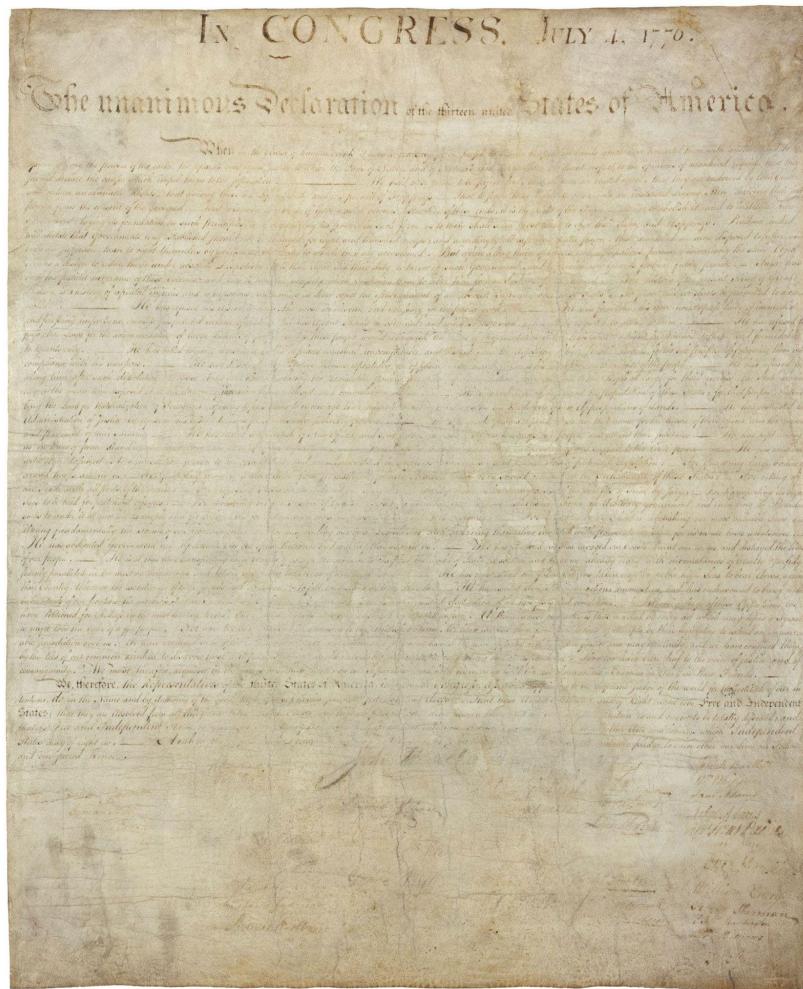


Activity 1: Declaration of Independence Close Reading



Activity 1: Declaration of Independence Close Reading

Guiding Question

- How did the persuasive language of the Declaration of Independence influence the development of core American ideals and values?

National Standards

National Center for History in the Schools History Standards

- *Era 3: Revolution and the New Nation (1754 - 1820s)*
 - *Standard 1:* The causes of the American Revolution, the ideas and interests involved in forging the revolutionary movement, and the reasons for the American victory
 - *Standard 1B:* The student understands the principles articulated in the Declaration of Independence.

National Standards for Civics and Government

- *NSCG.9-12.2.C.1* American national identity and political culture. Students should be able to explain the importance of shared political and civic beliefs and values to the maintenance of constitutional democracy in an increasingly diverse American society.

Common Core State Standards

- *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1:* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information. See also: *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1*
- *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.2:* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text. See also: *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2*
- *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.4:* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science. See also: *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.4*

College, Career, & Civic Life C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards

- *D2.Civ.2.9-12.* Analyze the role of citizens in the U.S. political system, with attention to various theories of democracy, changes in Americans' participation over time, and alternative models from other countries, past and present.
- *D2.His.11.9-12.* Critique the usefulness of historical sources for a specific historical inquiry based on their maker, date, place of origin, intended audience, and purpose.

Educating for American Democracy Roadmap

- *HDQ4.4: B.* What efforts have been made over time to build a “more perfect union” upon the one forged in 1776 and redesigned by the U.S. Constitution in 1787/88? How do perspectives on this question differ depending on whether people have or have not had access to political rights?
- *HDQ5.4: A.* What does it mean to “found” a country? When was the United States founded?

Historical Context

The Declaration of Independence: How Did it Happen?¹

The Revolution Begins

In the early 1770s, more and more colonists became convinced that Parliament intended to take away their freedom. In fact, the Americans saw a pattern of increasing oppression and corruption happening all around the world. Parliament was determined to bring its unruly American subjects to heel. Britain began to prepare for war in early 1775. The first fighting broke out in April in Massachusetts. In August, the King declared the colonists “in a state of open and avowed rebellion.” For the first time, many colonists began to seriously consider cutting ties with Britain. The publication of Thomas Paine’s stirring pamphlet *Common Sense* in early 1776 lit a fire under this previously unthinkable idea. The movement for independence was now in full swing.

Choosing Independence

The colonists elected delegates to attend a Continental Congress that eventually became the governing body of the union during the Revolution. Its second meeting convened in Philadelphia in 1775. The delegates to Congress adopted strict rules of secrecy to protect the cause of American liberty and their own lives. In less than a year, most of the delegates abandoned hope of reconciliation with Britain. On June 7, 1776, Richard Henry Lee introduced a resolution “that these united colonies are and of right ought to be free and independent states.” They appointed a Committee of Five to write an announcement explaining the reasons for independence. Thomas Jefferson, who chaired the committee and had established himself as a bold and talented political writer, wrote the first draft.

Writing the Declaration

On June 11, 1776, Jefferson holed up in his Philadelphia boarding house and began to write. He borrowed freely from existing documents like the Virginia Declaration of Rights and incorporated accepted ideals of the Enlightenment. Jefferson later explained that “he was not striving for originality of principle or sentiment.” Instead, he hoped his words served as an “expression of the American mind.” Less than three weeks after he’d begun, he presented his draft to Congress. He was not pleased when Congress “mangled” his composition by cutting and changing much of his carefully chosen wording. He was especially sorry they removed the part blaming King George III for the slave trade, although he knew the time wasn’t right to deal with the issue.

Declaring Independence

On July 2, 1776, Congress voted to declare independence. Two days later, it ratified the text of the Declaration. John Dunlap, official printer to Congress, worked through the night to set the Declaration in type and print approximately 200 copies. These copies, known as the Dunlap Broadsides, were sent to various committees, assemblies, and commanders of the Continental troops. The Dunlap Broadsides weren’t signed, but John Hancock’s name appears in large type at the bottom. One copy crossed the Atlantic, reaching King George III months later. The official British response scolded the “misguided Americans” and “their extravagant and inadmissible Claim of Independency.”

¹ Available online at <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration/how-did-it-happen>

Educational Activity

Declaration of Independence Close Reading

In this activity, high school students will explore the Declaration of Independence through a close reading. They will explore three different versions of the Declaration of Independence (the Engrossed copy, a Print, and the Dunlap Broadside) as an object, a primary source, and a persuasive argument. Estimated time: 45-60 minutes.

A digital version of this activity is available on DocsTeach, the online tool for teaching with documents from the National Archives. The [teacher page](#) provides an overview of the activity and suggested teaching instructions. Students can access the [student page](#) on their devices or you can project or screen share the activity with the whole class.

The screenshot shows a digital activity interface. At the top, a purple header bar contains the text "Begin this activity by observing the physical appearance of the...". Below this, a white main area contains the following text: "Begin this activity by observing the physical appearance of the Engrossed Declaration of Independence and the Print of the Declaration of Independence and the Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen. Consider the following questions regarding the document and type your answers in the next available response box." Below this text are two numbered questions: "1. How would you describe this document to someone who wasn't looking at it?" and "2. What do you notice? What specific details stand out?". A "Next >" button is located below the questions. The interface then lists three document options with "Enter Your Response" buttons: "The Declaration of Independence", "Print of the Declaration of Independence", and "Dunlap Broadside". Each option is preceded by a small circular icon with a question mark. Below these are three sections for examining the text of the Declaration, each with an "Enter Your Response" button and a question mark icon: "Next, we're going to examine the text of the Declaration...", "Now, we're going to examine the text of the Declaration...", and "...We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men...". The final section is "...That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men,...".

Teaching Instructions

This activity can be used during a unit on the American Revolution, the Declaration of Independence, or while exploring key American ideals and values from our Founding documents. For grades 9-12. Approximate time needed is 45-60 minutes.

Following this whole class discussions, the rest of the activity can be completed individually, in pairs, or in small groups and/or as a jigsaw activity where different students explore an individual section of the document. Begin the activity by asking students what they already know about the American Revolution in general and the Declaration of Independence specifically. Ask students to take 60 seconds to brainstorm people, places, events, and concepts they associate with these terms in small groups or pairs.

After discussing their ideas as a class, introduce the activity. Inform students that they will be doing a close reading of the Declaration of Independence. But first they will be looking at the [Engrossed Declaration of Independence](#) and a [Print of the Declaration of Independence](#) as an object/artifact.

Tell students to focus on the following questions:

- How would you describe this document to someone who wasn't looking at it?
- What do you notice? What specific details stand out?

After discussing their observations, direct students to the [Dunlap Broadside](#) copy of the Declaration of Independence. Inform students they will be analyzing this printed version of the Declaration of Independence as a primary source by specifically answering the following questions:

- Who wrote it?
- Who read it?
- When is it from?
- Where is it from?
- What is it talking about?
- Why was it written?

After analyzing it as a primary source, tell students they are now going to analyze the language of the Declaration of Independence as a persuasive argument. They will be looking at short sections of the document. Model analyzing the Declaration of Independence by focusing attention on the first selection as a class. Direct students to answer the following questions using the provided [graphic organizer](#):

- How did the authors use language to persuade people to support their case for independence?
 - Did they make a logical appeal (clear, logical connections; facts and statistics) or an emotional appeal (positive or negative feelings to inspire an emotional response)?
- What specific words or phrases stand out in this section?
- Evaluate the argument. Is this a strong or weak argument for independence?

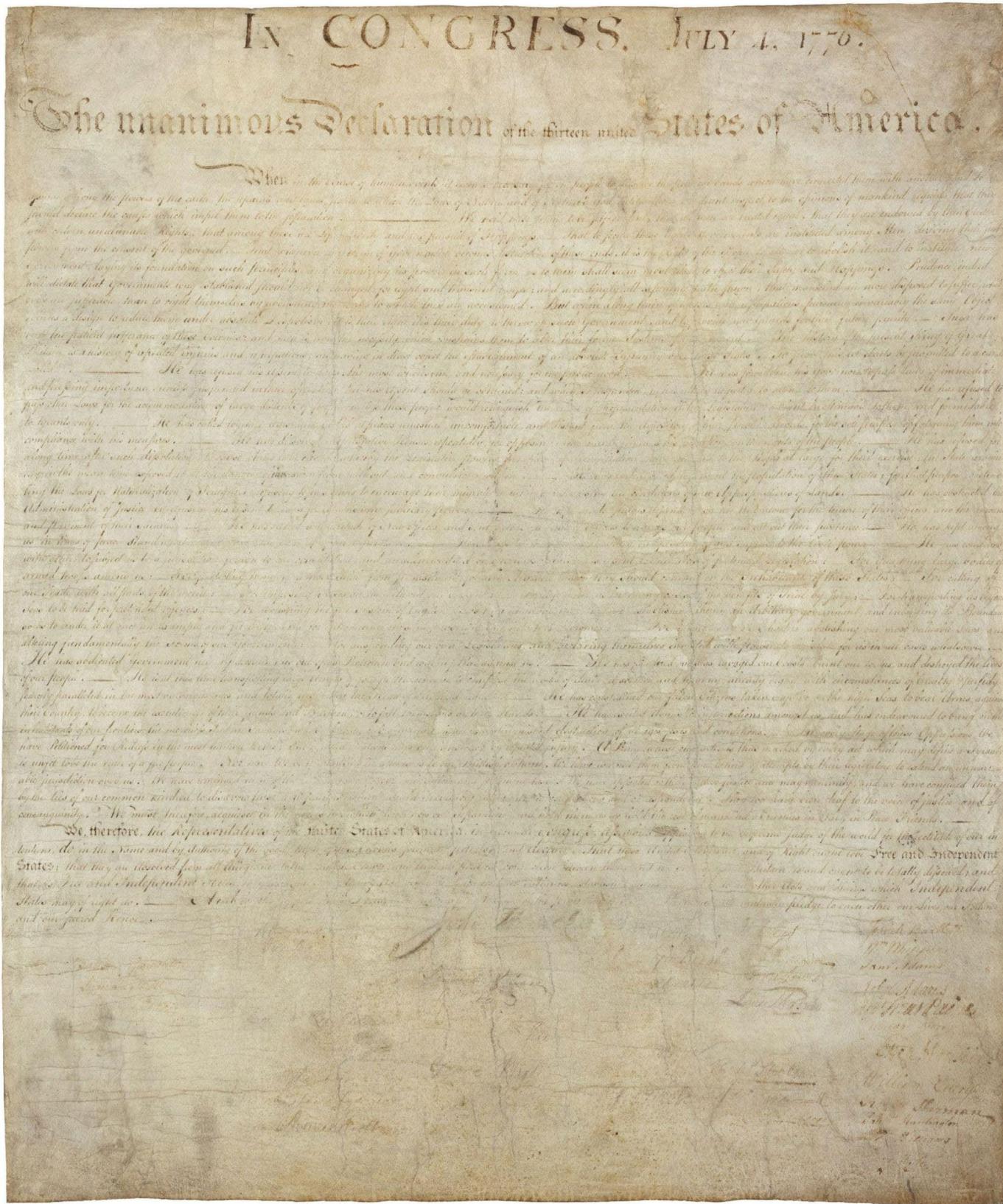
After reading the selections, ask students to enter their answer in the graphic organizer, or to conduct a turn-and-talk with a partner to share their phrase and word selections and explain why they were chosen. Ask students to volunteer their phrase and word selections, with explanations, for the rest of the class. As students share, ask if other students selected the same phrase or word, and facilitate a conversation about the reasons why specific phrases and words were selected. After discussing their word choices, ask students to evaluate the argument for independence—is this a strong or weak argument for independence?

After completing the activity, students should answer the following:

- How were core American values and ideals established in the language of the Declaration of Independence?

These core American values and ideals could include: natural rights, individual rights, natural law, liberty, equality, popular sovereignty, limited government, representative government, democracy, social contract theory, separation of powers, due process, etc.

Educational Activity Resources



Declaration of Independence

<https://docsteach.org/documents/document/the-declaration-of-independence>

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to this separation. — We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights; that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. — Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. — But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. — Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which conditions them to alter their former Systems of Government. — The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. — To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world. — He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good. — He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation, till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them. — He has refused to pass Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, who would otherwise derive the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inseparable to them and formidable to tyrants only. — He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, so as to frustrate their purpose of judging them into compliance with his measures. — He has obstructed Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people. — He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convolution within. — He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass Laws to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands. — He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary Powers. — He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries. — He has created a multitude of new Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance. — He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the consent of our legislatures. — He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power. — He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation. — For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us; — For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Misdemeanors which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States; — For calling off our Trade with all parts of the world; — For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent; — For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by jury; — For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences. — For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies; — For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments; — For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever. — He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us. — He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people. — He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to conflict the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & Severity scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation. — He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall by their Hands. — He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all age, sex and condition. — In every stage of these Oppressions we have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms. Our repeated Petitions have been answered by repeated Injury. A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people. — We have been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. — We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name and by authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown; and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things, which Independent States may of right do. — And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the Protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

Button Gwinnett
Lyman Hall
Geo. Walton.

John Hooper
Joseph Hewes,
John Peirce

Thos. Heyward Jr.
Thos. Lynch Jr.
Richard Henry Lee
Arthur Middleton
Th. Jefferson
Benj. Harrison
Thos. Nelson Jr.
Francis Lightfoot Lee
Caroler Braxton

John Hancock
Samuel Chase
Wm. Paca
Thos. Stone
Charles Carroll of Carrollton
Edward Rutledge.

George Wythe
Richard Henry Lee
Th. Jefferson
Benj. Harrison
Thos. Nelson Jr.
Francis Lightfoot Lee
Caroler Braxton

Robt Morris
Benj. Franklin
John Morton
Geo. George
Jac. Smith
Geo. Taylor
James Wilson

Thos. Hobart
Jos. Warren
Thos. Cushing
John Rutledge
Thos. Mifflin

Edw. Livingston
Thos. Lee
Lan. Morris
Thos. Smith
Thos. Taylor
Jos. Clarke

Josiah Bartlett
W. Whipple
Sam. Adams
John Adams
R. R. Treat Prince
Elbridge Gerry
Step. Hopkins
William Ellery
Roger Sherman
Jno. Huntington
M. Williams
Oliver Wolcott
Matthew Thornton

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.

A DECLARATION

BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
IN GENERAL CONGRESS ASSEMBLED.

WHEN in the Course of human Events, it becomes necessary for one People to dissolve the Political Bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the Powers of the Earth, the separate and equal Station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent Respect to the Opinions of Mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the Separation.

We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness—That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its Foundation on such Principles, and organizing its Powers in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient Causes; and accordingly all Experience hath shewn, that Mankind are more disposed to suffer, while Evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the Forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long Train of Abuses and Usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a Design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their Right, it is their Duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future Security. Such has been the patient Sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the Necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The History of the present King of Great-Britain is a History of repeated Injuries and Usurpations, all having in direct Object the Establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid World.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public Good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing Importance, unless suspended in their Operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other Laws for the Accommodation of large Districts of People, unless those People would relinquish the Right of Representation in the Legislature, a Right inestimable to them, and formidable to Tyrants only.

He has called together Legislative Bodies at Places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the Depository of their public Records, for the sole Purpose of fatiguing them into Compliance with his Measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly Firmness his Invasions on the Rights of the People.

He has refused for a long Time, after such Dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative Powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the Dangers of Invasion from without, and Convulsions within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the Population of these States; for that Purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their Migrations hither, and raising the Conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary Powers.

He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the Tenure of their Offices, and the Amount and Payment of their Salaries.

He has erected a Multitude of new Offices, and sent hither Swarms of Officers, to harass our People, and eat out their Substance.

He has kept among us, in Times of Peace, Standing Armies, without the consent of our Legislatures.

He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil Power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a Jurisdiction foreign to our Constitution, and unacknowledged by our Laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

For quartering large Bodies of Armed Troops among us:

For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from Punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:

For cutting off our Trade with all Parts of the World:

For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:

For depriving us, in many Cafes, of the Benefits of Trial by Jury:

For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended Offences:

For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an arbitrary Government, and enlarging its Boundaries, so as to render it at once an Example and fit Instrument for introducing the same absolute Rule into these Colonies:

For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:

For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with Power to legislate for us in all Cafes whatsoever.

He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

He has plundered our Seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our Towns, and destroyed the Lives of our People.

He is, at this Time, transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the Works of Death, Desolation, and Tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty and Perfidy, scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous Ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized Nation.

He has constrained our fellow Citizens taking Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the Executioners of their Friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

He has excited domestic Insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the Inhabitants of our Frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known Rule of Warfare, is an undistinguished Destruction, of all Ages, Sexes and Conditions.

In every stage of these Oppressions we have Petitioned for Redress, in the most humble Terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated Injury. A Prince, whose Character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the Ruler of a free People.

Now have we been wanting in Attentions to our British Brethren. We have warned them from Time to Time of Attempts by their Legislature to extend an unwarrantable Jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the Circumstances of our Emigration and Settlement here. We have appealed to their native Justice and Magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the Ties of our common Kindred to disavow these Usurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our Connections and Correspondence. They too have been deaf to the Voice of Justice and of Confanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the Necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of Mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace, Friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in GENERAL CONGRESS, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the World for the Rectitude of our Intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly Publish and Declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political Connection on between them and the State of Great-Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which INDEPENDENT STATES may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm Reliance on the Protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.

Signed by ORDER and in BEHALF of the CONGRESS,

JOHN HANCOCK, PRESIDENT.

ATTEST.
CHARLES THOMSON, SECRETARY.

PHILADELPHIA: PRINTED BY JOHN DUNLAP.

Dunlap Broadside

<https://docsteach.org/documents/document/dunlap-broadside>

Declaration of Independence Graphic Organizer

Transcript	Vocabulary	Argument Appeal (Logic or Emotion)	Evaluate Argument (Strengths/Weaknesses)
<p>The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,</p> <p>When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.</p>	unanimous: in full agreement dissolve: break down impel: force		
<p>We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.</p>	self-evident: obvious endowed: supplied unalienable: untransferable		
<p>--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.</p>	instituted: created deriving: getting consent: permission		

Declaration of Independence Graphic Organizer

Transcript	Vocabulary	Argument Appeal (Logic or Emotion)	Evaluate Argument (Strengths/Weaknesses)
<p>Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed.</p>	prudence: caution dictate: order transient: short-term disposed: willing abolishing: ending accustomed: often used		
<p>But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.--Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government.</p>	usurpations: taking by force invariably: always evinces: reveals despotism: oppressive power constrains: restricts		
<p>The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.</p>	candid: open and honest		

Supplemental Educational Resources

The following educational activities are designed to support student learning. These activities are not required. Feel free to facilitate only the activities that you think would be most helpful for your students.

1. We Hold These Truths (Civics for All of US Distance Learning Program)

Students will explore the Declaration of Independence as an artifact, a primary source, and a persuasive text. Students explore the document's important sections, and evaluate the persuasive elements of the Declaration of Independence.

Visit <https://civics.archives.gov/programs/we-hold-these-truths> for more details.



2. Key American Ideals Vocabulary Activity

In this activity, students will define key vocabulary words that relate to some of the American values and ideals that are present in the Declaration of Independence. Estimated time: 45 minutes

Inform students that many of these concepts have their origin in the Enlightenment (a 17th and 18th century intellectual and philosophical movement based on improving society through the use of reason) and still represent some of the key values of American social and political life.

These vocabulary terms can include: natural rights, individual rights, natural law, liberty, equality, popular sovereignty, limited government, representative government, democracy, social contract theory, separation of powers, due process. After defining these terms, ask students to explain ways that these values are expressed in contemporary life.

3. Political Cartoon Analysis: No Taxation Without Representation DocsTeach Activity

In this activity, students will analyze the colonial grievances that led to the American Revolution through a political cartoon. Estimated time: 20 minutes.

The [teacher page](#) provides an overview of the activity and suggested teaching instructions. Students can access the [student page](#) on their devices or you can project or screen share the activity with the whole class.



4. Prequel to Independence DocsTeach Activity

In this activity, students sequence key events leading to the Declaration of Independence. Estimated time: 45 minutes.

The [teacher page](#) provides an overview of the activity and suggested teaching instructions. Students can access the [student page](#) on their devices or you can project or screen share the activity with the whole class.

A sequence activity interface. At the top, there is a grid of 10 small historical documents. Below this, a instruction text reads: "DRAG THE ITEMS IN PANEL ABOVE INTO THE PANEL BELOW, IN THE CORRECT SEQUENCE." Below the instruction is a large grid divided into two rows of five numbered boxes each (1-5 in the top row, 6-10 in the bottom row). The numbered boxes are arranged in a staggered pattern.

5. Analyzing the Adoption of the Lee Resolution DocsTeach Activity

In this activity, students will carefully analyze the Adoption of the Lee Resolution. Estimated time: 25 minutes.

The [teacher page](#) provides an overview of the activity and suggested teaching instructions. Students can access the [student page](#) on their devices or you can project or screen share the activity with the whole class.



6. Analyzing a Visual Metaphor for the American Revolution DocsTeach Activity

In this activity, students will analyze a visual metaphor created to explain the causes, major events, battles and leaders of the American Revolution. Estimated time: 25 minutes.

The [teacher page](#) provides an overview of the activity and suggested teaching instructions. Students can access the [student page](#) on their devices or you can project or screen share the activity with the whole class.

