

“Who Fired First at Lexington Green?”

BEFORE YOU WRITE:

Analyze each of the *primary sources* and your notes/summaries

- What are the strengths or weaknesses of each witness' testimony?
- What is their viewpoint or bias? How might that influence their "version" of the truth?
- Are there any lengthy time lapses between the event and the testimony that could influence memories?
- Was the witness in a good location to actually see/hear what happened?

Formulate an opinion on who fired the first shot and find specific evidence and testimony that will support your opinion.

SHORT ESSAY: Write your essay in the space provided. If you need more space, you may staple another sheet of paper. Clearly explain your opinion and use evidence to support it. Use proper conventions and check your spelling using the dictionaries located under the windows.

PROMPT: The Revolutionary War began on April 19th, 1775, when “the shot heard ‘round the world” was fired on Lexington Green. By the end of the day, colonists and English soldiers had been killed, and the events that would lead to American independence and change the history of the world were set in motion. Which side (colonists or English) fired the shot that started the Revolutionary War and changed the course of world history? Use facts and eyewitness’ evidence to support your opinion.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

- **English / British** are also referred to as Regulars, Redcoats, Troops, soldiers and infantry
- **American colonists** are also referred to as the Militia, Rebels, Colonials and onlookers

DIRECTIONS: Use the map and eyewitness accounts (#2-#7) to complete the note chart to organize information about which side fired the first shot of the Revolutionary War. The accounts will disagree, so it is important to really analyze why someone might be a “bad” witness and therefore not as believable/reliable.

<u>Witness Name / account #</u>	<u>English or American?</u>	<u>Who fired first?</u>	<u>What makes this person a trustworthy witness?</u>	<u>What makes this person an unreliable witness?</u>
John Parker (sample notes for eyewitness account #1)	American militia commander	English fired first	1.As the American commander he should be honorable and truthful. 2.At the front of the line with an unobstructed view. 3.Testimony given under oath.	1. As the American commander, he many not want to be blamed for starting a war with England 2. Could be lying to cover up lack of control over his men