

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Using your best acting skills, read the transcript below about the Sons of Liberty and their plans to rebel against the British. Then, answer the questions that follow.

The Sons of Liberty: *Spill Some Tea*

Narrator: The year was 1773, and tensions were high in the American colonies. Colonists were divided on whether to be *Patriot*- loyal to the colony- or *Loyalist*- loyal to the British. In Boston, the British were quickly becoming enemy #1. The excise taxes and Quartering Act had enraged Bostonians and turned them against the mother country. The Boston Massacre in 1770, which saw 5 colonists killed by British soldiers, enraged the colonists and made the British seem like murderers. In the scene we are about to see, some of Boston's finest men- Samuel Adams, John Adams, John Hancock, Paul Revere, and Benjamin Edes- discuss Britain's latest restriction on the colonies- the Tea Act.

Scene Begins. 4 men sit around a large table drinking tea and ale. They are clearly agitated.

Samuel Adams: (*Sits reading a newspaper before slamming it down in anger*)
Nonsense. Pure nonsense. Now they want to decide where we get our tea?! Those nasty Brits just don't know when to quit. We should have chased 'em all out of the town after the massacre in '70!

John Adams: We tried chasing them out, and it got 5 good men killed! No, we're going to have to be more clever- and sneakier.

(*Paul Revere enters the room*)

Paul Revere: Whoa, whoa. What's with all the bad vibes in here?

Samuel Adams: You didn't read the paper, Paul? The British passed another one of their ridiculous "acts"- it's gonna let the British East India Company sell tea here. Cheap tea! You know what that means, right?

Paul Revere: (*Trying to act like he knows what that means*) Uh...yeah...that's...bad. Cheap tea is bad...

Benjamin Edes: (*Rolling his eyes*) It means any of the colonists in town who sell tea are going to be put right out of business. And all that money? It's going right to the redcoats, instead.

John Hancock: My cousin, Big Hancho's, a tea smuggler- yeah, okay, it's not the most honest living, but it's how he supports his family. This act is gonna ruin him.

John Adams: And besides, I'm getting real tired of the British thinking they can pass laws against us and not give us any say in it! Who do they think they are??

Samuel Adams: So what are we gonna do about it, gentlemen?

(All men speaking together)

Together: We fight back!

Paul: (*Excited shouting*) We poison all the tea in Boston! Every last cup! Poison everywhere!

(The other men stop and stare at him)

John Hancock: Come on, man. Why do you have to get weird about everything?

Samuel Adams: I say we destroy the tea! (*Paul goes to say something, but Samuel holds up a hand to stop him*) Not through poison. When the next shipment comes in, we'll make sure the tea never even makes it off the ships. We'll dump it in the harbor!

Benjamin Edes: Hmm...that could work. There's a large shipment coming in late in the evening on the 16th of December. If we wait for it to get dark, we should be able to sneak onto the ships and dump the tea overboard.

John Adams: Obviously we'll need more of our brothers in liberty to join us. But how can we ensure we won't get caught? Who knows what those nasty redcoats would do to us?

Paul Revere: What if we dressed up as dogs? They never suspect the dogs...



John Hancock: Paul, get out.

John Adams: Hmm...he might be onto something. Not with the dog thing, that makes no sense...but with the disguise. Who could we disguise ourselves as that the British wouldn't know how to catch?

Samuel Adams: Indians! We could disguise ourselves as Mohawks. It's not like they haven't destroyed colonial property before, and the British wouldn't know how to identify or punish them. They wouldn't want to risk war with the other tribes around here.

John Adams: It's perfect! Then the plan is set. We're gonna have ourselves a tea party.

Paul Revere: Huh- a tea party. The Boston Tea Party. Yeah, that's good- I hope people call it that one day.

Questions

1. What did the Tea Act do? Why did it anger colonists?
2. How do the Sons of Liberty plan to protest the Tea Act?
3. Why do they decide to disguise themselves as Mohawk Indians?
4. What message do you think the Boston Tea Party sent to the British government?