For Crown or Colony? Prologue & Part 1

Guiding Question: Why did protests against the British colonial government break out in Boston in the early 1770s?

Document Analysis

Text Analysis: "The Liberty Song" by John Dickinson, 1768

Directions: Times change and so does the style of English we speak and songs we listen to. Read the first stanza of the song in the left-hand column. Notice that someone has translated it from rhyming song lyrics that read like a poem into ordinary English prose in the right-hand column.

Your job is to read the stanza your group has been assigned and translate it into ordinary English in the right-hand column. You may use any resources you need in order to decode the lines.

Strategies to try:

- Work out loud. Try emphasizing different words.
- Divide the sentences into parts that sound like chunks of meaning and work on each, one at a time.
- Find the words and phrases you do understand to help you make sense of the ones you don't.
- Rearrange words and phrases.

"The Liberty Song," *published in the* Boston Gazette *in 1768, was written to be sung to the tune of a popular English tune called "Heart of Oak." Perhaps the first patriotic song in America, its lyrics were written by John Dickinson, a member of the Pennsylvania Assembly who later fought in the Revolutionary War and became Governor of Pennsylvania.*

1	Come, join hand in hand, brave Americans all, And rouse your bold hearts at fair Liberty's call; No tyrannous acts shall suppress your just claim, Or stain with dishonor America's name.	*Join together Americans. Awaken your brave hearts because liberty is calling you. The actions of a dictator cannot keep you from getting what is rightfully yours or humiliate us.*
2	Chorus: In Freedom we're born and in Freedom we'll live. Our purses are ready. Steady, friends, steady; Not as slaves, but as Freemen our money we'll give.	
3	Our worthy forefathers, let's give them a cheer,	

	To climates unknown did courageously steer; Thro' oceans to deserts for Freedom they came, And dying, bequeath'd us their freedom and fame. *Chorus*	
4	The tree their own hands had to Liberty rear'd, They lived to behold growing strong and revered; With transport they cried, Now our wishes we gain, For our children shall gather the fruits of our pain. *Chorus*	
5	Then join hand in hand, brave Americans all, By uniting we stand, by dividing we fall; In so righteous a cause let us hope to succeed, For heaven approves of each generous deed. *Chorus*	

Source: John Dickinson, "The Liberty Song," The Boston Chronicle, August 29, 1768; from the Dickinson College Archives and Special Collections, Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

Word Bank

rouse (v) – to awaken
tyrannous (adj) – cruel and controlling
purses (n) – a pouch used to hold money
Freemen (n) – a full citizen with the right to vote
bequeath (v) – to pass on from one generation to the next
rear'd/reared (v) – raised and nurtured
transport (n) – strong emotion
fruits (n) – the product or consequences of something
righteous (adj) – right and fair

Discussion Questions

1. What clues do these lyrics give you about why some colonists rebelled? Be prepared to cite specific parts of the text to support your answer.

2. What does freedom mean to the colonists who rebelled? What threatens their freedom? Be prepared to cite specific parts of the text to support your answer.