



# Overhearing History

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## Teaching Guide & Learning Activities

Provided by the New York State Archives Partnership Trust

Created by Toni Stevens-Oliver

### Activity #1: Note Catcher

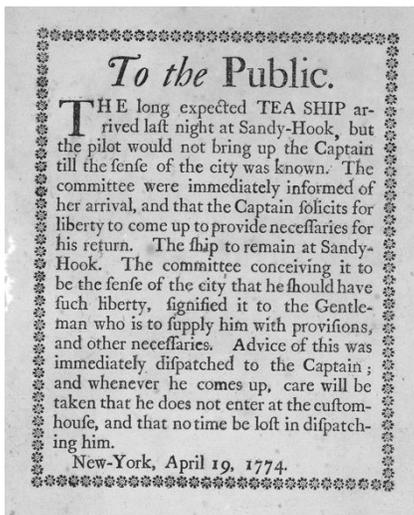
This table provides a way to capture the opinions and ideas of the characters introduced in the book. It can be completed while reading the story, or after. A key with suggested responses is provided. This note catcher can be used to look back at the story during discussions or while doing other activities.

### Activity #2: Taxes!

This activity asks students to use text evidence to support their answers about different characters' points of view about taxes. This is an ELA crossover activity that can be used in conjunction with other lessons being taught about taxes as a cause of the American Revolution. A key with suggested responses is included.

### Activity #3: Tea & Taxes

This activity introduces the New York Tea Party. The ship *Nancy*, which was loaded with tea on its way to New York City, was stopped by patriots in the Son's of Liberty and other community members and groups. The Committee of Correspondence posted notices around the city and in newspapers to notify citizens of what was being done to stop the British from importing East India Tea. One such notice is provided for students to analyze. This will need to be scaffolded for younger readers.



Some notes to help students understand what this message is about.

1. The ship is carrying British tea, which the colonists are boycotting and do not want to be brought into the city.
2. The ship is stopped at Sandy Hook and not allowed to dock in New York City so that it cannot unload the tea.
3. The pilot is the pilot boat – a smaller vessel that would tow the larger ship through the narrow waterways from the ocean to the city.
4. The captain is asking that he be allowed liberty to leave his ship in order to get supplies to make his return to trip to England.
5. The Committee decides that it is the “sense of the city” that the captain should be allowed liberty (to leave the ship) to get his supplies, BUT he may not go to the customhouse. A customhouse was a building where officials checked goods coming into a port and collected taxes on them. This would allow the tea to enter the city.
6. The captain will be dispatched – sent back to England – quickly.

The poor captain in this situation – he was stuck between the Americans who were not going to let him unload his cargo, and the company who had paid him to deliver the tea. That company and the King will not be happy to see that tea arrive back in England.

### Activity #3: Tea & Taxes (continued)

Next students will look at a map from the era, identifying New York City, Sandy Hook and the path between them. Based on the work you have already done with New York geography, you can add in other labels, or have a discussion on why the location of the port at New York was so advantageous.

#### **Activity #4: Ann & Jacob – Enslaved Persons**

Ann and Jacob are enslaved by Mr. Gordon. This activity has students thinking about Ann’s quote, “Mr. Gordon keeps talking about the rights of mankind,” Ann says. “But he owns us.” Students are asked to write about what Ann means, then to write about what they think about Mr. Gordon’s comments in light of the fact that he enslaves Ann and Jacob.

#### **Activity #5: Hester and the Land**

Hester is a Mohawk woman who mentions in her conversation with Mrs. Clarke that the land where she and her family have lived for generations is being turned into more and more farmsteads. In this activity students will compare two maps; one shows the land as it was in 1720, and one that was created in 1771. Students will locate the area where Saratoga is on both maps and note the differences. They will write about how the two maps support Hester’s statements.

#### **Activity #6: Overhearing History Research**

Students are asked to pick one of the conversations in the story to research the ideas further. This page is just to get students started. This has been left rather open ended so that teachers can individualize the project for their own classrooms.

#### **Activity #7: Vocabulary “I have... Who has...?”**

To play this game print out two sets of cards. Keep one as is to use as your key. The other set should be cut into individual cards. Hand out one card per student or student pair. Ask the student with the “I have ale” card to start by reading the “Who has...?” part of the card. The student(s) who have the defined word answer by saying, “I have XXX. Who has....?” The game goes on until the final “Who has...?” is read and the first person who went says, “I have ale” (the last card has the definition of the card read by the first reader – it comes round full circle).

#### **New York State Social Studies Framework:**

4.3 Colonial and Revolutionary Period in New York - 4.3d Growing conflicts between England and the 13 colonies over issues of political and economic rights led to the American Revolution. New York played a significant role during the Revolution, in part due to its location.

#### **Social Studies Practices:**

- A. Gathering, Interpreting, and Using Evidence
- B. Comparison and Contextualization
- C. Geographic Reasoning
- D. Economics and Economic Systems

#### **New York State Next Generation ELA Learning Standards:**

4R1: Locate and refer to relevant details and evidence when explaining what a text says explicitly/implicitly and make logical inferences.

4R4: Determine the meaning of words, phrases, figurative language, academic, and content-specific words.

4R6: In informational texts, compare and contrast a primary and secondary source on the same event or topic.

4R7: Identify information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, illustrations), and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text.

4W5: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to respond and support analysis, reflection, and research by applying the grade 4 Reading Standards.

4W6: Conduct research to answer questions, including self-generated questions, and to build knowledge through investigating multiple aspects of a topic.



# Overhearing History Note Catcher

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

| Who?                                                                                                                                     | Thoughts and Ideas | Patriot or Loyalist Point of View?<br>Why? |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <p>Nathaniel's<br/>Parents<br/>Joseph &amp; Emma</p>  |                    |                                            |
| <p>Mr. Clarke</p>                                     |                    |                                            |
| <p>Hester</p>                                         |                    |                                            |
| <p>Neighbors</p>                                    |                    |                                            |
| <p>Mr. Gordon</p>                                   |                    |                                            |
| <p>Ann &amp; Jacob</p>                              |                    |                                            |



# Overhearing History Note Catcher

KEY

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

| Who?                                                                                                                                 | Thoughts and Ideas                                                                                                                                                                                 | Patriot or Loyalist Point of View? Why?                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Nathaniel's Parents<br/>Joseph &amp; Emma</p>  | <p>Nathaniel's mother, Emma expresses concern about the treatment of her father, a loyalist. His father, Joseph, tries to calm her and say that he is sure that their neighbors will be civil.</p> | <p>It seems Nathaniel's parents might be leaning more towards being loyalists. Emma's father is a loyalist. Joseph's comments seem to think that most of the talk about freedom and rights is because people have had too much to drink.</p> |
| <p>Mr. Clarke,<br/>the Miller</p>                 | <p>Mr. Clarke believes thinks that people shouldn't be complaining about the taxes because they pay for soldiers who provided protection during the French and Indian War.</p>                     | <p>Mr. Clarke seems to side with the British idea that the taxes are warranted.</p>                                                                                                                                                          |
| <p>Hester</p>                                     | <p>Hester is a Mohawk woman. She comments on how the land that her family has known for generations is being turned into farmsteads.</p>                                                           | <p>It is hard to tell if Hester would support the Americans or the British from what she has said in this story.</p>                                                                                                                         |
| <p>Neighbors</p>                                 | <p>The neighbor ladies are discussing the outrageous price of tea, They talk about alternatives to tea and they are glad not to be giving money to the importers.</p>                              | <p>The neighbor ladies seem to be leaning towards the Patriots as they are not buying or drinking English tea.</p>                                                                                                                           |
| <p>Mr. Gordon</p>                               | <p>Mr. Gordon makes many toasts to the militia and being free from Great Britain. He also enslaves Ann &amp; Jacob.</p>                                                                            | <p>Mr. Gordon's toasts make it clear that he is a Patriot. He wants to be free of British control.</p>                                                                                                                                       |
| <p>Ann &amp; Jacob</p>                          | <p>Ann and Jacob are enslaved. They wonder how Mr. Gordon can talk about freedom while owning them. They worry about what might happen to them in the future.</p>                                  | <p>It is hard to tell from this story which way Ann and Jacob lean.</p>                                                                                                                                                                      |



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Taxes!

Not everyone in Colonial New York agreed about taxes. Nathaniel overheard Mr. Clarke the Miller, and the neighbors talking about taxes. Reread what Mr. Clarke and the Neighbors were saying. Decided if they were for or against paying the taxes and write the correct word in on the blank in the sentence below. Then support your claim with details from the text.



The miller was \_\_\_\_\_ taxes.  
 I know this because in the text it says,

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The neighbors were \_\_\_\_\_ taxes. I know this because in the text it says,

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



During his toast at Nathaniel's family's tavern, Mr. Gordon talks about taxes. What does he say? Write it on the lines below.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

From his statement, do you think Mr. Gordon is for or against taxes? Why?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ KEY \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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The miller was for taxes.

I know this because in the text it says, "it's only fair that we pay for the protection England has provided to us.... ". This means that the miller believes that the tax should be paid because taxes help pay for the soldiers that protected the colonists during the French and Indian war.

The neighbors were against taxes. I know this because in the text it says,

"The cost of tea is outlandish!" The neighbor ladies complain about the new types of tea they have to drink, but they are glad to not be giving money to the people importing British tea.



During his toast at Nathaniel's family's tavern, Mr. Gordon talks about taxes. What does he say? Write it on the lines below.

They impose tax upon tax, while we are given no say! It is time we unite and govern ourselves!"

From his statement, do you think Mr. Gordon is for or against taxes? Why?

I think Mr. Gordon is against taxes. I think this because in the text he seems angry about having taxes put on him by men across the ocean. Mr. Gordon thinks that the colonists should decide for themselves.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Tea & Taxes!



The neighbor ladies are sitting on the porch discussing the price of tea and cloth. They mention importers and boycotts. Let's learn more!

The Tea Act of 1773 was a law made by the British government. It said that the British East India Company could sell tea directly to the American colonies without paying extra taxes in England. This made their tea cheaper than other tea. But the colonists were upset because they still had to pay a tax on tea, and local tea *importers* lost business since they couldn't compete. Many people thought this was unfair, so they decided to *boycott* British tea and stop buying it. A *boycott* means people refuse to buy something as a way to protest. One famous protest was the Boston Tea Party, where colonists threw tea into the harbor to show they were angry.

In April 1774, a group of New York patriots staged their own protest against British tea. A ship named the *Nancy* carrying tea had to land near Sandy Hook, New Jersey, because the colonists in New York City refused to let it dock. The protesters wanted to make sure the tea never reached the city, so they forced the ship to turn back. This event showed that anger over the Tea Act was spreading beyond Boston. Like the Boston Tea Party, the Sandy Hook protest was part of a larger boycott against British tea and a stand against unfair taxes.

A few notes to make this document easier to understand:

- The letter 's' was often made with an 'f'. You will have to use context clues to help you decode some of the words.
- "The committee" talked about is the Committee of Correspondence. It was a group of colonists who wrote letters to share news and ideas about what Britain was doing. They helped the colonies talk to each other and work together against unfair laws.

### To the Public.

THE long expected TEA SHIP arrived last night at Sandy-Hook, but the pilot would not bring up the Captain till the sense of the city was known. The committee were immediately informed of her arrival, and that the Captain solicits for liberty to come up to provide necessaries for his return. The ship to remain at Sandy-Hook. The committee conceiving it to be the sense of the city that he should have such liberty, signified it to the Gentleman who is to supply him with provisions, and other necessaries. Advice of this was immediately dispatched to the Captain; and whenever he comes up, care will be taken that he does not enter at the custom-house, and that no time be lost in dispatching him.

New-York, April 19, 1774.

**Directions:** Use colored pencils or crayons to underline the information using the color code below.

-  WHO – Who are the people involved?
-  WHAT – What are the people concerned about?
-  WHEN – When was this document created?
-  WHERE – Where did the events in this document take place?
-  WHY – Why was this document created?



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ KEY \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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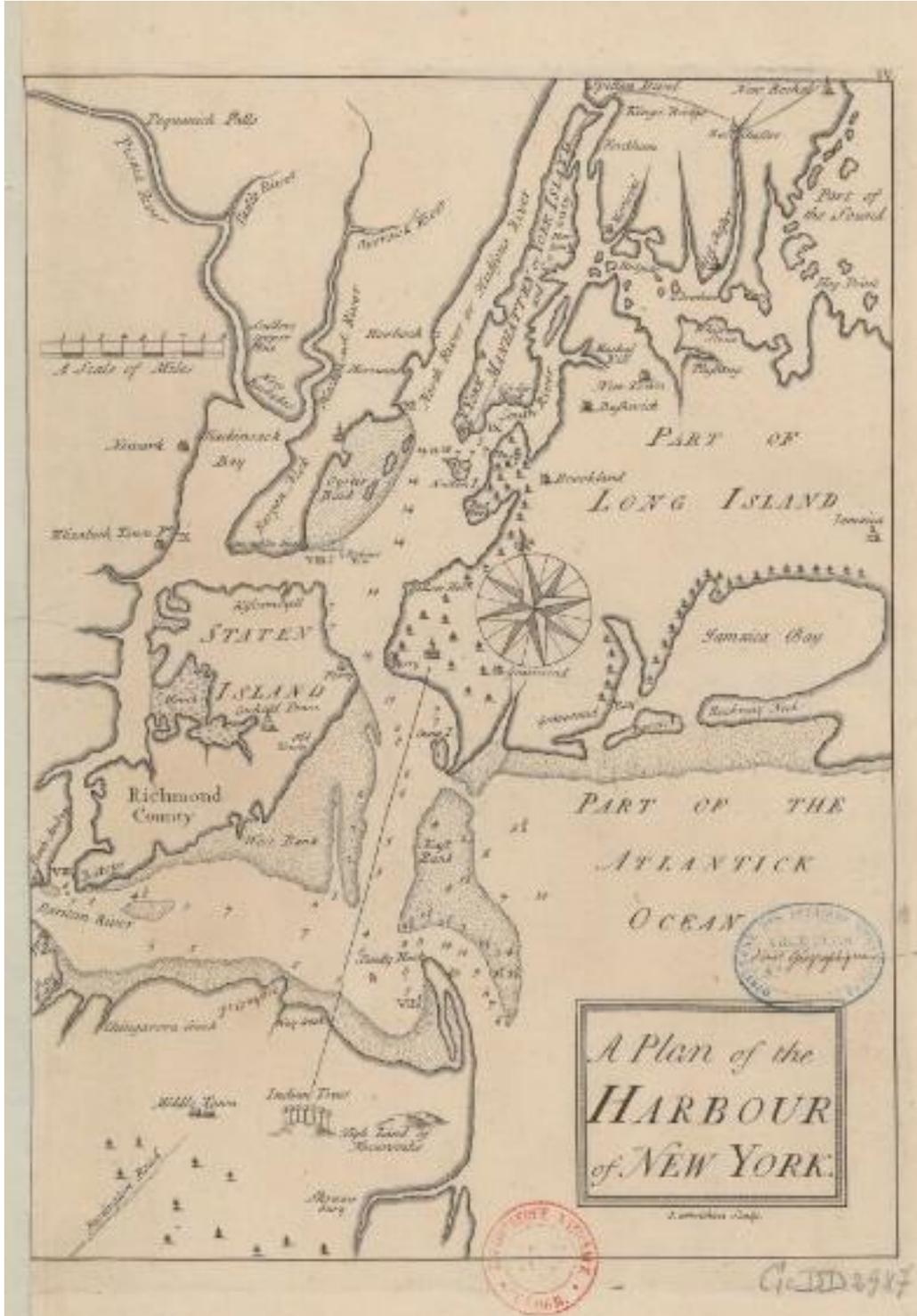
Image courtesy of the Library of Congress.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ . Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Tea & Taxes!

Geography matters! Take a look at the map below. It shows parts of New York and New Jersey.



1. Find Manhattan. At its southern tip is New York City (labeled N. York). Circle this in red.
2. Find Sandy Hook. It is south of Manhattan, and just south of East Bank. Circle it in green.
3. Lightly color the water ways blue.
4. Using black to draw a line from N. York to the Atlantic Ocean. Go south by Oyster Bank, then between West Bank and East Bank. Then go southeast by Sandy Hook and out to the Atlantic.

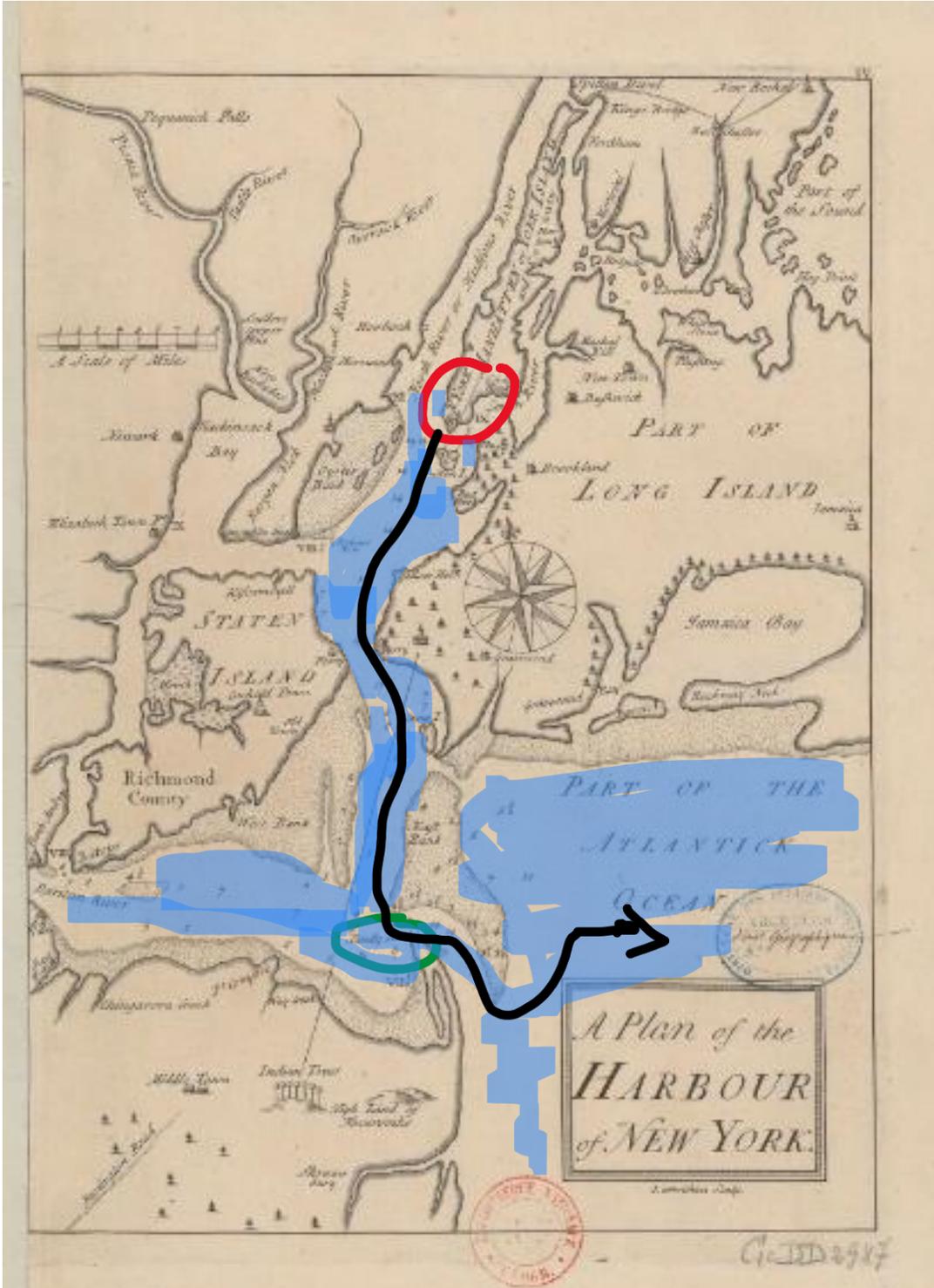
Ships coming in would use that path to get from the Atlantic Ocean to New York City. With the Son's of Liberty and other community members not allowing the *Nancy* to dock in New York City and off-load their tea, the *Nancy* had to dock at Sandy Hook, which is in New Jersey.



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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Ann & Jacob – Enslaved Persons



Ann and Jacob are two enslaved persons who are enslaved by Mr. Gordon. In the story, Nathaniel overhears them say,

“Mr. Gordon keeps talking about the rights of mankind,”

Ann says. “But he owns us.”

What do you think Ann means by this?

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What do you think about what Mr. Gordon has said, knowing that he enslaves Ann and Jacob?

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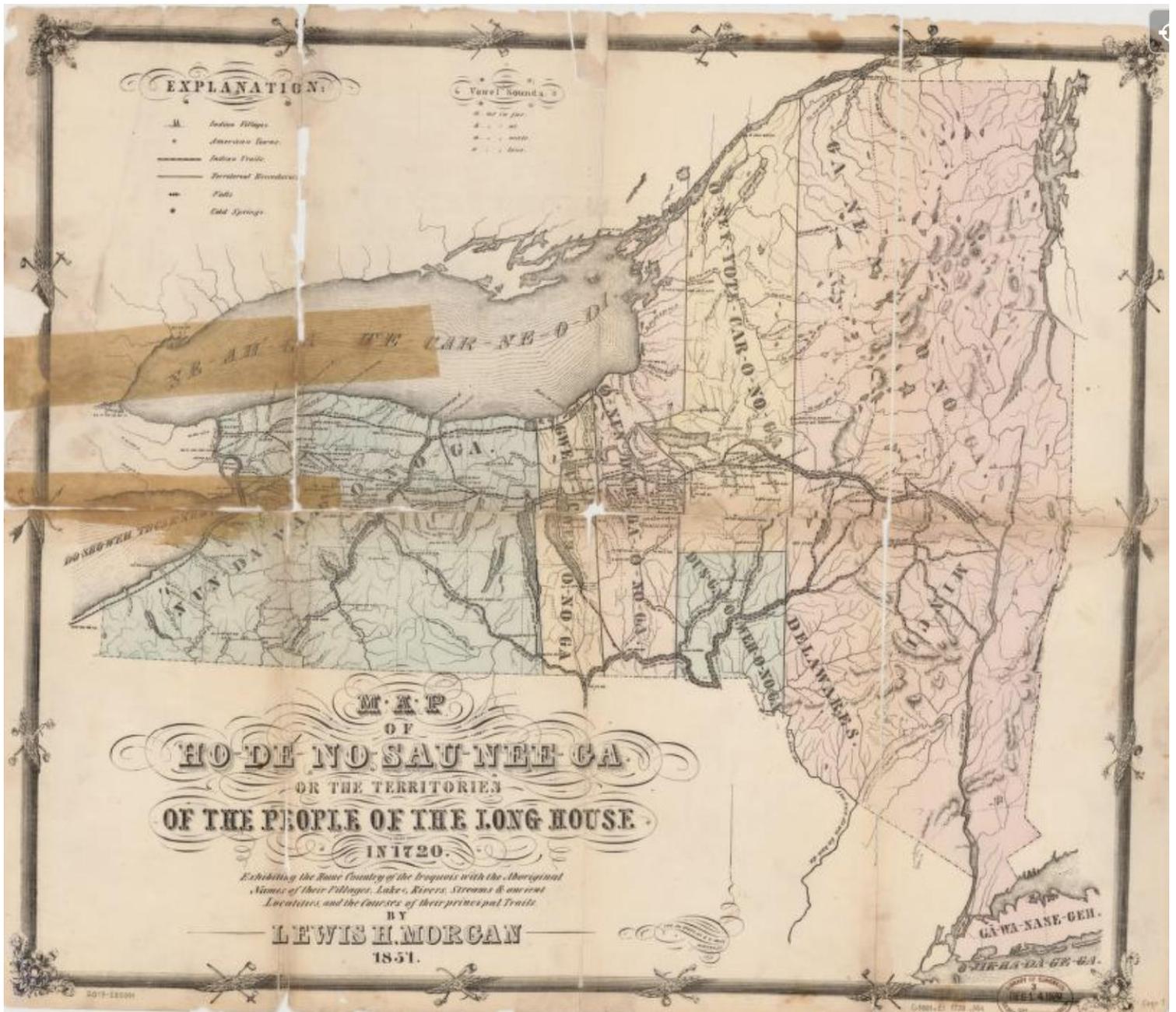


Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Hester and the Land

The map below is from the Library of Congress. It was created 1851, to show the location of the lands of the Haudenosaunee as they were in 1720. The map maker attempted to write the names the Haudenosaunee used in their own language, sounding the words out and writing them phonetically.

The pink section of the map in the far east part of New York state was Mohawk territory. Can you find the Hudson River where it meets the Mohawk River? Circle it. Just north of there is where Saratoga will be, where our story takes place. Hester is a Mohawk woman in the story. When Mrs. Clarke asks about where Hester is living, Hester comments, “My grandmother’s grandmother knew these fields and forests. But every few months a new farmstead is built, and they start clearing more and more trees.”



This map was created in 1771, just four years before our story takes place. Find where the Hudson River and the Mohawk meet. Can you find Saratoga? Circle it. What else do you notice about this map compared to the first one?

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How do these two maps support Hester's comment about the land?

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## I have Ale



Who has a form of punishment and torture in which hot pitch is poured on a person's skin and then they are covered with feathers?

## I have tared and feathered



Who has a way to cross a river using a raft pulled back and forth across the water along a strong rope?

## I have ferry



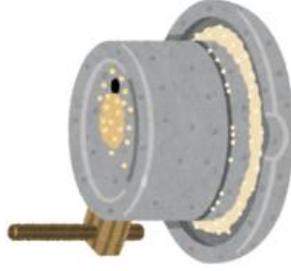
Who has terms for Americans who decided to remain Loyal to England?

## I have Tory & Loyalist



Who has a place where grains like wheat and rye were ground between large stones to create baking flour?

## I have grist mill



Who has conflict between Britain and France. Also called the Seven Years' War?

## I have French & Indian War



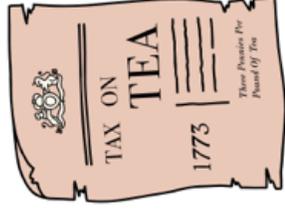
Who has community men who were trained for short-term military service?

## I have militia



Who has a government imposed fee on goods and services?

## I have tax



Who has people who purchase goods overseas to sell in the American Colonies?

## I have importers



Who has an herb that is a member of the mint family that was used as a substitute for tea?

## I have bergamot



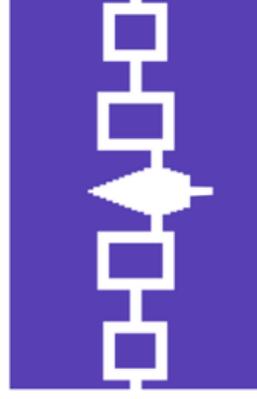
Who has cloth that is spun and woven in the home out of linen and/or wool?

## I have homespun



Who has the eastern-most tribe of the Haudenosaunee?

## I have Mohawk



Who has a type of British money?

## I have pence



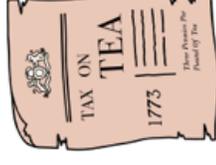
Who has a form of protest where people stop buying a certain item for political reasons?

## I have boycott



Who has to force an unwanted rule or tax on someone?

## I have impose



Who has a network of towns who communicated through letters and organized against the British?

## I have Committees of Correspondence



Who has a brief celebratory speech, usually accompanied by raising a glass and taking a drink?

## I have toast



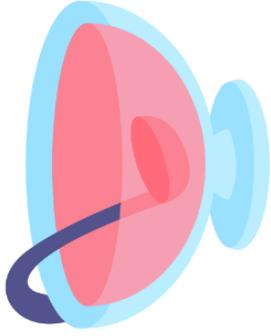
Who has a celebratory cheer said with feeling?

## I have "Huzzah!"



Who has a drink made from fruit and sugar and served from a large bowl?

## I have punch



Who has sugar that was sold in solid cones wrapped in paper?

## I have sugar cones



Who has a person who was said to be legally owned by another person and forced to work without pay?

## I have enslaved person



Who has a root vegetable that can be easily stored over the winter?

## I have turnip



Who has names for the Americans who chose to work for freedom from Great Britain?

## I have Patriots or Rebels



Who has a type of beer that was frequently served at taverns in the 1700s?

## I have a