

# Meeting of the Minds: Regulator Meeting Reenactment

Grades 6-8

## Lesson

Students will reenact a meeting of the Regulators BEFORE the Battle of Alamance. Since this is an imagined meeting, there will be representatives from both Governor Tryon's side and the Regulator side. The goal is for students to discuss the goal of the Regulators and understand the movement from both sides. Each student will either choose or be assigned a historical figure and will argue from that character's point of view in class. Students will research and write a paper based on a set of questions or as directed by the teacher to turn in the day of the Regulator Meeting. Some characters have generic names, e.g. Orange County Regulator, so students should focus on researching what farmers in Orange County were upset about pertaining to taxation.

## North Carolina Standards

7.C & G.1.1 - Explain how the power and authority of various types of governments have created conflict that has led to change.

## Background

The Regulator Movement took place in North Carolina from 1768 to 1771, and culminated in the Battle of Alamance in May of 1771. The Regulators consisted of poor, white farmers who were tired of high taxes and corrupt crown officials. Some historians argue that the Regulator Movement was a catalyst for the American Revolution in North Carolina, however it is important to note that the Regulators did not want a change in government, they just wanted changes in tax policy. Interestingly enough, the majority of the remaining Regulators did not join the Patriot cause when the American Revolution broke out in 1775.

## Learning Objectives

- Students will think critically about the Regulator Movement and how it impacted North Carolina history
- Students will think about how Regulator Movement from various points of view
- Students will work with primary sources in order to get a better understanding of the Regulator Movement in North Carolina
- Students will think about the Regulator Movement from an active point of view of those who were impacted by it

THE ALLIANCE FOR HISTORIC

HILLSBOROUGH

## Setting

The following characters are meeting in 1770 at the court seat in Hillsborough as a last ditch effort to avoid bloodshed. Students will discuss from the point of view of their assigned character as a way to understand the movement from all sides.

Prior to the class meeting, students will spend time researching and reading about the Regulator Movement in North Carolina and Orange County, as well as the Battle of Alamance. Students will be asked to write a brief paper from the perspective of their assigned character based on questions given by their teacher. After the activity is completed, students will write a one page paper summarizing the reenactment.

## Suggested Characters

- Herman Husband
- Wife of Herman Husband
- James Butler
- Governor William Tryon
- Margaret Wake Tryon
- Edmund Fanning
- General Hugh Waddell
- Regulator from Orange County
- Richard Blackledge, Commissary
- James Hunter
- Rednap Howell
- Female Regulator
- Occaneechi Tribe Member
- Cherokee Tribe Member
- Scottish Immigrant from Western North Carolina
- Lord Hillsboro
- Captain Gideon Wright
- Benjamin Merrill
- James Pugh
- Captain Robert Messer
- Robert Mataer
- \*Africa Parker: Africa Parker was not freed until 1799, but he ran a still and provided alcohol to the majority of the town. As a successful business owner, how would he have felt about the Regulator Movement; how would he have felt about taxes?
- William Hooper
- Judge Richard Henderson
- Jean Holeman
- Female merchant at Hillsborough Courthouse

THE ALLIANCE FOR HISTORIC

HILLSBOROUGH

## Questions to discuss

- What differences existed in the 1700s in colonial North Carolina's land regions, people, cultures, natural resources, and economic interests?
- How did taxation contribute to colonial frustration and conflicts in North Carolina?
- What were the Regulators' grievances?
- Why didn't Governor Tryon support the Regulators?
- When people are upset with the decisions of their government, what choices do they have in voicing their displeasure?
- What compelled the Regulators to escalate their actions over the years?
- What methods of civil disobedience did the Regulators employ and how did the colonial government respond?
- While the Regulator Movement is fought between poor white farmers and representatives of the crown, how do you think the movement impacted the enslaved, freed Blacks, and women?
- Could the Battle of Alamance be avoided?
- How was the Regulator Movement different from the stirrings of the American Revolution that begin in the mid-1770s?
- 

## Research Links

History of the Regulator Movement:

[https://historichillsborough.org/regulator-](https://historichillsborough.org/regulator-250/#:~:text=250%20years%20ago%2C%20a%20group,right%20here%20in%20Hillsborough%2C%20NC.)

[250/#:~:text=250%20years%20ago%2C%20a%20group,right%20here%20in%20Hillsborough%2C%20NC.](https://historichillsborough.org/regulator-250/#:~:text=250%20years%20ago%2C%20a%20group,right%20here%20in%20Hillsborough%2C%20NC.)

<https://www.ncpedia.org/history/colonial/regulator-movement>

<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/regulator-war>

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Regulators-of-North-Carolina>

<https://www.americanacorner.com/blog/north-carolina-regulators>

Primary Sources Pertaining to the Regulator Movement:

<https://digital.ncdcr.gov/collections/regulator-movement>

THE ALLIANCE FOR HISTORIC

HILLSBOROUGH