



# **Boston Massacre Activity Bundle Integrated Reading and Critical Thought Activities**

For Grades 5-8

**8 INTEGRATED ACTIVITIES**  
Perfect for Interactive Notebooks  
Perfect for Morning Work or Assessments

**MR. NUSSBAUM**  
LEARNING + FUN

## ANSWERS

Name	Answers
Boston Massacre	D, D, B, C, A, C, B, A, C, B
Crispus Attucks	B, B, D, D, A, ABC, C

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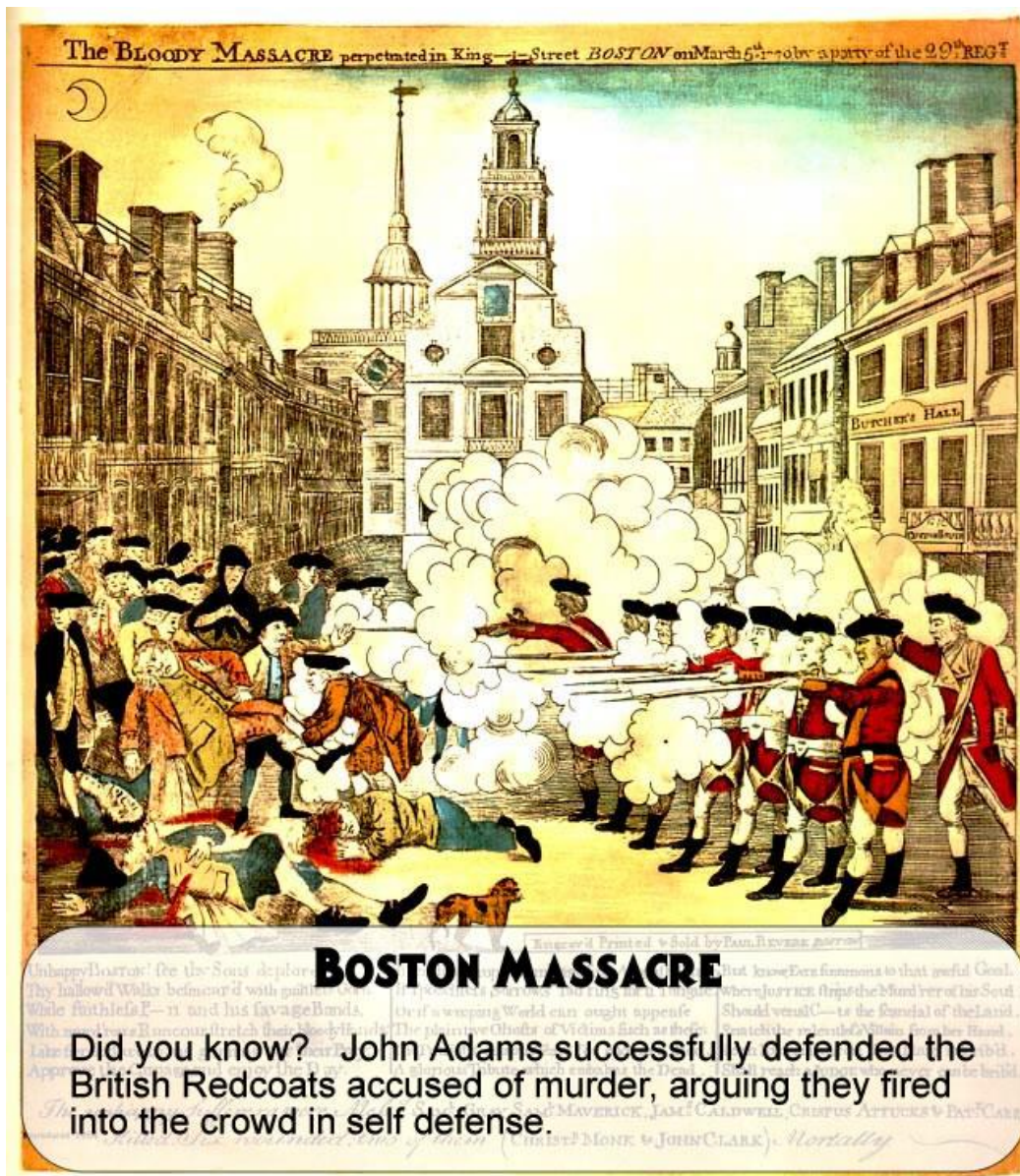
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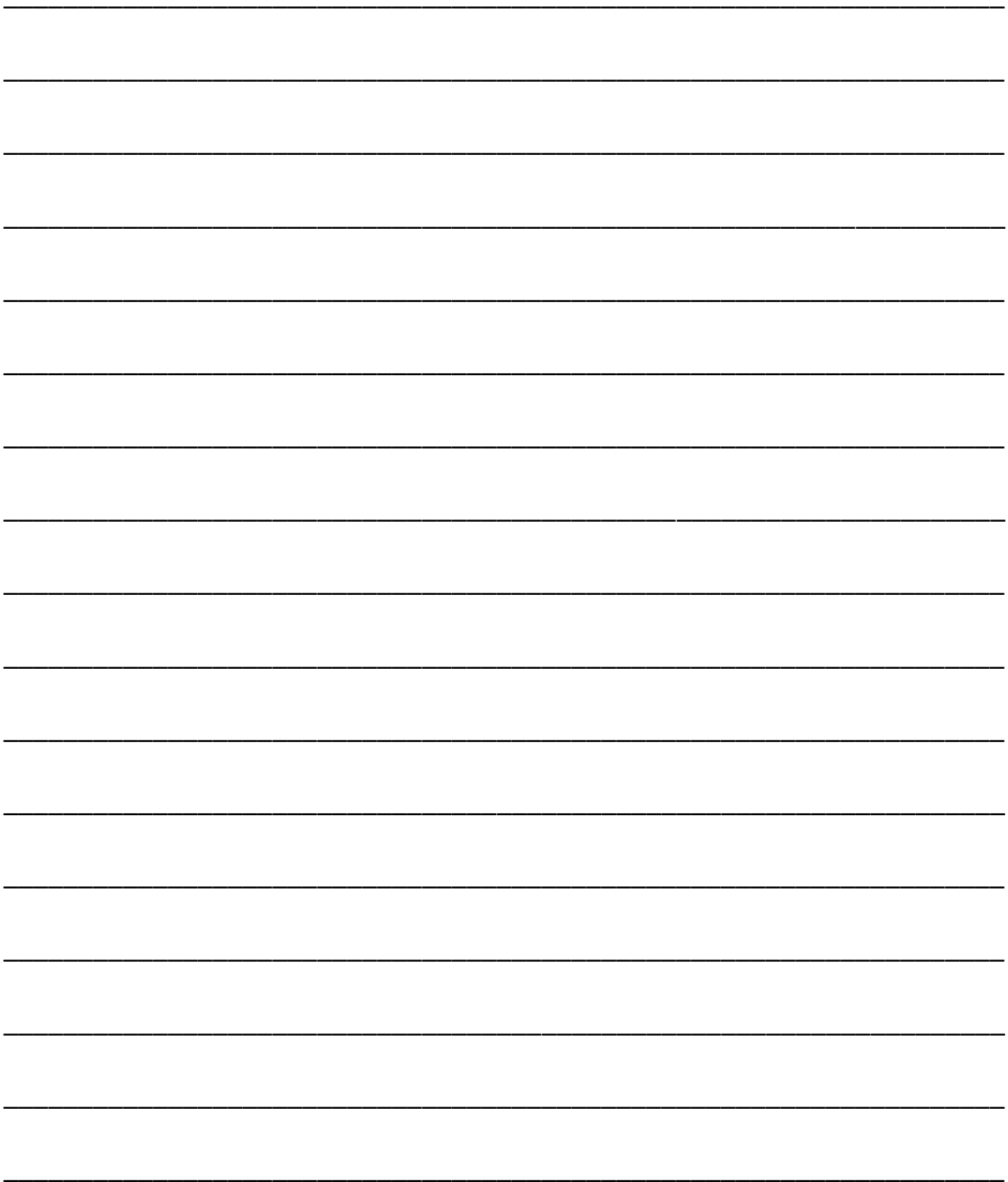
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## Propaganda

During the American Revolution, hostilities toward the British were sometimes driven by propaganda --- writings or depictions designed to provoke rage and anger through exaggeration. Below is a woodcut made by famous patriot Paul Revere after the Boston Massacre. View his depiction of this infamous event. If you were viewing this depiction in 1770, what conclusions would you come to about the Boston Massacre? What tone was he trying to convey?





**Virtual History Teacher**  
**Crispus Attucks Test**

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

Instructions: You are playing the role of a history teacher who is grading the test below. See the questions and your “student’s” answers. Grade the quality of the answers on a scale of 1-4, “1” being a poor answer and “4” being a great answer. For each answer you grade, use your knowledge of Crispus Attucks, or, reference the [mrnussbaum.com](http://mrnussbaum.com) online biography, to add the missing pieces.

<b>Question 1: What was known about the life of Crispus Attucks?</b>	Score:
<b>Student Answer:</b> Not much.	
Your Response:	

<b>Question 2: What happened in the Boston Massacre?</b>	Score:
<b>Student Answer:</b> Some people got killed.	
Your Response:	

<b>Question 3: What did John Adams think of Crispus Attucks? Why?</b>	Score:
<b>Student Answer:</b> He did not like him very much.	
Your Response:	



Answers:

<b>Question 1: What was known about the life of Crispus Attucks?</b>	Score:
<b>Student Answer:</b> Not much.	
Your Response: While a lot is missing from the life story of Crispus Attucks, there is some information about this life. We know that he was a sailor that travelled to different colonial ports, and we know he probably used a false name.	

<b>Question 2: What happened in the Boston Massacre?</b>	Score:
<b>Student Answer:</b> Some people got killed.	
Your Response:  While a lot is missing from the life story of Crispus Attucks, there is some information about this life. We know that he was born in 1723 in Massachusetts, and we know he was a sailor. We also know that he was of mixed descent – African-American and Native American.	

<b>Question 3: What did John Adams think of Crispus Attucks? Why?</b>	Score:
<b>Student Answer:</b> He did not like him very much.	
Your Response: John Adams didn't seem to think very much of Crispus Attucks. He definitely did not see him as a hero, but rather, as someone who tried to play the role of the hero, and someone who likely made the situation worse with "mad behavior."	

**Fact or Fiction?**

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

**Below is a biography on Crispus Attucks. On the following page is a chart with eleven statements. Indicate whether each statement is fact or fiction.**

Crispus Attucks was thought to be the first person of African-American descent to be killed in the American Revolution. He died on March 5, 1770, during the Boston Massacre.

## **Who was Crispus Attucks?**

Crispus Attucks was born sometime in 1723 in or near Framingham, Massachusetts. His cultural heritage is the subject of much debate. Some historians believe Attucks was of African and Native American descent. Although his mother was a slave, it is not clear whether Attucks was considered a free black man, or, was a runaway slave himself. Although details of his life are largely unknown, Attucks spent many years as a sailor and working the docks of various colonial ports. Historians who claim he was a runaway slave believe he used the name “Michael Johnson” to elude capture.

## **Background on the Boston Massacre**

Following the 1768 issuance of the Townshend Act, and the subsequent unrest in Boston, British soldiers patrolled Boston’s streets, leading to resentment and bitterness among the citizens. On the night of March 5, 1770, tensions finally boiled over when a British soldier assaulted a Boston man who was harassing him. Tensions quickly escalated as a mob of Bostonians gathered with ice chunks, bottles, and other objects. Several British soldiers were cornered. When someone within the mob hurled a club at a soldier, gunshots rang out. When the mob finally dispersed, five Bostonians were left dead including Crispus Attucks, who was thought to be the first killed.

## **Not Everyone Saw Attucks as a Hero**

While Attucks and the other dead were hailed as heroes in Boston, future president John Adams thought otherwise. Adams blamed Attucks for trying to be the “hero of the night” and by helping to fan the flames of the riot with his “mad behavior.” Adams defended the British soldiers in the ensuing trial and most were acquitted of wrongdoing, having acted in self-defense. Attucks was buried with the four others who died during the Boston Massacre in the Granary Burying Ground, where many other Boston heroes such as Samuel Adams and John Hancock are buried.

Long after his death, Crispus Attucks remains a hero and symbol of freedom. Schools, parks, roads, and theaters across America bear his name.

	FACT	FICTION
Crispus Attucks was the first African-American killed in the Revolutionary Era		
Crispus Attucks was involved in the Boston Tea Party		
Crispus Attucks was the only African-American killed in the Revolutionary Era		
Crispus Attucks was a runaway slave		
The Boston Massacre occurred in 1770		
Crispus Attucks was one of five Americans killed in the Boston Massacre		
Crispus Attucks was buried in a cemetery with other Boston heroes		
The Boston Massacre occurred before the Townshend Act		
John Adams considered Crispus Attucks a hero		
Crispus Attucks may have used fake names to avoid capture		
Much of the life of Crispus Attucks is unknown		



**Answers:**

	<b>FACT</b>	<b>FICTION</b>
Crispus Attucks was the first African-American killed in the Revolutionary Era	<b>X</b>	
Crispus Attucks was involved in the Boston Tea Party		<b>X</b>
Crispus Attucks was the only African-American killed in the Revolutionary Era		<b>X</b>
Crispus Attucks was a runaway slave		<b>X</b>
The Boston Massacre occurred in 1770	<b>X</b>	
Crispus Attucks was one of five Americans killed in the Boston Massacre	<b>X</b>	
Crispus Attucks was buried in a cemetery with other Boston heroes	<b>X</b>	
The Boston Massacre occurred before the Townshend Act		<b>X</b>
John Adams considered Crispus Attucks a hero		<b>X</b>
Crispus Attucks may have used fake names to avoid capture	<b>X</b>	
Much of the life of Crispus Attucks is unknown	<b>X</b>	

**Crispus Attucks and Text Elements** – What Heading Goes at the Beginning of Each Paragraph?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Below are the headings. Insert them above the correct paragraphs.

<b>Terrible Violence</b>	<b>Background on the Boston Massacre</b>
<b>Legacy</b>	<b>Who was Crispus Attucks?</b>
<b>Not Everyone Saw Attucks as a Hero</b>	

**NO HEADING HERE**

Crispus Attucks was thought to be the first person of African-American descent to be killed in the American Revolution. He died on March 5, 1770, during the Boston Massacre.

Crispus Attucks was born sometime in 1723 in or near Framingham, Massachusetts. His cultural heritage is the subject of much debate. Some historians believe Attucks was of African and Native American descent. Although his mother was a slave, it is not clear whether Attucks was considered a free black man, or, was a runaway slave himself. Although details of his life are largely unknown, Attucks spent many years as a sailor and working the docks of various colonial ports. Historians who claim he was a runaway slave believe he used the name “Michael Johnson” to elude capture.

Following the 1768 issuance of the Townshend Act, and the subsequent unrest in Boston, British soldiers patrolled Boston’s streets, leading to resentment and bitterness among the citizens. On the night of March 5, 1770, tensions finally boiled over when a British soldier assaulted a Boston man who was harassing him.

Tensions quickly escalated as a mob of Bostonians gathered with ice chunks, bottles, and other objects. Several British soldiers were cornered. When someone within the mob hurled a club at a soldier, gunshots rang out. When the mob finally dispersed, five Bostonians were left dead including Crispus Attucks, who was thought to be the first killed.

While Attucks and the other dead were hailed as heroes in Boston, future president John Adams thought otherwise. Adams blamed Attucks for trying to be the “hero of the night” and by helping to fan the flames of the riot with his “mad behavior.” Adams defended the British soldiers in the ensuing trial and most were acquitted of wrongdoing, having acted in self-defense. Attucks was buried with the four others who died during the Boston Massacre in the Granary Burying Ground, where many other Boston heroes such as Samuel Adams and John Hancock are buried.

Long after his death, Crispus Attucks remains a hero and symbol of freedom. Schools, parks, roads, and theaters across America bear his name.

## **Answers:**

- 1. Who was Crispus Attucks?**
- 2. Background on the Boston Massacre**
- 3. Terrible Violence**
- 4. Not Everyone Saw Attucks as a Hero**
- 5. Legacy**

**Crispus Attucks**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

Crispus Attucks was thought to be the first person of African-American descent to be killed in the American Revolution. He died on March 5, 1770, during the Boston Massacre.

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Long after his death, Crispus Attucks remains a hero and symbol of freedom. Schools, parks, roads, and theaters across America bear his name.

**1. What is DEFINITELY known about Crispus Attucks?**

- A. He was a runaway slave
- B. He was of African and Native descent
- C. His exact birthdate
- D. His mother was a slave

**2. Why may have Crispus Attucks used a different name?**

- A. Because he was of Native descent
- B. Because he may have been eluding capture
- C. Because he was trying to fit into Boston society
- D. Because details of his life are largely unknown

**3. Which of the following best describes the Boston Massacre?**

- A. The Boston Massacre was a situation that quickly escalated until the cornered Bostonians fired at British soldiers
- B. The Boston Massacre was a situation in which five British soldiers were killed
- C. The Boston Massacre was an instance in which the British fired into an innocent and unarmed mob of Bostonians
- D. The Boston Massacre was a situation that quickly escalated until the cornered soldiers fired at the Bostonians

**4. What event happened first?**

- A. Crispus Attucks was killed
- B. A club was hurled at a British soldier
- C. The mob of Bostonians dispersed
- D. March 4, 1770

**5. Which of the following best describes the mood of the third paragraph?**

- A. tense
- B. celebratory
- C. uncertain
- D. historic

**6. John Adams... (circle all that are true)**

- A. did not view Crispus Attucks as a hero.
- B. defended British soldiers charged in the Boston Massacre.
- C. would eventually become a president.
- D. defended members of the Boston mob charged in the Boston Massacre.

**7. To which of the following questions would “ after a British soldier assaulted a Bostonian” be the answer?**

- A. What happened after the club was hurled at a British soldier?
- B. When did the mob disperse?
- C. How did the Boston Massacre start?
- D. Why was a Bostonian harassing a British soldier?



## **BOSTON MASSACRE Reading Comprehension**

The situation in Boston grew more intense by the day. Local skirmishes between townspeople and British soldiers (redcoats) increased in frequency as did belligerence toward British soldiers. Rumors abounded throughout the city about possible attacks by soldiers or by the Sons of Liberty.

On Monday night, March 5, 1770, an American (patriot) began harassing a redcoat named John Goldfinch standing guard. Another redcoat nearby, named Hugh White, joined Goldfinch to defend him. White became agitated with the harassment and struck the patriot in the face with his musket. As the patriot cried out in pain, a mob of fifty or so Bostonians gathered. Goldfinch retreated to the nearby Custom House and pointed his musket toward the angry crowd.

The mob began throwing chunks of ice at White and shouted, "Kill him!" Meanwhile, other mobs were forming on Boston's streets. Those mobs began pelting other redcoats with chunks of ice. British officers on the scene ordered soldiers back to their barracks, and several had to be subdued by officers to prevent them from firing into the angry crowd. The mob surrounding Hugh White, however, grew until he was surrounded by over 400 angry Bostonians. White's shouts for reinforcements were answered by British Captain Thomas Preston and several other soldiers who entered the emotional mob.

Preston tried to march the British soldiers from the Custom House back to the main guard, but his path was blocked by the mob of patriots. Despite his demands for the dispersal of the crowd, the mob responded with more insults and ice chunks. When the British justice of the peace tried to read the Riot Act, which would subject all members of the mob to prosecution once it was read, the mob forced him to retreat by throwing snowballs and ice chunks at him.

The mob continued to provoke the soldiers and challenged them to fire. Members of the mob grew more and more violent and began striking the muskets and bayonets of the redcoats with clubs. Despite his attempts to prevent bloodshed, Captain Preston was losing control of his soldiers who were growing increasingly threatened by the angry mob. Suddenly, someone in the crowd hurled a club, which hit British soldier Hugh Montgomery and knocked him to the ground. Montgomery rose and fired into the crowd. Hearing the shot, the mob lunged at Preston and his men, wielding their clubs at them. For the next few minutes, the scene became a chaotic battle in which Preston's men fired into the crowd to avoid being beaten. The soldiers were able to fend off the mob which soon dispersed. When it did disperse, the bodies of several patriots lay dead or wounded on the ground. Preston and his soldiers formed a defensive line with guns drawn to protect themselves from another assault.

Later that evening, Preston and his soldiers were arrested and accused of murder. In the ensuing trial, almost all were acquitted (judged not guilty), as the deaths had occurred in self-defense. Additionally, Parliament repealed the Townshend Act and removed all taxes except for the tax on tea. Despite the anger in Boston over the massacre, American merchants began importing British goods again and the push for independence seemed to fizzle.

**1.) Who was the redcoat captain?**

- a.) Hugh White
- b.) John Goldfinch
- c.) Hugh Montgomery
- d.) Thomas Preston

**2.) What word probably DOES NOT describe the Boston Massacre?**

- a.) tense
- b.) scary
- c.) violent
- d.) jubilant

**3.) Which of the following was not USED in the Boston Massacre?**

- a.) chunks of ice
- b.) bows and arrows
- c.) muskets
- d.) bayonets

**4.) Which of the following BEST describes why the Boston Massacre occurred in the first place?**

- a.) John Goldfinch began harassing a redcoat.
- b.) Almost all redcoats involved were acquitted (judged to be not guilty) of crimes.
- c.) An isolated skirmish between a patriot and a couple of redcoats.
- d.) The redcoats began pelting the approaching mob with ice chunks.

**5.) Which of the following best describes the meaning of "reinforcements" in the following sentence?**

White's shouts for reinforcements were answered by British Captain Thomas Preston and several other soldiers who entered the emotional mob.

- a.) Additional help
- b.) Additional uniforms
- c.) More ice chunks
- d.) An escape route

**6.) Which of the following best describes the cause and effect of the Boston Massacre?**

- a.) Cause - An isolated skirmish between a patriot and a couple of redcoats.  
Effect - The Boston Massacre
- b.) Cause - The justice of the peace reading the Riot Act.  
Effect - The mob of people becomes more violent
- c.) Cause - An isolated skirmish between a patriot and a couple of redcoats.  
Effect - Parliament repeals many of the hated taxes, and the push for independence in Boston slows down.
- d.) Cause - Several patriots are killed in the mob.  
Effect - Parliament repeals many of the hated taxes, and the push for independence in Boston slows down.

**7.) Why were the British officials acquitted (judged to be not guilty) after the Boston Massacre?**

- a.) There was not enough evidence.
- b.) They were defending themselves.
- c.) The British agreed to repeal many of the hated taxes.
- d.) The British hated the patriots.

**8.) What happened first?**

- a.) The justice of the peace attempted to read the Riot Act.
- b.) Hugh Montgomery fired into the crowd.
- c.) Someone hurled a club at Hugh Montgomery.
- d.) Several members of the mob were found dead.

**9.) What happened second?**

- a.) The justice of the peace attempted to read the Riot Act.
- b.) Hugh Montgomery fired into the crowd.
- c.) Someone hurled a club at Hugh Montgomery.
- d.) Several members of the mob were found dead.

**10.) What word would best describe the feelings of Thomas Preston as the situation escalated?**

- a.) worried
- b.) desperate
- c.) unhappy
- d.) sad

**Virtual History Teacher**  
**Boston Massacre Test**

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

Instructions: You are playing the role of a history teacher who is grading the test below. See the questions and your “student’s” answers. Grade the quality of the answers on a scale of 1-4, “1” being a poor answer and “4” being a great answer. For each answer you grade, use your knowledge of Boston Massacre, or, reference the [mrnussbaum.com](http://mrnussbaum.com) narrative, to add the missing pieces.

<b>Question 1: Why did the Boston Massacre happen?</b>	Score:
<b>Student Answer:</b> People were really mad!	
Your Response:	

<b>Question 2: What was the effect of the Boston Massacre?</b>	Score:
<b>Student Answer:</b> Peace.	
Your Response:	

<b>Question 3: Who do you think was to blame for the Boston Massacre?</b>	Score:
<b>Student Answer:</b> I think it was the Redcoats.	
Your Response:	

Answers:

<b>Question 1: Why did the Boston Massacre happen?</b>	Score:
<b>Student Answer:</b> People were really mad!	
<p>Your Response:</p> <p>People were definitely mad! British Redcoats had been patrolling the streets of Boston for two years and the people of Boston did not want them there. The Massacre itself, however started when a drunk citizen started harassing a Redcoat. The Redcoat assaulted him, which drew of mob of angry, drunk, Boston men. Soon, a chaotic and dangerous situation formed and the Redcoats fired into the crowd.</p>	

<b>Question 2: What was the effect of the Boston Massacre?</b>	Score:
<b>Student Answer:</b> Peace.	
<p>Your Response:</p> <p>Following the trial, a surprising period of peace reigned in Boston. Parliament repealed the Townshend Act and the people lifted their boycott of British goods. The push for independence, which seemed so strong before the "massacre", fizzled.</p>	

<b>Question 3: Who do you think was to blame for the Boston Massacre?</b>	Score:
<b>Student Answer:</b> I think it was the Redcoats.	
<p>Your Response:</p> <p>Answers vary here. Some students may write that they blame the British because it seemed like the soldiers patrolling the streets were infringing upon the freedom of the citizens. Others may blame the Bostonians for forming a mob and seemingly provoking the British soldiers into firing. Clearly, the Redcoats who fired into the crowd were doing so out of self-defense.</p>	

**Fact or Fiction?**

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

Below is a biography on the Boston Massacre. On the following page is a chart with ten statements. Indicate whether each statement is fact or fiction.

The situation in Boston grew more tense by the day. Local skirmishes between townspeople and British soldiers (Redcoats) increased in frequency as did belligerence toward British soldiers. Rumors abounded throughout the city about possible attacks by soldiers or by the Sons of Liberty.

## **The Cause**

On Monday night March 5, 1770, an American (patriot) began harassing a Redcoat named John Goldfinch standing guard. Another Redcoat nearby, named Hugh White, joined Goldfinch to defend him. White became agitated with the harassment and struck the patriot in the face with his musket. As the patriot cried out in pain, a mob of fifty or so Bostonians gathered. Goldfinch retreated to the nearby Custom House and pointed his musket toward the angry crowd.

## **The Situation Escalates**

The mob began throwing chunks of ice at White and shouted "Kill him!" Meanwhile, other mobs were forming on Boston's streets. Those mobs began pelting other Redcoats with chunks of ice. British officers on the scene ordered soldiers back to their barracks, and several had to be subdued by officers to prevent them from firing into the angry crowd. The mob surrounding Hugh White, however, grew until he was surrounded by over 400 angry Bostonians. White's shouts for reinforcements were answered by British Captain Thomas Preston and several other soldiers who entered the emotional mob.

Preston tried to march the British soldiers from the Custom House back to the Main Guard, but his path was blocked by the mob of patriots. Despite his demands for the dispersal of the crowd, the mob responded with more insults and ice chunks. When the British justice of the peace tried to read the Riot Act, which would subject all members of the mob to prosecution once it was read, the mob forced him to retreat by throwing snowballs and ice chunks at him.

## **The Unthinkable!**

The mob continued to provoke the soldiers and challenged them to fire. Members of the mob grew more and more violent and began striking the muskets and bayonets of the Redcoats with clubs. Despite his attempts to prevent bloodshed, Captain Preston was losing control of his soldiers who were growing increasingly threatened by the angry mob. Suddenly, someone in the crowd hurled a club which hit British soldier Hugh Montgomery and knocked him to the ground. Montgomery rose and fired into the crowd. Hearing the shot, the mob lunged at Preston and his men, wielding their



clubs at them. For the next few minutes, the scene became a chaotic battle in which Preston's men fired into the crowd to avoid being beaten. The soldiers were able to fend off the mob which soon dispersed. When it did disperse, the bodies of several patriots lay dead or wounded on the ground. Preston and his soldiers formed a defensive line with guns drawn to protect themselves from another assault.

## The Aftermath, Trial, and Surprising Effect

Later that evening, Preston and his soldiers were arrested and accused of murder. In the ensuing trial almost all were acquitted (judged not-guilty), as the deaths had occurred in self-defense. Additionally, Parliament repealed the Townshend Act, and removed all taxes except for the tax on tea. Despite the anger in Boston over the massacre, American merchants began importing British goods again and the push for independence seemed to fizzle.

	FACT	FICTION
The Boston Massacre started when American John Goldfinch assaulted a Redcoat standing guard.		
The number of Bostonians that surrendered to the Redcoats numbered 400 or more.		
Several Redcoats were found dead when the crowd dispersed.		
Even before the massacre, tensions were high in Boston because of rumored attacks.		
Many Redcoats were judged guilty of murder.		
Following the Boston Massacre, Parliament issued the Townshend Act.		
Hugh Montgomery seemed to be the first to fire into the crowd.		
Following the Boston Massacre, Americans were more eager than ever to achieve independence.		
After the Boston Massacre, Americans began importing British goods again.		
Even the justice of the peace was assaulted by ice chunks and snowballs.		
The Redcoats tried to diffuse the situation several times, but ultimately could not.		

**Answers:**

	<b>FACT</b>	<b>FICTION</b>
The Boston Massacre started when American John Goldfinch assaulted a Redcoat standing guard.		<b>X</b>
The number of Bostonians that surrendered to the Redcoats numbered 400 or more.		<b>X</b>
Several Redcoats were found dead when the crowd dispersed.		<b>X</b>
Even before the massacre, tensions were high in Boston because of rumored attacks.	<b>X</b>	
Many Redcoats were judged guilty of murder.		<b>X</b>
Following the Boston Massacre, Parliament issued the Townshend Act.		<b>X</b>
Hugh Montgomery seemed to be the first to fire into the crowd.	<b>X</b>	
Following the Boston Massacre, Americans were more eager than ever to achieve independence.		<b>X</b>
After the Boston Massacre, Americans began importing British goods again.	<b>X</b>	
Even the justice of the peace was assaulted by ice chunks and snowballs.	<b>X</b>	
The Redcoats tried to diffuse the situation several times, but ultimately could not.	<b>X</b>	