

Excerpt from *My Brother Sam is Dead*

by James Lincoln Collier and Christopher Collier.

Because our church was the English Church, the people here on the Ridge seemed to be more on the Tory side and wanted to be loyal to the King. To tell the truth, I didn't exactly understand what the argument was all about. Ever since I could remember, all my life in fact, there had been these discussions and arguments and debates about whether we should rebel. What kept confusing me about it was that the arguments didn't have two sides the way an argument should, but about six sides. Some people said that the King was the King and that was that, and we out to do what he said. Other people said that men were supposed to be free to govern themselves and we should rebel and drive the Lobsterbacks out altogether. Some others said, well, they were born Englishmen and they wanted to die Englishmen but that the Colonies ought to have more say in their own government, and that may be we'd have to give the Lobsterbacks a taste of blood just to show the King that we meant business. Oh, people had all kinds of ideas—that we New Englanders ought to join together, or that all the Colonies ought to set one big government or that—well I don't know, I can't even remember all the different sides there were to the argument. You can see how confusing it was when you realize that sometimes Sam's side was called Patriots and sometimes they were called Rebels. I guess I'd been reading newspaper stories about it and hearing people shout about it for so long that I didn't listen anymore—it just went in one ear and out the other.

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Colonist Scenario Cards

Directions: Read each scenario and determine if the colonist described would have joined the Patriots, Loyalists, or remained neutral.

Colonist A

Colonist A is a wealthy merchant who has served as a politician in New York. He comes from an old American family that has longstanding ties with England. Many of the new acts have begun to affect his business. However, he still is able to continue his lavish lifestyle.

Colonist B

Colonist B is a young Southern woman. Her father owns a major tobacco plantation. He sells 90% of his crops to England. She has been courted by noble Englishmen and is currently engaged to the son of a wealthy plantation owner.

Colonist C

Colonist C is a lawyer who lives in Western New York right on the border of Iroquois territory. Colonist C is frequently worried about the possibility of Native American attack and supports the Proclamation of 1763 because he is aware of the danger of crossing into Native territory. Colonist C worries about his family and the dangers of the colonies going to war with England.

Colonist D

Colonist D is an enslaved African on a modest plantation in South Carolina. His masters treat him well, and he is able to stay with his wife and child. He has heard rumors that the British have offered freedom to any enslaved person with a Rebel master. He has also heard his master openly complain about the effect taxes are having on his modest plantation.



Colonist Scenario Cards *(continued)*

Colonist E

Colonist E owns a printing press in Boston, Massachusetts. Business had been going very well for him until the Stamp Act was passed. He was relieved when it was repealed and then anguished when more acts were passed by Parliament. He has also been getting threats from British soldiers in Boston about some of the articles he has published. He recently had to close down his printing press, but there are rumors that he is renting it to people during the night.

Colonist F

Colonist F is a free black man who works at the shipping docks. He has heard and witnessed many arguments and confrontations about the different acts that England has imposed on the colonies. Colonist F decided long ago to keep his head down, keep working, and stay out of it. Recently a few of his colleagues have been let go due to declining business from the recent acts passed by Parliament. Colonist F is worried that his job may be next.

Colonists G

Colonist G is a widow from Maryland. She now owns her late husband's tavern. She has lost much of her income due to taxes and has fallen behind on some of her bills. She has also noticed that her most frequent patrons have begun to visit the tavern less and less. She is not sure how much longer she will be able to keep the tavern open.

Colonists H

Colonist H is a Puritan living in Plymouth, Massachusetts. His day begins early. He goes to church to pray and then goes home and works in the field. His family is self-sufficient; they grow their own food, have animals for meat and milk, and make their own clothing. Their days are filled with work and prayer.

