

Primary Source:

The Boston Massacre engraving by Paul Revere, 1770

- How did African Americans participate in the Revolutionary War?
- How did their actions reflect a desire to enjoy their natural rights?

- I can connect actions taken by African Americans during the Revolutionary War to an understanding of natural rights of equality and justice.
- I can summarize the main ideas of historical text.
- I can create an argument supported by evidence from primary sources.

Building Context

On March 5, 1770, a clash between Bostonians and British troops led to the death of five colonists. Within three weeks, Boston patriot and printer Paul Revere offered his version of this event, now known as the Boston Massacre. In the below image, Revere included a poem, paragraph, and the names of the Patriot men who died as a result of the violence that night. Crispus Attucks, one of the five casualties of the 1770 incident, was a sailor of African and American Indian descent and is depicted in the bottom left of the engraving.

The Boston Massacre engraving by Paul Revere, 1770

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Boston_Massacre_high-res.jpg



The paragraph on the bottom right of the image reads:

But know, FATE summons to that awful Goal.
Where JUSTICE strips the Murd'rer of his Soul.
Should venal C__ts the scandal of the Land.
Snatch the relentless Villian from her Hand.
Keen Execrations [something detested or hated] of this Plate inscribed
Shall reach a Judge who never can be brib'd.

Comprehension and Analysis Questions

1. What evidence does this image provide about the role of African Americans during the American Revolution?

2. How does the paragraph under the image show that an understanding of the natural right of justice was central to the Patriot cause?

