

Choosing Sides- Loyalist or Patriot?

Directions: Divide the class into groups of three (a group of four will work if necessary, but there should be no groups of two or less). Once the students are in groups, assign them a letter- A, B, or C- the extra member in the group will be a "C" as well. Give those students who are an "A" the "A-Card". Give those students who are a "B" the "B-Card". The "C" students should receive a "C-Card", and there should only be one "A" and one "B" per group.

The Purpose of the Activity: "A" student and "B" student will take turns trying to convince the "C" student(s) in the group to come over to their side. They may have an idea of whether they are a Loyalist or Patriot based on the descriptions, but they can not reveal that information to the "C" student(s). The "C" student will have an opportunity to weigh both sides, and then they must write down which side they chose, and why. After all of the "C" students have chosen a side, the teacher will allow one "A" student and one "B" student to read their Side Card to the class. The teacher will then call on each "C" student, one at a time, to reveal which side they chose and why. The teacher will keep a tally of which side they chose, Loyalist or Patriot. The teacher will then read the Summary at the bottom of this page, and allow the students to comment on any aspect of the activity, prompting a discussion.

Background: During the years leading up to the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge and into the American Revolution, tensions were growing in the colonies between two major groups- the Loyalists and Patriots. Loyalists were those colonials who were loyal to the King of England. They may not have agreed with the policies and laws of the Crown, but they knew they had a duty to uphold the laws and remain loyal to the government that controlled their daily lives. The Patriots were those colonials who were growing weary of British rules and policies, especially when they had no say in how these laws would be made or implemented. They strived for freedom from a tyrannical royal government, often led by Royal Governors who suppressed any utterance of rebellion. The Patriots grew tired and weary of being British citizens without British rights. A third group of people in the colony were a group considered to be neutral- meaning they did not agree with being ruled by a Royal government, but feared the thought of trying to rebel against one of the most powerful countries in the world. So if you were a neutral, where would you have fit in?

Loyalist

- Also known as Tories, King's Men, Royalists
- Made up of:
 - Wealthy merchants
 - Old "official" class
 - Large planters
 - Professional men
 - Conservatives
 - Scottish Highlanders
 - Disgruntled Regulators

Patriots

- Also known as Whigs
- Made up nearly half of the population, which included:
 - Small farmers
 - Artisans
 - Some large landholders
- Stood ready to fight for a "redress of grievances", for independence if need be
- Feared tyranny and "no representation"

