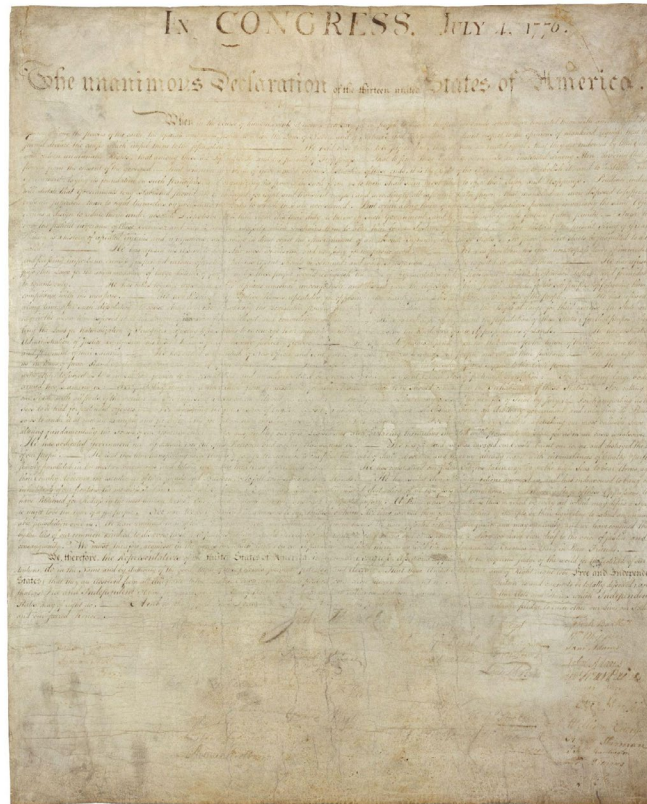


Activity 1:

Be a Document Detective:

Meet the Declaration of Independence



Activity 1: Be a Document Detective: Meet the Declaration of Independence

Guiding Question

- What is the Declaration of Independence and why is it important?

National Standards

National Center for History in the Schools History Standards

- *Topic 3: The History of the US: Democratic Principles and Values and the People from Many Cultures Who Contributed to Its Cultural, Economic, and Political Heritage*
 - *Standard 4: How democratic values came to be, and how they have been exemplified by people, events, and symbols.*
 - *Standard 4A.* The student demonstrates an understanding of how the United States government was formed and of the nation's basic democratic principles set forth in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.
 - *Standard 4D.* The student understands events that celebrate and exemplify fundamental values and principles of American democracy.

National Standards for Civics and Government

- *NSCG.K-4.2.A.1* Students should be able to explain the importance of the fundamental values and principles of American democracy.
- *NSCG.K-4.2.C.1* Students should be able to explain the importance of Americans sharing and supporting certain values, principles, and beliefs.

Common Core State Standards

- *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1.1* Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
See also: *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.K.1*; *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.2.1*
- *CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.1.5* Know and use various text features (e.g., headings, tables of contents, glossaries, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text.
See also: *CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.2.5*
- *CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.1.8* Identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.
See also: *CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.8*; *CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.2.8*
- *CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.1.3* Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood.
See also: *CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.K.3*; *CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.3*

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

- *D2.His.9.K-2*. Identify different kinds of historical sources.
- *D2.His.10.K-2*. Explain how historical sources can be used to study the past.
- *D2.His.11.K-2*. Identify the maker, date, and place of origin for a historical source from information within the source itself.
- *D2.His.12.K-2*. Generate questions about a particular historical source as it relates to a particular historical event or development.

Educating for American Democracy Roadmap

- *CDQ1.1B*: When/how do we speak up about something?
- *CDQ5.1B*: Why do people sometimes want to change the rules?
- *HDQ7.1A*: Why do people talk about the past?
- *HDQ7.1B*: Why do we need to know about the past?

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 principal 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.

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

Declaring Independence

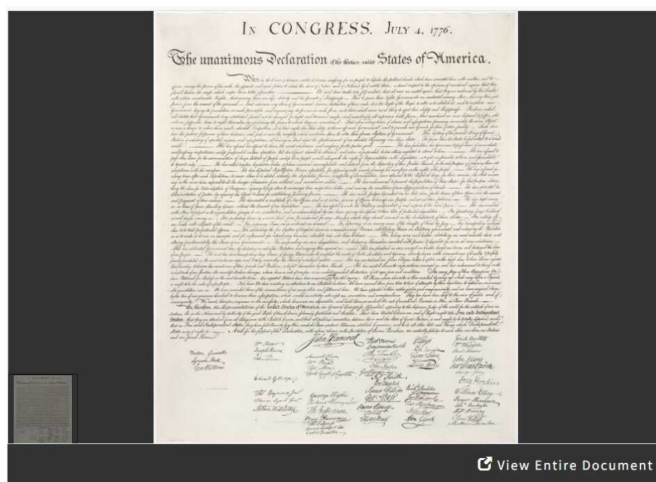
On July 2, 1776, Congress voted to declare independence. Two days later, it ratified the text of the Declaration. John Dunlap, official printer to Congress, worked through the night to set the Declaration in type and print approximately 200 copies. These copies, known as the Dunlap Broad­sides, were 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."

Educational Activity

Declaration of Independence Close Reading

In this activity, lower elementary school students will examine a Print of the Declaration of Independence and share their observations about the primary source document. This is designed as a full class activity, but students may work in small groups if preferred. Estimated time: 20-30 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.



Teaching Instructions

This activity can be used during a unit on the American Revolution, the Declaration of Independence, or the values and principles of American democracy. For grades K-2. Approximate time needed is 20-30 minutes.

Students can complete the activity as a full class or in small groups. Tell students that they are going to act as “document detectives” to explore details about an old historical document called the Declaration of Independence. As such, students will use primary source document analysis to identify details from the Declaration of Independence. Ask students the following:

- What do detectives do?
- What type of skills does someone need to be a detective?

Students may tell you that detectives need to be smart, they need to look closely at details, pay attention to clues, piece together information they find to determine what is happening. Tell

students that as document detectives, they will be using these same skills to learn more about the Declaration of Independence.

Use the [Analyze a Written Document](#) resource sheet to guide the class discussion of the Print of the Declaration of Independence. Direct students to look at the top section of the document and ask some general open-ended questions.

- What do you notice about it?
- How would you describe it?
- What parts stand out?

After discussing their general observations of this section, direct students' attention to the date on the document if this has not been discussed yet. Ask students the following:

- Can you find any numbers?
- Can you find the year on the document? What is the date?
- Have you ever celebrated on the 4th of July? If so, what do you do to celebrate?

Inform students that July 4th is the date that the Second Continental Congress adopted this document—the Declaration of Independence. If needed, share a basic definition of the terms.

- Declaration means an official or public statement about something.
- Independence means freedom from being ruled by another group.

Tell students that the name Declaration of Independence describes what the document was doing. Explain that the United States used to be a colony ruled by Great Britain. During that time, King George III was the ruler of Great Britain and, therefore, the British colonies, including the thirteen colonies that would become the United States. That at the time of the Declaration of Independence, American colonists were upset that they did not have a say in how they were governed by Great Britain. The American colonists did not feel that King George III represented their interests; they believed that it would be better for their communities to break free from British rule and become an independent nation. The Declaration of Independence was the document that announced this statement of independence for the colonies. That is why the Fourth of July holiday is officially called Independence Day.

Direct students to look at the middle section of the document and ask some general open-ended questions.

- What do you notice about it?
- How would you describe it?
- What parts stand out?

After discussing their general observations of this section, inform students that this section explains why the American colonies want to be a separate country and lists all the bad things that King George III did in recent years. Focus attention on the phrase that begins the second paragraph- “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.” Share that this is one of the most well-known phrases from the document. Its meaning has continued to inspire Americans for the past 250 years. Ask students to share what they think it means.

- What does the idea that “all men are created equal” mean to them?
- What does “all men are created equal” mean for creating a government?

Direct students to look at the bottom section of the document and ask some general open-ended questions.

- What do you notice about it?
- How would you describe it?
- What parts stand out?

After discussing their general observations, direct students' attention to the signatures on the document if this has not been discussed yet.

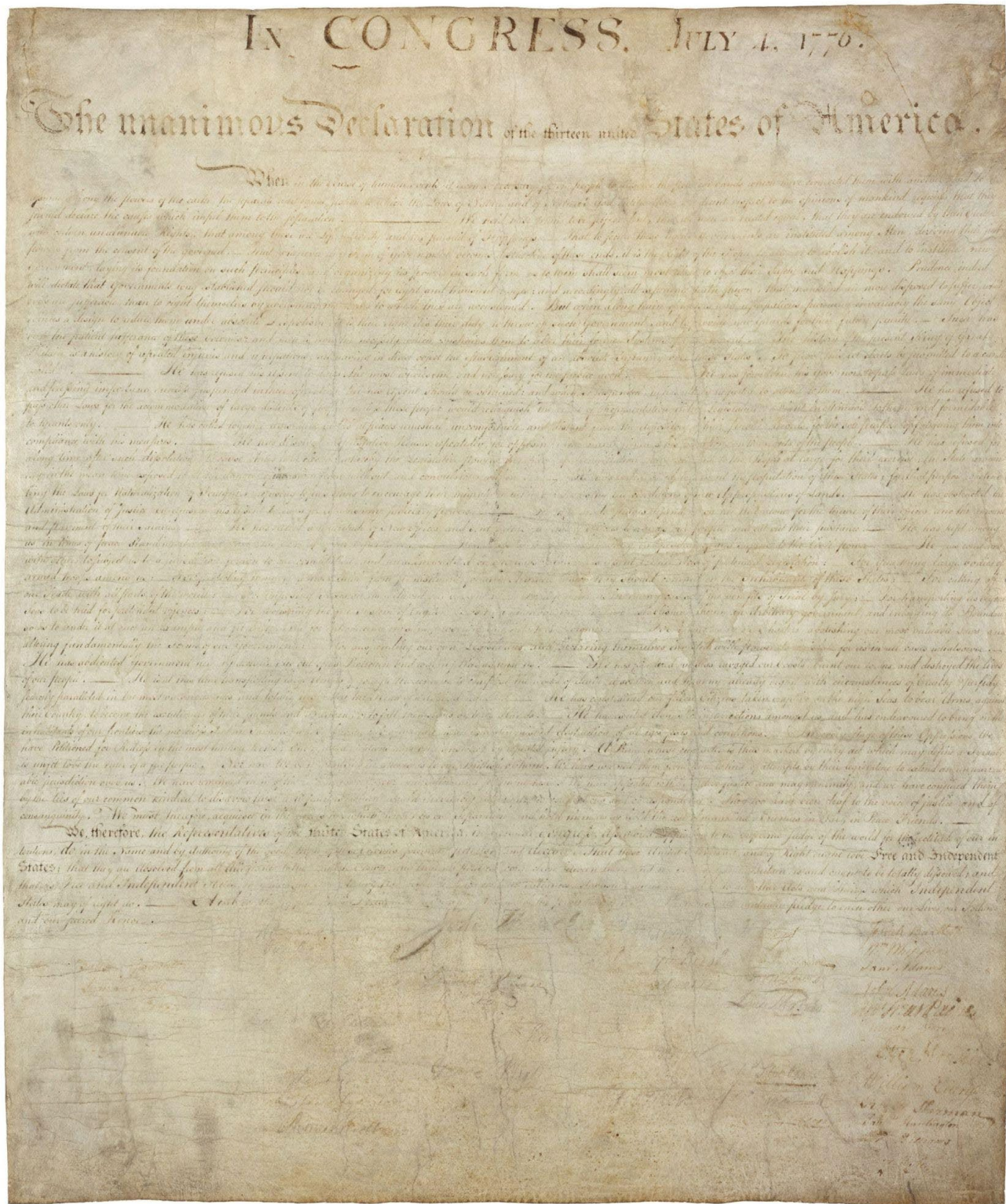
- What do you notice about the handwriting of this section?
- Why do you think people put their signature on something?
- Why do you think people signed this document?
- Was signing the Declaration of Independence a brave thing to do? Why or why not?

Share that although it bears the date "July 4, 1776," the Declaration of Independence was signed on August 2, by members of the Continental Congress who were present that day and later by other members of Congress. John Hancock, the President of the Congress, signed the engrossed copy with a bold signature. The other delegates, following custom, signed beginning at the right with the signatures arranged by states from northernmost New Hampshire to southernmost Georgia. This included 2 future Presidents, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, who also worked on the first draft of the Declaration. 56 delegates eventually signed the document. Signing the document reflected their agreement with its meaning. Explain that copies were printed and shared throughout the colonies.

After completing the activity, students should answer the following:

- What is the Declaration of Independence and why was it important?

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.

Here, 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 those 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 effect 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 evading 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; and the Stat remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within. — He has endeavored to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Law for Naturalization of Strangers; refusing to grant others to encourage their migration 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 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 combat the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & perfidy 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 themselves by their Hands. — He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the Inhabitants of one portion, 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. — Nor have We been wanting in attention 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 those usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of concinnquity. 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, we have solemnly pledged to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

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.

John Hancock *Samuel Adams* *Benjamin Franklin* *Joseph Bartlett*

Button Gwinnett
Lynnan Stall
Geo Walton.

Wm Hooper
Joseph Hewes,
John Penn

Edward Rutledge).

Thos. Weyman & Junr.
Thomas Lynch Junr.
Arthur Middleton

Arthur Middleton

Samuel Chao
Wm. Paro
Thos. Stone
Charles Smith et al

Thos Carroll of Carroll Co

George Wythe
Richard Henry Lee
Th Jefferson
Ben Harrison
Th Nelson jr
Francis Lightfoot Lee
Carver Braxton

Robt Morris
 Benjamin Rush
 Benj. Franklin

John Morton

67
J. Smith

Geo. Taylor

James Wilson
Capt. B. B.

Где: Москва
— Москва

See Money -
Cotton

Thos M. Kear

1

Dear Sir,
 Phil. Livingston,
 Aaron Lewis

Lewis Morris

Rich. D. Webb

Wichman

A. Hopkins 1812

John Kent

Mr Clark



Josiah Bartlett
Wm Whipple
Saml Adams
John Adams

Robt Gray Pain

Star Blank

11. 11. 11

William Ellery

Roger Sherman
Sam^l Huntington

W^m Williams

Oliver Wolcott
Matthew Thompson

of Savanna Station

Print of the Declaration of Independence

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

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 according to 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 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 complete 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 taken 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.

Not have we been wanting in Attention 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.

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>

Supplemental Educational Resources

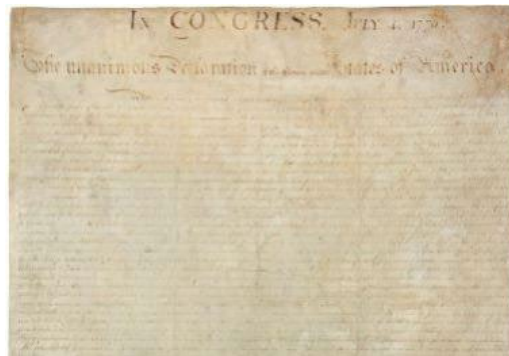
The following educational activities are designed to support student learning. These activities are not required. Feel free to facilitate only the activities that you think would be most helpful for your students.

1. Happy 250th Birthday, America! (Civics for All of US Distance Learning Program)

Students will learn about America's national holiday and birthday — Independence Day!

Students will explore artwork and primary sources about the American Revolution and the Founders and investigate copies of the Declaration of Independence from the National Archives.

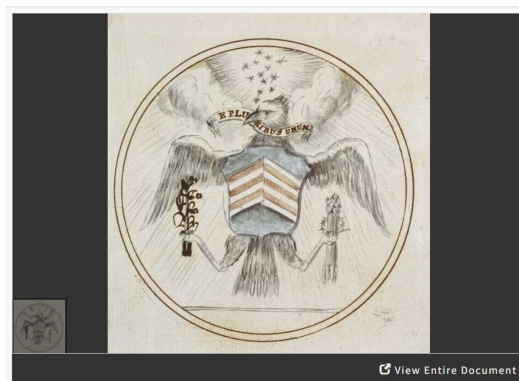
Visit <https://civics.archives.gov/programs/happy-250th-birthday-america> for more details.



2. Finding American Symbols: The Great Seal

This short document analysis exercise has students look closely at the Design for the Verso of the Great Seal of the United States. Students will observe the parts included in this design and consider what symbols they would include if designing a new version. Estimated time: 20 to 30 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.



Declaration of Independence Transcript with Vocabulary

Transcript	Vocabulary
<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>	<p>unanimous: in full agreement dissolve: break down impel: force</p>
<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>	<p>self-evident: obvious endowed: supplied unalienable: untransferable</p>
<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>	<p>instituted: created deriving: getting consent: permission</p>
<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>	<p>prudence: caution dictate: order transient: short-term disposed: willing abolishing: ending accustomed: often used</p>
<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>	<p>usurpations: taking by force invariably: always evinces: reveals despotism: oppressive power constrains: restricts</p>
<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>	<p>candid: open and honest</p>