

The Story Behind the Boston Massacre



Notes on Propaganda:

- Before the Revolutionary War both the British and the colonists used **propaganda** to influence public opinion.
- **Propaganda** is verbal or visual communication that is designed to influence a person's opinions, emotions, or actions. It is a form of **bias** (prejudice in favor of or against, usually in a way considered to be unfair).
- Visual propaganda uses symbols or images to influence a person's opinion. It often contains distortions of the truth.

Questions to consider:

1. Explain how Paul Revere distorted the truth in his engraving.
2. How did he portray the British soldiers?
3. How did he portray the colonists?
4. Why did he call his engraving the "Boston Massacre"?
5. What message was he attempting to send to the readers of colonial newspapers?

Boston Massacre Engraving Analysis

VIDEO: What really happened.	ENGRAVING: Paul Revere's view.
<p><i>What really happened:</i></p> <p>The riot occurred after nine o'clock on a cold winter night with a thick layer of snow and ice covering the ground. (March 1770)</p>	<p><i>What the engraving shows:</i></p>
<p><i>What really happened:</i></p>	<p><i>What the engraving shows:</i></p> <p>The soldiers lined up like a firing squad and shooting their muskets at the same time under direct orders of their commander, Captain Preston.</p>
<p><i>What really happened:</i></p> <p>Several witnesses testified that British Captain Preston was standing IN FRONT of his troops attempting to keep their muskets down and keep them calm.</p>	<p><i>What the engraving shows:</i></p>
<p><i>What really happened:</i></p>	<p><i>What the engraving shows:</i></p> <p>Well-dressed men wearing proper coats and vests and tri-corner hats. All appear to be unarmed.</p>
<p><i>What really happened:</i></p> <p>The mob was angry and riotous—throwing rocks and snowballs and wielding clubs and boards.</p>	<p><i>What the engraving shows:</i></p>
<p><i>What really happened:</i> <i>Self-defense or unprovoked attack? Explain.</i></p>	<p><i>What the engraving shows:</i> <i>Self-defense or unprovoked attack? Explain.</i></p>