

Hourglass Lesson Points – For teacher reference

Give the students the Worksheet **“Our Declaration of Independence – Influences and Legacy”**

Each student will need a pair of scissors and a glue stick.

Duplicate enough of the puzzle piece sheets and cut the stacks of paper into individual puzzle pieces or instruct the children to cut out their own pieces. Teach about each piece using the notes below. Have the students glue the individual puzzle pieces in the proper places as they learn about them.

The top of the hourglass shows some influences that contributed to the rights sentence in the Declaration of Independence. The center of the hourglass represents the actual sentence from the Declaration of Independence. . The bottom of the hourglass shows some of the influences that this famous American sentence has had on our country and on the rest of the world. In considering *America on the World Stage* it is important to see that this famous sentence which embodies basic American beliefs was influenced by other countries and in turn influenced other countries as well.

The Greeks and Romans – Rule by the people

The Greeks developed the idea of democracy – rule by the people.

The Romans developed “representative democracy,” republic.

Thucydides said in his speech at the funeral of Pericles in 429 BC:

“Our government favors the many instead of the few; this is why it is called a democracy. If we look to the laws, they afford equal justice to all.”

You can read this famous speech at this site.

<http://ancienthistory.about.com/cs/greekfeatures/a/democracythucyd.htm>

Educated people in Jefferson's time studied the ideas of the Greeks and Romans.

John Locke – All men are created equal.

John Locke was an English philosopher from the “Age of Enlightenment .” He wrote this statement in 1690. Other European writers wrote similar statements but Locke is perhaps the most famous. He was one of Jefferson's favorite writers, so Jefferson would have read this many times. Here is a quote from Locke's most famous book.

"Being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty, or possessions"

Locke, John (1690). [Two Treatises of Government](http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext05/trgov10h.htm) (10th edition). You can read this at Project Gutenberg. <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext05/trgov10h.htm>. Retrieved January 21, 2009.

Many U.S. colonial documents contained phrases like this including Virginia Declaration of Rights; 1776 written by George Mason, Thomas Paine's Common Sense, 1776; and Thomas Jefferson's A *Summary View of the Rights of British America*, 1774.

See this site for an interactive view of some of these documents:.

<http://www.myloc.gov/Exhibitions/CreatingtheUS/interactives/declaration/HTML/equal/documents.html>

Divine Right of Kings

European kings believed that they were ordained by God to rule everyone else. They did not believe that all men are created equal.

King James I wrote these words in 1598.

“Kings were the authors and makers of the laws, and not the laws of the kings....And as ye see it manifest that the King is overlord of the whole land, so is he master over every person that inhabiteth the same, having power over the life and death of every one of them.”

Read the whole document at <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/james1-trew2.html>

This is the same King James who was responsible for the translation of the King James Version of the Bible. He is also famous for being king when the first permanent English settlement in America – Jamestown, was settled. Jamestown and the James river were named for him. He was also king during the establishment of the Massachusetts Bay Colony at Plymouth Massachusetts in 1620.

This puzzle piece does not fit in the puzzle because America does not have a king!

English Bill of Rights-

In 1689 English citizens wrote the “Act Declaring the Rights and Liberties of the Subject”. Their country was ruled by a king, but they asserted rights that the king could not over step. This document declares that the king or queen does not have more power than the law. The document states that the English people, “ *do claim, demand and insist upon ... their undoubted rights and liberties.*”⁵ <http://www.jacobite.ca/documents/16891216.htm>

English system of Lords and Ladies -

People who were born into certain families had special privileges. They were lords and ladies. People who were not born into noble families could never have these special privileges. America would never have a noble class. America's founding fathers felt so strongly about this that it was written into the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution of the United States.

This puzzle piece does not fit in the puzzle because America does not have royalty.

Jefferson's Declaration of Independence.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with inherent and inalienable rights; that among these, are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Thomas Jefferson studied all of the above writings and more. When he said these truths were “self-evident” he really meant that everyone could see that these things are true.

This is one of the most famous sentences in the world. It sums up what the words in the top half of the hourglass are all about and goes even farther. This sentence will go forward from this point to inspire the speakers in the bottom half of the hour glass.

[Many sites online have this famous document in its entirety. This link is to the National Archives site which has many things appropriate for elementary students.](http://archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration.html)
<http://archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration.html>

French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen

This is the French document written during the French Revolution. It borrowed many of its ideas about human rights from the United States Declaration of Independence. Its primary author was the marquis de Lafayette. He was a Frenchman who aided the American colonists in the American Revolution. He was a personal friend of Jefferson who was actually in France at the time of its writing. It says:

"Men are born and remain free and equal in rights."

This is the first of many such documents stating human rights drawing from the US Declaration of Independence.

You can read the whole document at http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/rightsof.asp

Abraham Lincoln

Our 16th president loved the Declaration of Independence and stated that it influenced all his political beliefs. He was president in a time when America began to realize that equality for all men meant equality for African Americans.

I have never had a feeling, politically, that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence . . . I have often inquired of myself what great principle or idea it was that kept this Confederacy so long together. It was not the mere separation of the colonies from the motherland, but that sentiment of the Declaration of Independence which gave liberty not alone to the people of this country, but hope to all the world, for all future time. It was that which gave promise that in due time the weights would be lifted from the shoulders of all men, and that all should have an equal chance. This is the sentiment embodied in the Declaration of Independence .

—Abraham Lincoln, from a speech given at Independence Hall, Philadelphia, February 22, 1861

Lincoln was to subsequently refer to the Declaration in the opening lines of one of the most famous speeches in American history, "The Gettysburg Address:"

"Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

Both of these quotes were taken from:

http://www.pbs.org/ktca/liberty/popup_lincoln.html

Susan B. Anthony

Women were another group of people omitted from the original meaning of "all men are created equal." The speakers and writers of the Women's Suffrage Movement often quoted the famous sentence from the Declaration of Independence.

Susan B. Anthony was arrested for voting in an election when women were not allowed to vote. In June 1873 she made this speech at least 42 times.

Friends and Fellow-citizens: I stand before you to-night, under indictment for the alleged crime of having voted at the last Presidential election, without having a lawful right to vote. It shall be my work this evening to prove to you that in thus voting, I not only committed no crime, but, instead, simply exercised my citizen's right, guaranteed to me and all United States citizens by the National

Constitution, beyond the power of any State to deny.

Our democratic-republican government is based on the idea of the natural right of every individual member thereof to a voice and a vote in making and executing the laws. We assert the province of government to be to secure the people in the enjoyment of their unalienable rights. We throw to the winds the old dogma that governments can give rights. Before governments were organized, no one denies that each individual possessed the right to protect his own life, liberty and property. And when 100 or 1,000,000 people enter into a free government, they do not barter away their natural rights; they simply pledge themselves to protect each other in the enjoyment of them, through prescribed judicial and legislative tribunals. They agree to abandon the methods of brute force in the adjustment of their differences, and adopt those of civilization.

You can read the entire speech at <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/naw:@field%28DOCID+@lit%28rbnawsan2152div13%29%29>

Eleanor Roosevelt – and The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

In 1948 Eleanor Roosevelt was instrumental in assisting the adoption of **The Universal Declaration of Human Rights** by the United Nations. It has since been translated into over 300 languages and dialects, more than any other document in the world. This document is used in the formation of laws, treaties, and constitutions. This document states in Article 1:

"All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights..."

Eleanor Roosevelt supported the adoption of the UDHR as a declaration, rather than as a treaty, because she believed that it would have the same kind of influence on global society as the United States Declaration of Independence had within the United States. In this she proved to be correct. Even though not formally legally binding, the Declaration has been adopted in or influenced most national constitutions since 1948. It also serves as the foundation for a growing number of international treaties and national laws and international, regional, national and sub-national institutions protecting and promoting human rights.

This site had a photograph of E. Roosevelt holding a copy of the document in Spanish.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:EleanorRooseveltHumanRights.png#filelinks>

Dr. Martin Luther King's "I have a Dream Speech"

August 28, 1963

"I say to you today, my friends, so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal."

Many modern nations have a Declaration of Independence. Some notable examples are: Venezuela 1811, New Zealand 1835, Liberia 1847, Czechoslovak Nations 1918, and Vietnam 1945.

Armitage, David, "The Declaration of Independence in World Context" *America on the World Stage: A Global Approach to American History*. Organization of American Historians. Edited by Gary W. Reichard and Ted Dickson pg. 18-28.