

Title Independence Declared

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Key Words rights, grievances, Declaration of Independence, life, liberty, pursuit, principle

Grade Level 3

Time Allotted 60-75 minutes

Lesson Overview	A close look at the Declaration of Independence and its parts (Introduction, Preamble, List of Grievances, Conclusion and Signatures) will reveal how the frustration with the King of England and the influence of Enlightenment ideas empower and compel the colonists to declare independence from the crown. In addition, students will connect the principles of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness to modern America to conclude that the Founder's ideas are an important part of the American way of life.
Guiding Question(s)	How did the colonists' frustration with the king and the influence of Enlightenment thinking come together in the Declaration of Independence? How do the words "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" in the Declaration apply to our lives as American citizens today?

Learning Objectives (SWBAT)

- Make observations about a primary source document: the Declaration of Independence.
- Generate inferences about a primary source document: the Declaration of Independence.
- Interpret the meaning of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."
- Relate the colonists' grievances with the King to the principles and ideas they adopted from Enlightenment philosophes.

- Generalize the confluence of these two factors as the impetus for the Declaration of Independence

Virginia History and Social Science SOL

3.11 The student will explain the importance of the basic principles that form the foundation of a republican form of government by

- a) describing the individual rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;
- b) identifying the contributions of ... Thomas Jefferson ...

Virginia Studies

VS.5 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the role of Virginia in the American Revolution by

- a. identifying the reasons why the colonies went to war with England as expressed in the Declaration of Independence;
- b. identifying the various roles played by Virginians in the Revolutionary War era, with emphasis on ... Thomas Jefferson ...

Essential Historical Skills Taught:

- Historical Analysis and Interpretation: Compare and contrast the King's actions (as listed by Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence) with the principles of human rights, natural law and the role government espoused by the founders.
Hypothesize the influence of the words "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" on the everyday lives of citizens today.
- Historical Research Capabilities: Formulate questions from observation of the Declaration of Independence.
- Historical Issues-Analysis and Decision-Making: Identify the grievances expressed by the colonists and their underlying values.

Assessment Tool(s)

The *Sum Up Your Thinking* activity in the closure of the lesson will serve as an assessment of student understanding.

Materials/Resources

- Replicas of the Declaration of Independence, one per group of 4-6 students. Available at http://www.amazon.com/544-Declaration-of-Independence/dp/B001V7O1RE/ref=pd_sbs_op_1
- Magnifying glasses, 1-2 per group of 4-6 students

- Primary Source Analysis Tool, 1 copy per group of 4-6 students
http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/resources/Primary_Source_Analysis_Tool.pdf
- Primary Source Analysis Questions, one copy for projection
http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/resources/Analyzing_Manuscripts.pdf
- Principle Cards – page 6 of this lesson plan, one card per group of 4-6
- Grievance Cards – page 7 of this lesson plan, one set per group of 4-6

Modifications (to meet needs of diverse learners)

Add new or unfamiliar words to a classroom word wall. Include a picture or visual cue along with each word. Or have students add new words along with a brief definition and a picture to a personal dictionary.

Instructional Procedures/Process (How will you guide your students through this activity?)

1. If students are already in small groups (due to desk or table arrangement), give each group a replica of the Declaration of Independence and a couple of magnifying glasses. If students are not already in groups, randomly assign them to groups of 4-6 students per group. Model how to use the magnifying glass. Remind students that this document is the Declaration of Independence, written by Thomas Jefferson with editing/revising help from a committee of other colonists. Review some of the predictions and Declaration-related questions they posed in the previous lesson. Give students about 5-10 minutes to analyze the document. Encourage them to attempt to read some of the words, but point out that the task is not to read the document. Give students a copy of the Analysis Tool.
http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/resources/Primary_Source_Analysis_Tool.pdf Students should record their thoughts on the Analysis Tool.
2. Using an Elmo or overhead projector, project a blank copy of the Analysis Tool.
http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/resources/Primary_Source_Analysis_Tool.pdf As students share their thinking record it on this class version of the Analysis Tool.

3. Be sure to point out the first two paragraphs. Remind students that the Wordle words came from these two sections. Show the Wordle again and ask students to find some of the words. Point out and read (or have student volunteers attempt to read) some of the grievances (or complaints) against the King. Reference the lyrics of *No More Kings* and the classroom timeline events that relate to the grievances outlined. Ask students why they think they are formatted like a list. Summarize the conclusion. Explain that this document was written to the world to justify going against the King in order to gain support.
4. Ask students to find the phrase “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” in the Preamble (second paragraph) of the Declaration. Read the entire sentence. Tell the students that this sentence summarizes one of the most important Enlightenment principles upon which our government is based.
5. Identify and/or label three distinct spots in the classroom (such as corners) 1. Life 2. Liberty 3. Pursuit of Happiness. Read the first statement aloud. Students decide which principle the statement is most related to and move to the corresponding spot in the room. Ask a student or two from each principle location to justify their decision. There are no wrong answers as long as the justification is logical. Repeat for each statement.

You can choose whom to play with at recess.

- a. You can spend your money on things you pick out in the store.*
 - b. Your family can move and live wherever they choose.*
 - c. You can express your opinion about homework.*
 - d. Rules exist to prevent students from harming one another.*
 - e. You can choose what you want to be when you grow up.*
 - f. You can bring what you like to eat for lunch or snack.*
 - g. You can choose how you wear your hair or what clothes you wear.*
6. As students return to their seats, ask them to rate, with their fingers (1-10 fingers held up: 10 meaning very important, 1 meaning not at all important), how important life, liberty and pursuit of happiness is to them, their families, their friends, their neighbors. Remind them that these principles, discussed in salons, during the Enlightenment, and in the colonies, were important to the colonists as well. They believed the King opposed these ideas and denied them their rights.
7. Refer the students to the list of grievances in the Declaration. Based on their beliefs about what the principles of government should be, the

colonists disagreed with many actions of the King. Distribute one “principle” card and one set of “grievance” cards to each group. The group should read the principle card aloud and place it in the center of a desk or the table. Turn the grievance cards upside down. Group members take turns reading the grievance card and deciding if and how the complaint is related to the principle. The group member who drew the card should speak first. Others may add their thoughts afterwards. Those grievances, which they agree are an example of a violation of the principle, remain upturned and are placed near the principle card. If the group decides it is unrelated to the principle, they put it in a discard pile turned face down.

8. After groups have worked through the cards, ask each group to pick one example from their cards of a complaint/grievance based on principle and explain their thinking to the class.

Closure (How does this come back to the guiding question?)

9. Sum Up Your Thinking: Write these words on the board: Declaration of Independence, Complaints about King, and Enlightenment ideas. Ask students to generate sentences that include all three and describe their relationships.

Some examples of student responses might be:

Because the colonists had complaints about the King and believed Enlightenment ideas, they wrote the Declaration of Independence.

Enlightenment ideas and complaints about the king can be found in the Declaration of Independence.

10. Review, add to and/or modify the posted insights and questions from the end of the previous lesson.

Principle Cards

Print one copy. Cut apart.

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.	Government exists to protect the rights of its citizens.
Citizens should help decide what the laws are.	The government should not hurt or treat its citizens unfairly.
Government gets its power from the citizens.	One person should not have all the power in the government.

Grievance Cards

Print one set per group. Cut apart.

The King did not allow the colonists to have representatives in the English Government.	The King did not seek their interests or opinions when making laws.	The King used his power to force lawmakers and judges do what he wanted them to do.
The King tried to stop the colonists from holding meetings and making their own laws.	The King would not allow the colonists to buy and sell products they produced to anyone they wished.	The King did not include any colonists in decisions to impose taxes even though they were the ones who had to pay them.
The King used his army to control and threaten the colonists, not to protect them from enemies.	The King had colonists arrested, brought to England, and convicted of crimes with unfair trials.	The King forced the colonists to house and feed his soldiers.

Here are some plausible matches. The purpose is not to get the right answers, rather to make logical connections. The principles are in bold, grievances in italics.

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The King forced the colonists to house and feed his soldiers.

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