

Battle of Lexington and Concord Source Analysis

Document 1

During the standoff between the Americans and British troops, a shot was fired. Nobody on the green in Lexington could tell where the shot came from; nobody would ever know. In the ensuing melee, the redcoats fired a musket volley, fixed their bayonets, and charged. All was confusion; one of the witnesses, Paul Revere, could discern only "a continual roar of musketry." In fifteen minutes it was over. Eight colonists lay dead and ten were wounded.

From Lexington, British troops marched to Concord, where they destroyed the few supplies the militia had not hidden. After a fierce skirmish with militia, they started back to Boston. Hundreds of militiamen joined the counterattack, forcing the British to make a desperate retreat through a gauntlet of musket fire. Exhausted and panicked, British soldiers lashed out, killing civilians, ransacking and looting houses, and setting fires.

News of the fighting at Lexington and Concord rallied "Friends of American Liberty" in all the colonies. Some colonists recoiled from the notion of taking up arms. Others joined the fight resolved to save themselves and their children from lives of "perpetual slavery" under British rule.

Source: Smithsonian National Museum of American History

What claim can be made about the outcome of the Battle of Lexington and Concord?	What evidence did you use from the document, context and/or source to make your claim?

Document 2

"In Lexington the enemy set fire to Deacon Joseph Loring's house and barn, Mrs. Millikin's house and shop, and Mr. Joshua Bond's house and shop, which were all consumed. They **pillaged** almost every house they passed by, breaking and destroying doors, windows, glasses, etc. and carrying off clothing and other valuable effects."

Source: Salem Gazette, April 25, 1775

Vocabulary:

pillaged- robbed, stole

What claim can be made about the outcome of the Battle of Lexington and Concord?	What evidence did you use from the document, context and/or source to make your claim?

Document 3

The Battle of Lexington, engraving by Amos Doolittle, 1775 Courtesy of Connecticut Historical Society

What claim can be made about the outcome of the Battle of Lexington and Concord?	What evidence did you use from the document, context and/or source to make your claim?

Document 4

April 19, 1775

At dawn, the British troops arrived in Lexington and saw around 70 militiamen gathered on the town green. The militiamen were heavily outnumbered against the 700 British soldiers. The commander of the militiamen ordered the men to hold their fire. John Parker, a commander of the militiamen is reported to have told his men, "Stand your ground. Don't fire unless fired upon, but if they mean to have a war, let it begin here." Then, a shot rang out. The British soldiers fired several rounds at the militiamen and when the smoke cleared, eight militiamen were dead. No redcoats died at that confrontation.

What claim can be made about the outcome of the Battle of Lexington and Concord?	What evidence did you use from the document, context and/or source to make your claim?