

TEACHER'S GUIDE

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MISSION 1: "For Crown or Colony?"

Boston Gazette's Article on the Murder of Christopher Seider

Christopher Seider (here called Snider) was an eleven-year old boy who was part of a mob demonstrating at the home of Ebenezer Richardson, a known Boston loyalist. After the mob broke down Richardson's front door, he fired a musket into the crowd, killing Seider. The event caused outrage among Boston patriots, and contributed to an atmosphere of tension and hostility in the days leading up to the Boston Massacre two weeks later.

1 On Thursday last in the Forenoon, a barbarous Murder
2 extended with many aggravating Circumstances, was
3 committed on the Body of a young lad of about eleven
4 Years of Age, Son to Mr. ___ Snider of this Town. A
5 Number of Boys had been diverting themselves with
6 the Exhibition of a Piece of Pageantry near the House
7 of Theopolis Lillie who perhaps at this Juncture of
8 Affairs may with the most Propriety be described by
9 the Name of an IMPORTER — This exhibition naturally
10 occasioned Numbers to assemble, and in a very little
11 Time there was a great Concourse of Persons,
12 especially the younger sort. — One Ebenezer
13 Richardson, who has been many years employed as an
14 under Officer of the Customs, long known by the
15 Name of an INFORMER, and consequently a Person of
16 a most abandoned Character, it seems, took Umbrage
17 at the supposed Indignity offered to the Importer,
18 and soon became a Party to the Affair-- He first
19 attempted to demolish the Pageantry, and failing in the
20 attempt, he retired to his House, which was but a few Rods
21 from the Exhibition. Several Persons passing by the House,
22 Richardson, who seemed determined to take this Occasion to
23 make a Disturbance, without the least Provocation, gave
24 them the most opprobrious Language, charging them with
25 Perjury, &c., which raised a Dispute between them—This, it
26 is supposed, occasioned the boys to gather nearer
27 Richardson's House, and he, thinking he had now a good
28 Colouring to perpetuate the Villainy, threatened to fire upon
29 them, and Swore by GOD that he would make the Place too
30 hot for some of them before Night, and that he would make

31 Lane through them if they did not go away. Soon after, a
32 Number of Brickbats or Stones were thrown among the
33 People from Richardson's House, but the Witnesses, who
34 were sworn before the Magistrates, declared that it did not
35 appear to them that till then any Sort of Attack was made
36 by the People on the House. This, however, brought on a
37 Skirmish, and Richardson discharged his Piece, loaded with
38 Swan Shot, at the Multitude, by which the unhappy young

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39 Person above-mentioned was mortally wounded, having since
40 died of his Wounds — A Youth, Son to Captain John Gore,
41 was also wounded in one of his Hands and in both his Thighs,
42 by which his life was endangered, but he is likely to soon
43 recover of his Wounds

72 ...We are assured that not less than eleven Shot were found in
73 the Body of the unfortunate Boy, who was inhumanly murdered
74 by the infamous Informer on Thursday last.

75 It is hoped the unexpected and melancholy Death of young
76 Snider will be a Means for the future of preventing any, but
77 more especially the Soldiery, from being too free in the Use
of their Instruments of Death.

Source: *Boston Gazette*, February 26, 1770