

**Fact or Fiction?**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Below is a biography on Crispus Attucks. On the following page is a chart with twelve statements. Indicate whether each statement is fact or fiction.**

Crispus Attucks was thought to be the first person of African-American descent to be killed in the American Revolution. He died on March 5, 1770, during the Boston Massacre.

## **Who was Crispus Attucks?**

Crispus Attucks was born sometime in 1723 in or near Framingham, Massachusetts. His cultural heritage is the subject of much debate. Some historians believe Attucks was of African and Native American descent. Although his mother was a slave, it is not clear whether Attucks was considered a free black man, or, was a runaway slave himself. Although details of his life are largely unknown, Attucks spent many years as a sailor and working the docks of various colonial ports. Historians who claim he was a runaway slave believe he used the name “Michael Johnson” to elude capture.

## **Background on the Boston Massacre**

Following the 1768 issuance of the Townshend Act, and the subsequent unrest in Boston, British soldiers patrolled Boston’s streets, leading to resentment and bitterness among the citizens. On the night of March 5, 1770, tensions finally boiled over when a British soldier assaulted a Boston man who was harassing him. Tensions quickly escalated as a mob of Bostonians gathered with ice chunks, bottles, and other objects. Several British soldiers were cornered. When someone within the mob hurled a club at a soldier, gunshots rang out. When the mob finally dispersed, five Bostonians were left dead including Crispus Attucks, who was thought to be the first killed.

## **Not Everyone Saw Attucks as a Hero**

While Attucks and the other dead were hailed as heroes in Boston, future president John Adams thought otherwise. Adams blamed Attucks for trying to be the “hero of the night” and by helping to fan the flames of the riot with his “mad behavior.” Adams defended the British soldiers in the ensuing trial and most were acquitted of wrongdoing, having acted in self-defense. Attucks was buried with the four others who died during the Boston Massacre in the Granary Burying Ground, where many other Boston heroes such as Samuel Adams and John Hancock are buried.

Long after his death, Crispus Attucks remains a hero and symbol of freedom. Schools, parks, roads, and theaters across America bear his name.

	<b>FACT</b>	<b>FICTION</b>
Crispus Attucks was the first African-American killed in the Revolutionary Era		
Crispus Attucks was involved in the Boston Tea Party		
Crispus Attucks was the only African-American killed in the Revolutionary Era		
Crispus Attucks was a runaway slave		
The Boston Massacre occurred in 1770		
Crispus Attucks was one of five Americans killed in the Boston Massacre		
Crispus Attucks was buried in a cemetery with other Boston heroes		
The Boston Massacre occurred before the Townshend Act		
John Adams considered Crispus Attucks a hero		
Crispus Attucks may have used fake names to avoid capture		
Much of the life of Crispus Attucks is unknown		

**Answers:**

	<b>FACT</b>	<b>FICTION</b>
Crispus Attucks was the first African-American killed in the Revolutionary Era	<b>X</b>	
Crispus Attucks was involved in the Boston Tea Party		<b>X</b>
Crispus Attucks was the only African-American killed in the Revolutionary Era		<b>X</b>
Crispus Attucks was a runaway slave		<b>X</b>
The Boston Massacre occurred in 1770	<b>X</b>	
Crispus Attucks was one of five Americans killed in the Boston Massacre	<b>X</b>	
Crispus Attucks was buried in a cemetery with other Boston heroes	<b>X</b>	
The Boston Massacre occurred before the Townshend Act		<b>X</b>
John Adams considered Crispus Attucks a hero		<b>X</b>
Crispus Attucks may have used fake names to avoid capture	<b>X</b>	
Much of the life of Crispus Attucks is unknown	<b>X</b>	