elsewhere in the United States at the same time. Scroll to the entry for the Stamp Act Protests. When you click on the entry, students will see an image of a Stamp Act protest that took place in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in September 1765.
Examine the infographic	This infographic provides more information about the Stamp Act and why colonists were unhappy about it. It also provides a clear visual of the stamp that colonists would have seen on items in colonial New Hampshire. Reinforce that the colonists did not have any say about how the British government taxed them. The British government made the decision without allowing the colonists to vote on it.
Place the stamps	Prepare for this part of the lesson by making a copy of the stamp page for each student. Give students time to cut out their stamps. Remind them that the Stamp Act placed a tax on any item made from paper. Challenge them to look around the classroom to identify all the items made from paper (including items made from cardboard) and attaching a stamp to each one using some masking tape. Are they able to use up all of their stamps? What does that say about the importance of paper products?
Complete the simulation	Give students five plastic counters. Tell them that throughout the day, if they need to use an item that has a stamp on it, they must give up one of their plastic counters. (Consider labeling a box or basket to collect the counters.) When they have used up their counters, they can no longer use the items that are stamped. Continue the simulation for as long as is best for your students. Consider repeating the simulation by stamping items made of plastic instead of paper. Or, ask students to vote about whether to tax paper or plastic. After the votes are cast and counted, the teacher declares the losing item will be taxed instead! What do students think about that? (This illusion of self-governance was especially frustrating for the colonists; even when they thought they had a say, ultimately the King and Parliament made the laws.) Afterwards, have a group discussion about what it was like to have to pay extra to use needed objects in the classroom.

THE STAMP ACT MARK

What is this image?

This is a stamp mark. When the British government passed the Stamp Act in 1765, the new law required all types of paper to be stamped with this mark.

The Stamp Act applied to all types of paper—newspapers, books, legal documents, posters, college diplomas, even playing cards! People living in Great Britain had been paying a stamp tax for years, but this kind of tax was new in America. Normally the British government didn't tax things that Americans used in their everyday lives.

What did the Americans do about it?

First, the Americans sent letters and petitions to the British government, asking them to remove the tax, but when the government didn't listen, the Americans organized Stamp Act protests in most major cities in the colonies. Some of the protests were peaceful, but others turned violent.

Fun Fact:

Although the stamp looks brown today, it's original color was dark red.

Notice & Wonder

1. How much did this tax cost? Look closely, the price is written on the mark.
2. Can you find on the mark an image that represents the king and his power?
3. Who do you think would have been most impacted by this tax?

Moose on the Loose
Social Studies for Granite State Kids