

CELEBRATE FREEDOM WEEK

September 22 - 26, 2008



John Trumbull's (June 6, 1756 – November 10, 1843) famous painting actually depicts the five-man drafting committee presenting their work to the Second Continental Congress, not the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The drafting committee consisted of John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Robert Livingston, and Roger Sherman.

Lessons, Activities, and Resources to Support the Study of The Declaration of Independence

Miami-Dade County Public Schools
Curriculum and Instruction
Social Sciences



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Celebrate Freedom Week - Florida Statute 1003.421 The 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 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. . . .

Florida Statute 1003.421 requires that the last week in September be recognized in Florida's public schools as **Celebrate Freedom Week**. Specifically, the Statute requires the following:

- Celebrate Freedom Week must include at least 3 hours of appropriate instruction in each social studies class, as determined by the school district, which shall include an in-depth study of the intent, meaning, and importance of the **Declaration of Independence**.
- During the last full week of September, at the beginning of each school day or in homeroom, public school principals and teachers shall conduct an oral recitation by students of the following words of the 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 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."

- Student recitation of this statement shall serve to reaffirm the American ideals of individual liberty.
- Upon written request by a student's parent, the student must be excused from the recitation of the Declaration of Independence.

The full text of Florida Statute 1003.421 may be obtained from Online Sunshine at <http://www.leg.state.fl.us>



As president of the Continental Congress, the American Revolutionary leader John Hancock was the first to sign the Declaration of Independence. He was a devoted patriot who risked his fortune in the struggle for independence and performed valuable services for his country. John Adams referred to him as an "essential character" of the American Revolution. (The Bettmann Archive)

CELEBRATE FREEDOM WEEK

Social Sciences has developed this resource guide to assist teachers in teaching about the Declaration of Independence. These resources are intended to serve as tools to implement the requirements of Florida Statute 1003.421. The intent of this legislation is to "Educate students about the sacrifices made for freedom in the founding of this country and the values on which this country was founded."

A description of the contents of this resource guide follows.

- ▶ **LESSONS, ACTIVITIES, AND STRATEGIES FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY STUDENTS**

Detailed primary, intermediate and secondary lesson plans with all readings and support materials needed to teach about the Declaration of Independence are provided in this section of the guide. The lessons are also correlated to the appropriate Language Arts Benchmarks. Additional lesson ideas and strategies are also included.

- ▶ **INTERNET RESOURCES AND THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE**

Related lesson plans, teacher background information, interactive activities and downloadable worksheets may be found on the web sites listed in this section of the guide. Additionally, a copy of the required recitation section, as well as a complete copy of the Declaration of Independence is included in this section of the guide.

**LESSONS, ACTIVITIES AND
STRATEGIES FOR
ELEMENTARY STUDENTS**

Celebrate Freedom Lesson Plan

GRADE LEVEL: Social Studies - Primary Grades

TITLE: The Declaration of Independence and Independence Day

OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify the Declaration of Independence as one of the documents that serves as the basis for American democratic ideals and principles.
2. Define concepts important to American democracy including independence, freedom and justice.

LANGUAGE ARTS/READING BENCHMARKS:

1. LA.A.2.2.1 Reads text and determines the main idea or essential message, identifies relevant supporting details and facts, and arranges events in chronological order.
2. LA.E.2.2.1 Recognizes cause-and-effect relationships in literary texts

SUGGESTED TIME:

1 hour

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES:

1. Read aloud and discuss Handout A - *The Declaration of Independence and Independence Day*. Save the questions on Handout B for later.
2. Define and discuss key vocabulary terms found in the lesson including: settler, colony, colonist, freedom, independence and justice (fairness). Ask students to cite examples of "fair vs. unfair." Also ask students to cite examples of the freedoms they have as citizens/residents of the United States; e.g., speech, religion, privacy.
3. On a map, point out the location of England and the 13 English Colonies. Note the distance between the two and the Atlantic Ocean that separates them.
4. Define tax (money collected by the government to provide services to the public; e.g., fire and police services). Explain that England felt that the colonists were

English subjects and should pay English taxes. Further explain that a growing number of colonists felt the taxes were unfair since the colonists were not represented in English government (“No Taxation without Representation!). Explain that American colonial leaders asked the King to allow them to rule themselves. When he refused, some colonists wanted to fight for their freedom. The American Revolution was the result.

5. Explain that the Declaration of Independence was written to declare independence (freedom) for the American colonies. Tell students that the men who signed the Declaration were very brave because declaring independence was considered an act of treason against the King and England.
6. Re-read Handout A - *The Declaration of Independence and Independence Day*. Have students orally answer Handout B - Questions about the reading.
7. Read aloud to students the following excerpt from the 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 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.”

Explain that these important words are taken from the actual Declaration of Independence. As appropriate to the age and maturity of students, discuss the concepts of life, liberty (freedom), and pursuit of happiness (includes the right to choose where to live and work, the right to own property, etc.).

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY:

Oral questioning and reading activity

MATERIALS/AIDS NEEDED:

Handout A - *The Declaration of Independence and Independence Day*, Handout B - Questions, and map (not provided)

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

1. Find or draw pictures to illustrate the concept of freedom and justice (fairness).
2. Find or draw pictures to illustrate how Americans celebrate Independence Day.

SOURCE:

The reading was adapted from the *Horizons* series by Harcourt Publishers, copyright 2005.

The Declaration of Independence and Independence Day

Handout A

Many early settlers came to North America from England. They settled along the coast of North America in colonies. A colony is land ruled by another country. England was very far away across the Atlantic Ocean. Not all settlers or colonists were happy about having to follow the laws of England. The colonists also felt that the taxes they had to pay England were unfair. The colonists felt that they should not pay the taxes since they were not represented in England's government. The colonists said, "No Taxation Without Representation!"

The colonists wanted to be treated fairly. England was ruled by King George III who would not let the American colonists rule themselves. They complained to the King. The colonists wanted justice and freedom. The King did not listen. In 1775, American colonists went to war with England. The war was the American Revolution.

In 1776, leaders in the colonies asked Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin and John Adams to write the Declaration of Independence. Independence means to be free from control by another country. The Declaration of Independence said that the colonists were Americans and should be free. The Declaration of Independence was signed on July 4, 1776.

The American colonists won the war with England. The United States of America was created because the colonists won the war. Today, Americans celebrate their freedom and the signing of the Declaration of Independence every July 4th. The holiday is called Independence Day. It is the birthday of the United States!

The Declaration of Independence and Independence Day

Handout B

Questions:

1. Why were the colonists unhappy with England and the King?
2. What did the Declaration of Independence say that the colonists wanted?
3. Why is Independence Day called the birthday of the United States?
4. Place these events in the correct order (1-4):
 - _____ The colonists were unhappy and complained to the King.
 - _____ Settlers came to America from England.
 - _____ The American colonists won the war with England.
 - _____ The Declaration of Independence was signed on July 4, 1776.

**Celebrate Freedom
Lesson Plan**

GRADE LEVEL: Social Studies - Primary Grades

TITLE: The Biography of Thomas Jefferson

OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify Thomas Jefferson as the primary author of the Declaration of Independence and as an advocate for American democratic ideals and principles.

LANGUAGE ARTS/READING BENCHMARKS:

1. LA.A.2.2.1 Reads text and determines the main idea or essential message, identifies relevant supporting details and facts, and arranges events in chronological order.
2. LA.E.2.2.1 Recognizes cause-and-effect relationships in literary texts

SUGGESTED TIME:

1 hour

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES:

1. Define “biography.” Explain the difference between a “biography” and “autobiography.”
2. Define and discuss key vocabulary terms found in the reading (Handout A) including: colony, minister, French, Greek, Latin, freedom, justice, and independence. Also ask students to cite examples of the freedoms they have as citizens/residents of the United States; e.g., speech, religion, privacy.
3. Read aloud and discuss Handout A – *The Biography of Thomas Jefferson*. Save the questions on Handout B for later.
4. On a map, point out the location of England and the 13 English Colonies. Note the distance between the two and the Atlantic Ocean that separates them. Also, point out the location of the colony of Virginia.

5. Re-read Handout A – *The Biography of Thomas Jefferson*. Have students orally answer Handout B - Questions about the reading.
6. Remind students that Jefferson was the primary author of the Declaration of Independence. Read aloud to students the following excerpt from the 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 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.”

Explain that these important words are taken from the actual Declaration of Independence. As appropriate to the age and maturity of students, discuss the concepts of life, liberty (freedom), and pursuit of happiness (includes the right to choose where to live and work, the right to own property, etc.).

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY:

Oral questioning and reading activity

MATERIALS/AIDS NEEDED:

Handout A –*The Biography of Thomas Jefferson*, Handout B - Questions, and map (not provided)

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

1. Find or draw pictures of Thomas Jefferson and other colonial patriots; e.g., John Adams, Samuel Adams, Benjamin Franklin, George Washington.
2. Find or draw pictures to illustrate the words students identified to describe Jefferson in question 3 of Handout B.

Biography of Thomas Jefferson Handout A

Thomas Jefferson was born on April 13, 1743 in the English colony of Virginia. Thomas was from an important family. He had six sisters and one brother.

Thomas was a very good student. At age 9, Thomas went to live with a Scottish minister who taught him French, Greek and Latin along with his regular subjects. He entered William and Mary College in Virginia at age 16. After he graduated, he studied law.

Thomas had strong beliefs about the importance of freedom. His beliefs were influenced by his studies and by friends such as Patrick Henry and Richard Henry Lee. His beliefs led him to support the American colonies when they asked to be free from England. Thomas and other colonists in America wanted justice and freedom. They wanted the colonies to be independent from England. The King did not listen. In 1775, American colonists went to war with England. The war was the American Revolution.

In 1776, leaders in the colonies asked Thomas to help write the Declaration of Independence. Independence means to be free from control by another country. Thomas had help from Benjamin Franklin and John Adams when he wrote the Declaration of Independence. It was signed on July 4, 1776.

Americans became free from England by winning the American Revolution. Thomas served the United States for many years. He was the Vice-President and later the third President of the United States. Thomas died on July 4, 1826. He died exactly 50 years after the Declaration of Independence was signed.

Biography of Thomas Jefferson Handout B

1. What subjects did Thomas Jefferson study in school?
2. What did Thomas Jefferson and other colonists want from England?
3. Think about Thomas Jefferson's life and his beliefs. What words best describe Thomas Jefferson?
4. Place the following events in order (1-3):
 - _____ Thomas Jefferson studies law.
 - _____ Thomas Jefferson becomes the President of the United States.
 - _____ Thomas Jefferson helps write the Declaration of Independence.

**Celebrate Freedom
Lesson Plan**

GRADE LEVEL: Social Studies - Intermediate Grades

TITLE: History of the Declaration of Independence

OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify the Declaration of Independence as one of the documents that serves as the basis for American democratic ideals and principles.
2. Describe the events that led to the writing of the Declaration of Independence.
3. Define “unalienable rights” as outlined in the Declaration of Independence and cite examples of each right.

LANGUAGE ARTS/READING BENCHMARKS:

1. LA.A.2.2.1 Reads text and determines the main idea or essential message, identifies relevant supporting details and facts, and arranges events in chronological order.
2. LA.E.2.2.1 Recognizes cause-and-effect relationships in literary texts

SUGGESTED TIME:

1-2 hours

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES:

1. Write the words “freedom” and “independence” on the chalkboard. Ask students to define the terms and give examples of each. Explain that this lesson will help them understand how the United States became a free and independent nation.
2. For background information, have students read/review the passages of their textbooks about the events in Colonial America that led to the American Revolution. Explain to the students that England felt that the colonists were English subjects and should pay English taxes (money collected by the government to provide services to the public; e.g., fire and police services). Further explain that a growing number of colonists felt the taxes were unfair since the colonists were not represented in English government (“No Taxation without Representation!). Explain that American colonial leaders asked the King to allow

them to rule themselves. When he refused, some colonists wanted to fight for their freedom. The American Revolution was the result.

3. Review key vocabulary with students including: unalienable rights, freedom, independence, liberty, rebellion, and draft.
4. Read Handout A - *History of the Declaration of Independence* and answer the questions on Handout B
5. Define “unalienable rights” as outlined in the Declaration (life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness). As a class, have students cite examples of each right. Ask students to consider if they would be willing to give up these rights or if they would fight for them as the colonists did in 1776. Ask students to consider what would have happened to the colonists if they had lost the war with England. (The signers of the Declaration would most likely have been executed as traitors.)

TEACHER’S NOTE: Many of the ideas Thomas Jefferson included in the Declaration were borrowed. The idea that all people are equal and that no person is born with the right to have power over another came from the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The belief that people have certain natural rights or unalienable rights and that no government may interfere with them came from the English philosopher John Locke. Locke defined those rights as “life, liberty, and property.” (Property includes the right to choose where to live and work, the right to own property, etc.) Jefferson added “the pursuit of happiness.”

6. Read aloud to students the following excerpt from the 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 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.”

Explain that these important words are taken from the actual Declaration of Independence. As appropriate to the age and maturity of students, discuss the following:

1. Throughout the history of our nation, have all individuals been treated equally and fairly? Give examples to explain your answer.
2. Agree or Disagree? When one person loses his/her rights, we all lose our rights.
3. What does it mean when the Declaration states that governments are “instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.”

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY:

Oral questioning and reading activity

MATERIALS/AIDS NEEDED:

Handout A - *History of the Declaration of Independence* and the questions on Handout B

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

1. Using the Internet and print resources, create a time line of the events leading up to the writing of the Declaration of Independence.
2. Find or draw pictures to illustrate the unalienable rights outlined in the Declaration of Independence.
3. Find or draw pictures to illustrate how Americans celebrate Independence Day.

SOURCE:

The reading was adapted from the *Horizons* series by Harcourt Publishers (copyright 2005) and the history of Independence Day from www.twilight.com

History of the Declaration of Independence

Handout A

“Thus may the 4th of July, that glorious and ever memorable day, be celebrated through America, by the sons of freedom, from age to age till time shall be no more. Amen and Amen.”
Virginia Gazette on July 18th, 1777

Although July 4th is celebrated as the day the 13 English colonies declared their independence from the King George III and England, the path to independence took far longer than a single day.

“Taxation without representation!” That was the battle cry of the 13 colonies in North America who were forced to pay taxes to England’s King George III with no representation in England’s government (Parliament). As dissatisfaction among the colonists grew, English soldiers were sent in to stop any signs of rebellion. Peaceful efforts by the colonists to resolve the problems with the King and his government were unsuccessful. In April 1775, the war between the 13 colonies and England began at Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts. The American Revolution actually began before the Declaration of Independence was written! Was it time for the Americans to formally declare their independence from England and the King?

While meeting in Philadelphia on June 11, 1776, the colonies’ Second Continental Congress formed a committee to write a document that would declare the colonies free. The committee included Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Roger Sherman, and Robert R. Livingston. The draft document was written by Jefferson, a young lawyer from Virginia who was considered the committee’s best writer.

In the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson explained why the American colonies should be free and independent. Jefferson used the simple argument that people are born with certain “unalienable rights,” meaning rights that can not be taken away. These rights include life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Next, Jefferson said that if a government abuses the rights of people, the people have the right to change the government. The Declaration includes a lengthy list of the abuses the King and England brought on the colonists. Because of these abuses, the Declaration said that the American colonists were declaring themselves free.

History of the Declaration of Independence

Handout A
continued

A total of 86 changes were made to Jefferson's draft! The final version of the Declaration of Independence was officially adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776. The next day, copies of the Declaration of Independence were distributed. On July 6, The *Pennsylvania Evening Post* became the first newspaper to print the document.

On July 8, 1776, the Declaration was read aloud in Philadelphia's Independence Square to the ringing of bells and band music.

Now true independence depended on the outcome of the American Revolution!

SOURCE: The reading was adapted from the *Horizons* series by Harcourt Publishers (copyright 2005) and the History of Independence Day from www.twilight.com

History of the Declaration of Independence - Questions

Handout B

1. What did the colonists mean when they said “No taxation without representation”?
2. Why was Thomas Jefferson chosen by the committee to write the Declaration of Independence?
3. What is an “unalienable right?” What are the three unalienable rights Jefferson listed in the Declaration?
4. What is meant by the last sentence of the story which states “Now true independence depended on the outcome of the American Revolution!”
5. Agree or disagree? Explain your answer. “Signing the Declaration of Independence was a dangerous act.”
6. Place the following events in the correct order:

_____ The American Revolution begins in Massachusetts.

_____ The colonists complain about “No taxation without representation!”

_____ A committee is formed to write the Declaration of Independence.

_____ *The Pennsylvania Post* publishes the Declaration of Independence.

**Celebrate Freedom
Lesson Plan**

GRADE LEVEL: Social Studies - Intermediate Grades

TITLE: New Words, Same Meaning - Paraphrasing the Declaration of Independence

OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify the Declaration of Independence as one of the documents that serves as the basis for American democratic ideals and principles.
2. Work as a group to paraphrase the language of a key portion of the Declaration of Independence.
3. Translate the original language of the Declaration of Independence into modern English.

LANGUAGE ARTS/READING BENCHMARKS:

1. LA.A.1.2.1. uses a table of contents, index, headings, captions, illustrations, and major words to anticipate or predict content and purpose of a reading selection.
2. LA.A.1.2.2. selects from a variety of simple strategies, including the use of phonics, word structure, context clues, self-questioning, confirming simple predictions, retelling, and using visual cues, to identify words and construct meaning from various texts, illustrations, graphics, and charts.
3. LA.A.1.2.3. uses simple strategies to determine meaning and increase vocabulary for reading, including the use of prefixes, suffixes, root words, multiple meanings, antonyms, synonyms, and word relationships.
4. LA.A.1.2.4. clarifies understanding by rereading, self correction, summarizing, checking other sources, and class or group discussion.
5. LA.A.2.2.1 Reads text and determines the main idea or essential message, identifies relevant supporting details and facts, and arranges events in chronological order.
6. LA.A.2.2.2 Identifies the author's purpose in a simple text.

SUGGESTED TIME:

1-2 hours

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES:

1. Define paraphrasing. Explain that paraphrasing is an important skill and an excellent means of determining if students truly comprehend what they are reading.
2. To illustrate the skill of paraphrasing, ask students to paraphrase the following statements:

“It is illegal to operate a motor vehicle past the speed limit noted on traffic signs.”
(It is against the law to drive a car faster than the speed limit posted on signs.)

“The teacher insisted that all students follow the rules by sitting properly and not speaking aloud without obtaining permission from the teacher. Violators would serve an afternoon detention.” (The teacher demanded that all students follow the rules by sitting still and not speaking until they had permission. Anyone who did not follow the rules would have to stay after school.)

3. Explain that in this lesson, students will be asked to read an important passage from the Declaration of Independence and then paraphrase the passage into more modern English.
4. To provide a context for the lesson, review the passages in the student textbook or Handout A from the previous lesson outlining the events in Colonial America that led to the American Revolution.
5. Divide the class into groups of three and distribute copies of the quote below from Declaration of Independence to each group. Also supply each group with a dictionary.

“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.”

6. Assign each group with the task of paraphrasing the quote from the Declaration and re-writing it into more modern language. Offer the following questions as a guide:
 - a. After reading and discussing the quote with your group, what are the main ideas the writer is trying to help you understand? Ask each group member to attempt to paraphrase the quote or a portion of the quote.

- b. What new vocabulary words used in the quote do you not understand? Look these words up in the dictionary. Also read the examples given with the definition. Do the examples help you better understand the words being used in the quote?
 - c. What words or sentences can you suggest to re-write the quote into modern English? Is your paraphrasing clear and does it still express the original ideas of the writer?
7. Have each group share the results of the exercise. Using the best ideas from each group, create a “new” Declaration of Independence and post the paraphrasing in the classroom.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY:

Group work and class discussion

MATERIALS/AIDS NEEDED:

Copies of the quotation and dictionaries for each group

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

1. Illustrate the “new” Declaration of Independence developed by the class.

SOURCE:

The lesson was adapted from the lesson entitled, “Declaration of Independence from Plagiarism” found at educationworld.com

**Celebrate Freedom
Lesson Plan**

GRADE LEVEL: Social Studies – Intermediate Grades

TITLE: The Biography of Thomas Jefferson

OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify Thomas Jefferson as the primary author of the Declaration of Independence and as an advocate for American democratic ideals and principles.

LANGUAGE ARTS/READING BENCHMARKS:

1. LA.A.2.2.1 Reads text and determines the main idea or essential message, identifies relevant supporting details and facts, and arranges events in chronological order.
2. LA.E.2.2.1 Recognizes cause-and-effect relationships in literary texts

SUGGESTED TIME:

1 hour

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES:

1. Define “biography.” Explain the difference between a “biography” and “autobiography.”
2. Define and discuss key vocabulary terms/concepts found in the reading (Handout A) including: surveyor, clergyman, Scottish, French, Greek, Latin, legislature, delegate, philosopher, eloquently, draft, freedom, pursuit of liberty, and consent. Also ask students to cite examples of the freedoms they have as citizens/residents of the United States; e.g., speech, religion, privacy.
3. Read aloud and discuss Handout A – *The Biography of Thomas Jefferson*. Save the questions on Handout B for later.
4. On a map, point out the location of England and the 13 English Colonies. Note the distance between the two and the Atlantic Ocean that separates them. Also, point out the location of the colony of Virginia and its proximity to Massachusetts, where the American Revolution began.

5. Re-read Handout A – *The Biography of Thomas Jefferson*. Have students orally answer Handout B - Questions about the reading.
6. Remind students that Jefferson was the primary author of the Declaration of Independence. Read aloud to students the following excerpt from the 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 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.”

Explain that these important words are taken from the actual Declaration of Independence. As appropriate to the age and maturity of students, discuss the concepts of life, liberty (freedom), and pursuit of happiness (includes the right to choose where to live and work, the right to own property, etc.).

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY:

Oral questioning and reading activity

MATERIALS/AIDS NEEDED:

Handout A –*The Biography of Thomas Jefferson*, Handout B - Questions, and map (not provided)

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

1. Find or draw pictures of Thomas Jefferson and other colonial patriots; e.g., John Adams, Samuel Adams, Benjamin Franklin, George Washington.
2. After reading the biography of Jefferson, ask students to identify character traits that Jefferson exemplified; e.g., courage, leadership, fairness. Draw or find pictures that represent these character traits.

SOURCES:

1. Kings Park Elementary School, Springfield, Virginia
<http://www.fcps.edu/KingsParkES/technology/bios/>
2. Social Studies for Kids <http://www.socialstudiesforkids.com/>

The Biography of Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) Handout A

Thomas Jefferson was born on April 13, 1743 in Shadwell, Virginia. One of eight children, his father was a wealthy surveyor who owned many slaves and his mother came from an important Virginia family. Jefferson had six sisters and one brother.

At age 9, Jefferson went to live with a Scottish clergyman, who taught him French, Greek and Latin along with his regular subjects. Young Jefferson developed a life-long hunger for learning. Jefferson entered William and Mary College in Williamsburg, Virginia at age 16 and, after graduation, he studied law.

In 1769, Jefferson was elected to the Virginia House of Burgesses (legislature), where he developed friendships with other champions of individual liberty like Patrick Henry and Richard Henry Lee. Six years later, he was elected to serve as a delegate to the Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In 1775, the Congress asked Jefferson to work with a committee, which included Benjamin Franklin and John Adams, to write a declaration of independence from England. Borrowing ideas from the English philosopher John Locke, Jefferson eloquently, but clearly explained the reasons why the American colonists should not be subject to the authority of the English government. The result was the Declaration of Independence. After revising some portions of the draft, the Continental Congress signed the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776.

The Declaration of Independence said that all men were equal and that God had given them certain rights. Those rights included life, freedom, and the pursuit of happiness. It went on to say that men created governments in order to make sure all men had these rights and that governments received their power from those men. These ideas are stated in the following quote from the 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 certain inalienable 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." (Declaration of Independence, 1776)

The Biography of Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) Handout A Continued

Jefferson left the Continental Congress in 1776 and served in the Virginia legislature until his election as governor in 1779. He was governor from 1779 to 1781. Following the American Revolution, Jefferson served the United States as the Minister to France, Secretary of State, and Vice-President under President John Adams.

Thomas Jefferson served as the new nation's third president from 1801-1809. During the last 17 years of his life, Jefferson remained in Virginia. He died at his home, Monticello, on July 4, 1826 on the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

SOURCES:

Kings Park Elementary School, Springfield, Virginia
<http://www.fcps.edu/KingsParkES/technology/bios/>

Social Studies for Kids <http://www.socialstudiesforkids.com/>

Questions - The Biography of Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) Handout B

1. Cite evidence from the reading to support the following statement: "Young Jefferson developed a life-long hunger for learning."
2. What individuals influenced Jefferson's beliefs regarding the importance of liberty?
3. What is meant by the phrase, "Jefferson eloquently, but clearly explained the reasons why American colonists should not be subject to the authority of the English government."?
4. Agree or disagree? Explain your answer. "Thomas Jefferson, like others who supported freedom for the colonies, risked being considered traitors."

5. Place the following events in order (1-5):

_____ Jefferson studies law.

_____ Jefferson works to draft the Declaration of Independence.

_____ Jefferson serves as President of the United States.

_____ Jefferson serves in the House of Burgesses.

_____ Jefferson serves as Governor of Virginia.

Additional Elementary Activities and Strategies (K-5)

- ▶ Explain to the class that a long time ago, the 13 colonies were under the rule of the King of England (George III) who lived far away. Use a wall map to explain the geographical space between the colonies and Great Britain. This king imposed many rules and taxes that made people in the colonies upset because they were not always fair rules. Explain that the Declaration of Independence is a statement that was developed long ago to give the colonists permission to rule themselves without the abuse of a king. The Declaration of Independence was meant to free them from the unfair rules made by the King of England. Invite students to develop class rules and consequences to be followed for the school year. Have the students draw pictures for each rule developed and post the pictures under each rule around the classroom.

- Discuss with students that you have overheard them, at times, make various complaints about the treatment of young people. Complaints motivated the Founding Fathers at the time of the American Revolution. Give the students a brief time in small groups to list general complaints they have about the treatment of young people. The complaints should be of a general nature (for example: recess should be longer, fourth graders should be able to see PG-13 videos, etc.). Collect the list. Choose complaints to share with the class, so you can guide the discussion to follow. Save the lists for future reference. Explain that there are moments when all of us are more eager to express what's wrong than we are to think critically about the problem and possible solutions. There is no reason to think people were any different in 1776. It's important to understand the complaints of the colonists as one step in a process involving careful deliberation and attempts to redress grievances. Ask questions to help your students consider their concerns in a deliberate way. WHO makes the rules they don't like? WHO decides if they are fair or not? HOW does one get them changed? WHAT does it mean to be independent from the rules? And finally, HOW does a group of people declare that they will no longer follow the rules?

- Working alone or in small groups, students can draft their own declarations. The transcript of the Declaration of Independence will serve as a model, with student documents containing the same sections. They should start with their reasons for writing (preamble). Tell students they can model their statement after the Preamble to the Declaration. For example, they can begin with the words "When, in the course of human events...."

- Show the class a copy of the Declaration of Independence (if possible, find a copy that includes the signatures of the founders). Write the classroom rules on a large yellow chart paper and discuss the rules with the class. Explain that a signature means the person who signs something believes in the worth of the document being signed. Invite the class to sign the poster with the classroom rules as their belief of the importance of following classroom rules. Optional - send a copy of the rules home for students to review and discuss. Have parents and students sign a copy of the rules and return it to the classroom teacher.

- After studying about the Declaration of Independence as a symbol of new nation, discuss the flag or other patriotic symbols and what they stand for. You may include a school symbol or mascot. Ask students to create a symbol representative of their classroom. Use this symbol throughout the school year.
- Read and learn about the Fourth of July holiday. Make sure students understand the relevance of this holiday in terms of American independence from Britain.
- Read books/stories such as *Aesop's Fables*, *Miss Nelson is Missing*, *Dr. Seuss' Yertle the Turtle*, and *Sh! We're Writing the Constitution* by Jean Fritz, or other stories that are related to civics or civic virtue. Discuss the importance of rules of law. Based on the readings of the stories, have students rewrite the books by reorganizing the storybook leaders in order to form "new rules of order." Primary age students may draw pictures and include copying basic vocabulary words.
- Read or have students read and discuss the following excerpt from the 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 certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness." Have students form three teams to research the "truths" contained in this excerpt. "Truths" may include the following: all men are created equal; that all people are born with the same rights, given by God or nature; that these rights include life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness and that these rights cannot be taken away by man; how government is the way by which people secure these rights for all; and how government gets its power through the people's consent, so the people have a right and a duty to govern the government or change/amend or abolish a government that abuses its people. Ask students to research the various truths and present their findings to the class.
- Discuss the term *Founding Fathers*. Explain that this term is used to describe the original writers, framers and signers of the Constitution. Have students research and write a report of the lives of the original framers; e.g., Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Roger Sherman, and/or Robert Livingston. Extension activity: discuss the exclusion of females, African Americans, and Native Americans at the Constitutional Convention.
- Write the word *freedom* on the chalkboard and ask students to brainstorm what this word means. Write their explanations on the board. Then write *freedom of expression*, *freedom of religion*, *freedom of assembly*, *freedom of the press*, etc., and discuss how the Bill of Rights protects citizens of the United States. Invite students to give examples of these freedoms found in television, music, newspapers, etc. Extension Activity: compare the rights of U.S. citizens to persons living under persecution such as Cuba. Ask students to write a Bill of Rights for their classroom.

- Explain and discuss the grievances included in the Declaration of Independence against the British crown. Ask upper elementary students to make a list of general problems related to a school or classroom issue. Each group should share its list of problems with the class. Have the class prioritize the problems and develop a list of possible solutions. Divide the class into work groups that will address each problem and present solutions. Ask students to write a personal Declaration of Independence, including resolutions, based on these issues and present them to other class members.
- Have students research and explore how the Declaration of Independence was a precursor to the Preamble and our Constitution and therefore, helped form our present system of laws and government emphasizing human rights and government responsibilities. Ask students to compare and contrast the various documents.
- The Preamble to the Constitution begins with the famous words “We the People...” Explain that it was written by the framers and created the basis of government. Have students read the Preamble and discuss how it set the tone for the Constitution of the United States. Discuss how both, the Preamble and the Declaration of Independence make statements about the responsibilities of citizens and government. Have students study the history of these documents and compare and contrast the various documents.
- Discuss the role and function of government or laws. Explain that a democratic government is the means by which people make sure that every person has equal rights. Furthermore, explain that these rights, given by God or nature cannot be taken away by man. Ask students to list the ways citizens enjoy these rights today. Also include a discussion of how these rights are protected. Share this information with class members or other classes. You may want to have students’ role play various scenes where individual’s rights are being denied and the role of government to protect these rights.
- Students could conduct a Declaration Convention in which they use the small group declarations as the basis of a single document representing the entire class.
- Volunteers could stage a dramatic reading of the entire Declaration.
- Students may be interested in seeing an image of the original Declaration. See the “Web Listings” section of this packet for links to the original document.

**LESSONS, ACTIVITIES AND
STRATEGIES FOR
SECONDARY STUDENTS**

**Celebrate Freedom
Lesson Plan**

GRADE LEVEL/COURSE: Secondary Social Studies

TITLE: The Declaration of Independence

OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify the Declaration of Independence as one of the documents that serves as the basis for American democratic ideals and principles.
2. Describe the events that led to the writing of the Declaration of Independence.
3. List and analyze the fundamental democratic principles contained in the Declaration of Independence.
4. List and analyze the “unalienable rights” as outlined in the Declaration of Independence.

LANGUAGE ARTS/READING BENCHMARKS:

MIDDLE SCHOOL Benchmarks for Grades 6-8

- LA.A.1.3.2 Uses a variety of strategies to analyze words and text, draw conclusions, use context and word structure clues, and recognize organizational patterns.
- LA.A.2.3.1 Determines the main idea or essential message in a text and identifies relevant details and facts and patterns of organization.

HIGH SCHOOL Benchmarks for Grades 9-12

- LA.A.1.4.2 Selects and uses strategies to understand words and text, and to make and confirm inferences from what is read including interpreting diagrams, graphs, and statistical illustrations.
- LA.A.2.4.1 Determines the main idea and identifies relevant details, methods of development, and their effectiveness in a variety of types of written material.
- LA.2.4.7 Analyzes the validity and reliability of primary source information and uses the information appropriately.

SUGGESTED TIME:

1-2 class periods

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES:

1. For background information, have students read/review the passages of their textbooks about the events in Colonial America that led to the American Revolution. Give special attention to the colonial dissent brought about by Britain's taxation and governmental control over the colonies.
2. Introduce key vocabulary including: infringement, reconciliation, discontent, entrust, indictment, and grievance. Also introduce and discuss the concept of natural rights.
3. Read Handout A - *Declaration of Independence* and answer the questions on Handout B. This can be completed individually or as a small group exercise. When completed, review the questions orally.

TEACHER'S BACKGROUND:

Natural Rights – the political theory that maintains that an individual enters into society with certain basic rights and that no government can deny these rights. The modern idea of natural rights grew out of the ancient and medieval doctrines of natural law; i.e., the belief that people, as creatures of nature and God, should live their lives and organize their society on the basis of rules and precepts laid down by nature or God. With the growth of the idea of individualism, especially in the 17th century, natural law doctrines were modified to stress the fact that individuals, because they are natural beings, have rights that cannot be violated by anyone or by any society. Perhaps the most famous formulation of this doctrine is found in the writings of John Locke. Locke assumed that humans were by nature rational and good, and that they carried into political society the same rights they had enjoyed in earlier stages of society, foremost among them being freedom of worship, the right to a voice in their own government, and the right of property. Jean Jacques Rousseau attempted to reconcile the natural rights of the individual with the need for social unity and cooperation through the idea of the social contract. The most important elaboration of the idea of natural rights came in the North American colonies, however, where the writings of Thomas Jefferson, Samuel Adams, and Thomas Paine made of the natural rights theory a powerful justification for revolution. The classic expressions of natural rights are the English Bill of Rights (1689), the American Declaration of Independence (1776), the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen (1789), the first 10 amendments to the Constitution of the United States (known as the Bill of Rights, 1791), and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations (1948).

In summary, many of the ideas Jefferson included in the Declaration were borrowed. The idea that all people are equal and that no person is born with the right to have power over another came from the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The idea that people have certain natural rights or unalienable rights that no government may interfere with came from the English philosopher John Locke. Locke defined those rights as "life, liberty, and property." Jefferson added "the pursuit of happiness." Source: adapted from answers.com

4. Define "unalienable rights" (life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness) as contained in the Declaration. (NOTE: Property includes the right to choose where to live and work, the right to own property, etc.) Ask students to consider if they would be willing to give up these rights or if they would fight for them as the colonists did in 1776. Ask students to consider what would have happened to the colonists if they had lost the war with England.
5. List and discuss the fundamental democratic principles contained in the Declaration of Independence ("that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with inalienable rights," and "that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.")
6. Read aloud to students the following excerpt from the 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 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."

Discuss the following:

- a. Throughout the history of our nation, have all individuals been treated equally and fairly? Give examples to explain your answer.
- b. Agree or Disagree? When one person loses his/her rights, we all lose our rights.
- c. What does it mean when the Declaration states that governments are "instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY:

Discussion and question activity

MATERIALS/AIDS NEEDED:

Handout A - *Declaration of Independence* and questions on Handout B

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

1. Working alone or in small groups, have students draft their own declarations in modern language. The transcript of the Declaration of Independence will serve as a model and student documents should contain the same sections. Begin with their reasons for writing (preamble), followed by a list of grievances and close with a declaration of independence.
2. Have students read the original draft of the Declaration of Independence as written by Thomas Jefferson and the final version as we know it today. Working in groups, identify the differences between the two versions. Students should speculate as to why the changes were made and whether they would have made the same changes. The original draft and final version of the Declaration of Independence are available at: http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/00-2/lp2046.shtml

SOURCE: Reading adapted from answers.com

Declaration of Independence

Handout A

The Declaration of Independence which announced the independence of the thirteen colonies in North America from Great Britain was adopted on July 4, 1776. However, the road to American independence and the creation of the United States took far longer than a single day.

The Road to Its Adoption

Official acts that colonists considered infringements upon their rights had previously led to the Stamp Act Congress (1765) and to the First Continental Congress (1774), but these were mostly conservative assemblies that sought reconciliation, not independence. The efforts of the First Continental Congress in 1774 to reason with Britain failed. Discontent grew, and as the battles at Lexington and Concord in April 1775 developed into the American Revolution. Many members of the Second Continental Congress of Philadelphia followed the leadership of John Hancock, John Adams, and Samuel Adams in demanding independence.

On June 7, 1776, Richard Henry Lee, a delegate to the Convention from Virginia, called for a resolution of independence. On June 11, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Robert R. Livingston, and Roger Sherman were instructed to draft such a declaration. The actual writing was entrusted to Jefferson, a young lawyer from Virginia. The first draft was revised by Franklin, Adams, and Jefferson before it was sent to Congress, where it was again changed numerous times. That final draft was adopted on July 4, 1776, and Independence Day has been the most important American patriotic holiday ever since.

The Declaration and Its Importance

The Declaration of Independence is one of the most important of all American historical documents. It is essentially a justification of the American Revolution presented to the world. After stating its purpose, the opening paragraphs clearly state the American ideal of government based on the natural rights philosophy of John Locke, Emerich de Vattel, and Jean Jacques Rousseau, among others. The Declaration begins:

“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

Declaration of Independence

Handout A Continued

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..."

In just a few sentences, the Declaration presents the basic foundations of American government: "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with inalienable rights," and "that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

The document follows with an indictment of King George III for purposely abusing the rights of the colonists in order to establish an "absolute Tyranny" over the colonies. The document states that colonial patience had achieved nothing. Therefore, the colonists found themselves forced to declare their independence. The powerful closing paragraph is the formal pronouncement of independence from Great Britain. It states:

"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."

The unique combination of philosophy and theory of government and the detailed listing of specific grievances and injustices suffered by the colonists has given the Declaration enduring power as one of the greatest political documents ever written. Many of the fundamental principles found in the Declaration were later included in the United States Constitution.

Adapted from answers.com

Questions - The Declaration of Independence Handout B

1. Re-read the following passage and explain its meaning.

“Official acts that colonists considered infringements upon their rights had previously led to the Stamp Act Congress (1765) and to the First Continental Congress (1774), but these were mostly conservative assemblies that sought reconciliation, not independence. “

2. Who first called for a resolution of independence? Name the committee members who were finally given the task of drafting the Declaration of Independence.
3. Within the Declaration, three natural rights are described as “unalienable rights.” What are these rights?
4. The first paragraph of the Declaration outlines two of the basic foundations of American government. List and define each in your own words.
 - a.
 - b.
5. What is declared in the last paragraph of the Declaration?
6. Agree or disagree? Cite examples to support your answer.

“Many of the fundamental principles found in the Declaration were later included in the United States Constitution.”

**Celebrate Freedom
Lesson Plan**

GRADE LEVEL/COURSE: Secondary Social Studies

TITLE: The Biography of Thomas Jefferson

OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify Thomas Jefferson as the primary author of the Declaration of Independence and as an advocate for American democratic ideals and principles.

LANGUAGE ARTS/READING BENCHMARKS:

MIDDLE SCHOOL Benchmarks for Grades 6-8

- LA.A.1.3.2 Uses a variety of strategies to analyze words and text, draw conclusions, use context and word structure clues, and recognize organizational patterns.
- LA.A.2.3.1 Determines the main idea or essential message in a text and identifies relevant details and facts and patterns of organization.

HIGH SCHOOL Benchmarks for Grades 9-12

- LA.A.1.4.2 Selects and uses strategies to understand words and text, and to make and confirm inferences from what is read including interpreting diagrams, graphs, and statistical illustrations.
- LA.A.2.4.1 Determines the main idea and identifies relevant details, methods of development, and their effectiveness in a variety of types of written material.
- LA.2.4.7 Analyzes the validity and reliability of primary source information and uses the information appropriately.

SUGGESTED TIME:

1 class period

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES:

1. Review the difference between a “biography” and “autobiography.”
2. Define and discuss key vocabulary terms/concepts found in the reading (Handout A) including: tyranny, advocate, eloquent, national debt, commerce, qualms, and embargo.
3. Have students read Handout A – *The Biography of Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826)* and complete the questions on Handout B. This can be completed individually or as a small group exercise. When completed, review the questions orally.
4. Read aloud to students the following excerpt from the 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 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.”

Discuss the following:

- What does it mean when the Declaration states...*“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...”*?
- Unfortunately, the study of our nation’s history shows that not all individuals/groups have been treated equally and fairly at all times. Cite examples of this inequity. In your opinion, is our nation improving in this area or not? Cite examples to support the argument.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY:

Oral questioning and reading activity

MATERIALS/AIDS NEEDED:

Handout A –*The Biography of Thomas Jefferson*, Handout B - Questions

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

1. After reading the biography of Jefferson, ask students to identify character traits that Jefferson exemplified; e.g., courage, leadership. Make a similar list of character traits for each major presidential candidate for 2008. Discuss the similarities and differences among the lists made for the candidates and Jefferson.
2. Discuss the following: Consider the life and times of American colonial patriots such as Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, Samuel Adams, John Adams, and Patrick Henry. Do you believe that the times in which a person lives makes the person or does the person make the time in which they live?

SOURCE:

Adapted from the White House website -
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/history/presidents/tj3.html>

Biography of Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) Handout A

In the middle of a political conflict in 1800, Thomas Jefferson wrote in a private letter, "I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man."

This powerful advocate of liberty was born in 1743 in Albemarle County, Virginia, inheriting from his father, a planter and surveyor, some 5,000 acres of land, and from his mother, a Randolph, high social standing. He studied at the College of William and Mary. Upon graduation, he studied law. In 1772 he married Martha Wayles Skelton, a widow, and took her to live in his partly constructed mountaintop home, Monticello.

Freckled and sandy-haired, rather tall and awkward, Jefferson was eloquent as a writer, but he was no public speaker. In the Virginia House of Burgesses (legislature) and the Continental Congress, he contributed his pen rather than his voice to the patriot cause. As the "silent member" of the Congress, Jefferson, at 33, drafted the Declaration of Independence. In the years following, he labored to make its words a reality in Virginia. Most notably, he wrote a bill establishing religious freedom, enacted in 1786.

Jefferson succeeded Benjamin Franklin as minister to France in 1785. His sympathy for the French Revolution led him into conflict with Alexander Hamilton when Jefferson was Secretary of State in President Washington's Cabinet. He resigned in 1793.

Sharp political conflict developed, and two separate parties, the Federalists and the Democratic-Republicans, began to form. Jefferson gradually assumed leadership of the Democratic-Republicans, who sympathized with the revolutionary cause in France. Attacking Federalist policies, he opposed a strong federal government and championed the rights of states.

As a reluctant candidate for President in 1796, Jefferson came within three votes of election. Through a flaw in the United States Constitution, he became Vice President, although a political opponent of President Adams. In 1800, the flaw caused a more serious problem. Democratic-Republican electors, attempting to name both a President and a Vice President from their own party, cast a tie vote between Jefferson and Aaron Burr. The House of Representatives settled the tie. Hamilton, disliking both Jefferson and Burr, nevertheless urged Jefferson's election. Jefferson was elected the nation's third president.

When Jefferson assumed the Presidency, the crisis in France had passed. He slashed Army and Navy expenditures, cut the budget, eliminated the tax on whiskey so unpopular in the West, yet reduced the national debt by a third. He also sent a naval squadron to fight the Barbary pirates, who were harassing American commerce in the Mediterranean. Further, although the Constitution made no provision for the acquisition of new land, Jefferson suppressed his qualms over constitutionality when he had the opportunity to acquire the Louisiana Territory from France's Napoleon in 1803.

During Jefferson's second term, he was increasingly preoccupied with keeping the United States from involvement in the Napoleonic wars, though both England and France interfered with the neutral rights of American merchantmen. Jefferson's attempted solution, an embargo upon American shipping, worked badly and was unpopular.

After serving two terms as President of the United States, Jefferson retired to his Monticello home to ponder such projects as his grand designs for the University of Virginia. A French nobleman observed that he had placed his house and his mind "on an elevated situation, from which he might contemplate the universe."

He died on July 4, 1826, exactly fifty years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

Adapted from the White House website -
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/history/presidents/tj3.html>

Biography of Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) Handout B

1. Explain the following quote from Thomas Jefferson: "I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man."
2. What two political parties emerged when Jefferson was serving in President George Washington's cabinet? Which party did Jefferson lead? What did this party support and oppose?
3. List at least 3 actions taken by Jefferson during his presidency. In your opinion, which action was most significant? Why?
4. What did the French nobleman mean when he observed that Jefferson placed his house and mind "on an elevated situation, from which he might contemplate the universe?"

**Celebrate Freedom
Lesson Plan**

GRADE LEVEL: Secondary Social Studies

TITLE: New Words, Same Meaning - Paraphrasing the Declaration of Independence

OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify the Declaration of Independence as one of the documents that serves as the basis for American democratic ideals and principles.
2. Work as a group to paraphrase the language of key portions of the Declaration of Independence.
3. Translate the original language of the Declaration of Independence into modern English.

LANGUAGE ARTS/READING BENCHMARKS:

MIDDLE SCHOOL Benchmarks for Grades 6-8

LA.A.1.3.1 uses background knowledge of the subject and text structure knowledge to make complex predictions of content, purpose, and organization of the reading selection.

LA.A.1.3. 2. uses a variety of strategies to analyze words and text, draw conclusions, use context and word structure clues, and recognize organizational patterns.

LA.A.2.3.1. determines the main idea or essential message in a text and identifies relevant details and facts and patterns of organization.

LA.A.2.3.2. identifies the author's purpose and/or point of view in a variety of texts and uses the information to construct meaning.

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL BENCHMARKS for Grades 9-12

LA.A.1.4.1. selects and uses prereading strategies that are appropriate to the text, such as discussion, making predictions, brainstorming, generating questions, and previewing, to anticipate content, purpose, and organization of a reading selection.

LA.A.1.4.1.2. selects and uses strategies to understand words and text, and to make and confirm inferences from what is read, including interpreting diagrams, graphs, and statistical illustrations.

LA.A.2.4.1. determines the main idea and identifies relevant details, methods of development, and their effectiveness in a variety of types of written material.

LA.A.2.4.2. determines the author's purpose and point of view and their effects on the text.

SUGGESTED TIME:

1-2 hours

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES:

1. Define paraphrasing. Explain that paraphrasing is an important skill and an excellent means of determining if students truly comprehend what they are reading.
2. To illustrate the skill of paraphrasing, ask students to work as individuals to paraphrase the following statements:

"It is illegal to operate a motor vehicle at speeds that exceed the limit posted on roadside traffic signs." (It is against the law to drive a car faster than the speed limit posted on signs.)

"The teacher insisted that all students follow the rules by: 1. being properly attired as required by the school uniform policy; 2. not being tardy; and, 3. not speaking aloud without first obtaining permission from the teacher. Violators would serve an afternoon detention." (The teacher demanded that all students follow the school rules by wearing their school uniform, not being late, and not speaking until they had permission. Any student who did not follow the rules would have to stay after school.)
3. Explain that in this lesson, students will be asked to important passages from the Declaration of Independence and then paraphrase the passages into more modern language.
4. To provide context for the lesson, review the passages in the student textbook or Handout A from the previous lesson outlining the events in Colonial America that led to the American Revolution.

5. Divide the class into groups of three and distribute copies of the quote below from Declaration of Independence to each group. Also supply each group with a dictionary.

“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.”

6. Assign each group with the task of paraphrasing the quote from the Declaration and re-writing it into more modern language. Offer the following questions as a guide:
 - a. After discussing the quote with your group, what are the main ideas the writer is trying to help you understand? Let each group member orally paraphrase the quote or a portion of the quote.
 - b. What vocabulary words used in the quote do you not understand? Look these words up in the dictionary. Also read the examples given with the definition. Do the examples help you better understand the language being used in the quote?
 - c. What new language can you suggest to re-write the quote into modern English? Is your paraphrasing clear and does it still express the original ideas of the writer?
7. Have each group share the results of the exercise. Using the best ideas from each group, create a “new” Declaration of Independence and post the paraphrasing in the classroom.
8. Continue the exercise by providing the small groups with the examples below of the grievances listed against King George III in the Declaration’s list of “Injuries and Usurpations.” Ask each group to paraphrase each grievance into modern English. (TEACHER’S NOTE: A possible paraphrase is supplied in *italics*.)
 - A. HE has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public Good. *(He will not give his stamp of approval to the laws we feel are necessary for our country.)*
 - B. 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. *(His leaders oversee the passing of new laws, but when those laws are put before him for approval he totally ignores them.)*
 - C. 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 holds new laws hostage, hoping citizens will give up their desire to be represented by leaders they vote for.)*

- D. 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 holds meetings of great importance at the most inconvenient places and times so that he will meet little resistance to his ideas.)*
- E. HE has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly Firmness his Invasions on the Rights of the People. *(He has done all he can to shut down representative government.)*
- F. 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 placed friends in high places; and threatened their jobs and livelihoods if they go against him.)*
- G. HE has erected a Multitude of new Offices, and sent hither Swarms of Officers to harass our People, and eat out their Substance. *(He is trying to extend his reach and gain support for his plans by "planting" supporters in communities everywhere.)*
- H. HE has kept among us, in Times of Peace, Standing Armies, without the consent of our Legislatures. *(He maintains armies without approval of the citizens.)*
- I. 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 captured and forced citizens to join him in fighting and killing their fellow citizens.)*

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY:

Group work and class discussion

MATERIALS/AIDS NEEDED:

Copies of the quotation and dictionaries for each group

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

1. Combine students' work to create a new, modern language Declaration of Independence.

SOURCE:

The lesson was adapted from the lesson entitled, "Declaration of Independence from Plagiarism" found at educationworld.com

Celebrate Freedom Lesson Plan

GRADE LEVEL/COURSE: Secondary Social Studies

TITLE: Created Equal?

OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify the Declaration of Independence as one of the documents that serves as the basis for American democratic ideals and principles.
2. Analyze the concept of "equality."
3. Interpret the phrase "All Men Are Created Equal" in the context of the Declaration of Independence.
4. Develop arguments for and against Thomas Jefferson's inclusion of the phrase "All Men Are Created Equal" in the Declaration of Independence.

LANGUAGE ARTS/READING BENCHMARKS:

MIDDLE SCHOOL Benchmarks for Grades 6-8

- LA.A.1.3.2 Uses a variety of strategies to analyze words and text, draw conclusions, use context and word structure clues, and recognize organizational patterns.
- LA.A.2.3.1 Determines the main idea or essential message in a text and identifies relevant details and facts and patterns of organization.
- LA.A.2.3.2 Identifies the author's purpose and/or point of view in a variety of texts and uses the information to construct meaning.
- LA.2.3.8 Checks the validity and accuracy of information obtained from research, in such ways as differentiating fact and opinion, identifying strong vs. weak arguments, and recognizing that personal values influence the conclusions an author draws.
- LA.A.2.3.5 Locates, organizes, and interprets written information for a variety of purposes, including classroom research, collaborative decision-making, and performing a school or real-world task.

HIGH SCHOOL Benchmarks for Grades 9-12

- LA.A.1.4.2 Selects and uses strategies to understand words and text, and to make and confirm inferences from what is read including interpreting diagrams, graphs, and statistical illustrations.

- LA.A.2.4.1 Determines the main idea and identifies relevant details, methods of development, and their effectiveness in a variety of types of written material.
- LA.A.2.4.2 Determines the author's purpose and point of view and their effects on the text.
- LA.2.4.7 Analyzes the validity and reliability of primary source information and uses the information appropriately.
- LA.A.2.4.4 Locates, gathers, analyzes, and evaluates written information for a variety of purposes, including research projects, real-world tasks, and self-improvement.
- LA.A.2.4.8 Synthesizes information from multiple sources to draw conclusions.

SUGGESTED TIME:

3-4 class periods (requires research)

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES:

Day One

1. Review the basic purpose of the Declaration of Independence with the class. Explain that the class is beginning an examination of certain key concepts of the document, especially "All men are created equal."
2. Begin with a brainstorming activity on the meaning of "equality." Have students brainstorm individually at first. After a few minutes, divide the class into groups of 4-5 and have students share interpretations of "equality" within each group. Each student should add two-three additional interpretations of equality to his or her list own list.
3. As a class, discuss the various definitions of equality developed both individually and within the group.
4. Introduce the phrase "all men are created equal" from the Declaration of Independence. As a class, discuss what Jefferson meant by this phrase in the document.
5. Following class discussion, move back to small groups to consider the following: "Who was not treated equally? Why?" Allow groups time to discuss.

6. Ask each group to summarize the points made during the small group discussion for the rest of the class. Also discuss, as a class, the following questions:

During Jefferson's time in history, what groups were not considered equal?

What was Jefferson's intended purpose for using the phrase "All men are created equal?"

Could Jefferson justify such a statement for inclusion in the Declaration of Independence?

Day Two - Four

1. Have each student pick a card that has either "for" or "against" written on it. The card must also include a number that designates the student's group for the rest of the lesson. Depending on the size of the class you may have four to six groups.
2. Explain that each small group will research a position - either to support Jefferson's inclusion of "All men are created equal" in the Declaration or to oppose Jefferson's inclusion of the phrase in the Declaration. Further explain that research on the Internet will be required. All groups will be responsible for reporting their group findings to the class in an oral report.
3. Using the Internet, have students research and read the materials linked from the *Was It Compromise or Hypocrisy?* website. The link offers information to support or oppose Jefferson's inclusion of the phrase "All men are created equal" in the Declaration of Independence. The web address is:
 - a. http://memory.loc.gov/learn/lessons/01/equal/thomas_y.html
 - b. (Note: If necessary, the materials may be downloaded and printed; however, they are lengthy.)
4. Have students gather information from the web site *Was It Compromise or Hypocrisy?* Students should record their sources and findings on the Handout A - *Evidence Compilation Sheet*.
5. Each team is responsible for presenting their respective evidence to the rest of the class as an oral report. The oral presentations may be supported with visual aids; e.g., posters, transparencies, multimedia presentations.
6. After reviewing all of the evidence for both sides, discuss the pros and cons of each side of the argument. Discuss how we should interpret the phrase "all men are created equal" in the Declaration of Independence. What did it mean in 1776? What does it mean today?

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY:

Class discussion, research activities, and oral report

MATERIALS/AIDS NEEDED:

Handout A - *Evidence Compilation Sheet* and Internet readings from the *Was It Compromise or Hypocrisy?* website

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

As a follow up exercise, have each student compose a letter addressed to the opposition detailing his or her findings and viewpoints.

SOURCE:

<http://memory.loc.gov/learn/lessons/01/equal/overview.html>

Evidence Compilation Sheet

Handout A

Student's Name: _____ Position Researched: _____

Title and Source of Information

Title and Source of Information

Title and Source of Information

Title and Source of Information

Title and Source of Information

Title and Source of Information

Based on your personal research, list 3 arguments that best support your position.

1.

2.

3.

**Celebrate Freedom
Lesson Plan**

GRADE LEVEL/COURSE: Secondary Social Studies

TITLE: The Declaration of Independence and The Declaration of Sentiments

OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify the Declaration of Independence as one of the documents that serves as the basis for American democratic ideals and principles.
2. Compare the Declaration of Independence and the Declaration of Sentiments.

LANGUAGE ARTS/READING BENCHMARKS:

MIDDLE SCHOOL Benchmarks for Grades 6-8

- LA.A.1.3.2 Uses a variety of strategies to analyze words and text, draw conclusions, use context and word structure clues, and recognize organizational patterns.
- LA.A.2.3.1 Determines the main idea or essential message in a text and identifies relevant details and facts and patterns of organization.
- LA.A.2.3.2 Identifies the author's purpose and/or point of view in a variety of texts and uses the information to construct meaning.
- LA.2.3.8 Checks the validity and accuracy of information obtained from research, in such ways as differentiating fact and opinion, identifying strong vs. weak arguments, and recognizing that personal values influence the conclusions an author draws.

HIGH SCHOOL Benchmarks for Grades 9-12

- LA.A.1.4.2 Selects and uses strategies to understand words and text, and to make and confirm inferences from what is read including interpreting diagrams, graphs, and statistical illustrations.
- LA.A.2.4.1 Determines the main idea and identifies relevant details, methods of development, and their effectiveness in a variety of types of written material.
- LA.A.2.4.2 Determines the author's purpose and point of view and their effects on the text.
- LA.2.4.7 Analyzes the validity and reliability of primary source information and uses

the information appropriately.

SUGGESTED TIME:

1-2 class periods

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES:

1. Discuss the events leading to the writing of the Declaration of Independence. Use text passages for additional background information.
2. Have students read the Declaration of Independence (copy enclosed). Through discussion, identify the specific arguments for independence; e.g., unfair taxation, dissolution of representative assemblies.
3. Have students read Handout A- *The Declaration of Sentiments* and discuss the forces that led Elizabeth C. Stanton to write it.

TEACHER'S' BACKGROUND: Throughout history, women had traditionally been regarded as inferior to men both physically and intellectually. Both law and theology had ordered their subjection. Women could not possess property in their own names, engage in business, or control the disposal of their children or even of their own persons. Although Mary Astell and others had pleaded earlier for larger opportunities for women, the first feminist document was Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792). During the French Revolution, women's republican clubs demanded that liberty, equality, and fraternity be applied regardless of sex, but this movement was extinguished for the time by the Code Napoléon. In North America, although Abigail Adams and Mercy Otis Warren pressed for the inclusion of women's emancipation in the Constitution, the feminist movement really dates from 1848, when Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Coffin Mott, and others in a women's convention at Seneca Falls, N.Y., issued a declaration of independence for women, demanding full legal equality, full educational and commercial opportunity, equal compensation, the right to collect wages, and the right to vote.

4. Review the Declaration of Sentiments with students. How is this document similar to the Declaration of Independence? Why did these women feel their rights were being violated?

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY:

Class discussion

MATERIALS/AIDS NEEDED:

Declaration of Independence, Handout A - *The Declaration of Sentiments*

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

1. As a colonial woman, write a letter to the Founding Fathers advocating women's rights.
2. Write a new Declaration of Sentiments from another view point; e.g., students' rights, gay rights.

SOURCE:

Adapted from <http://www.teachervision.fen.com/page/1717.html>

Declaration of Sentiments

Handout A

The Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions was drafted by Elizabeth Cady Stanton for the women's rights convention at Seneca Falls, New York in 1848. Based on the American Declaration of Independence, the Sentiments demanded equality with men before the law, in education and employment. Here, too, was the first pronouncement demanding that women be given the right to vote.

Sentiments

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one portion of the family of man to assume among the people of the earth a position different from that which they have hitherto occupied, but one 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 that impel them to such a course.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of those who suffer from it to refuse allegiance to it, and to insist upon the institution of a 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 has shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they were 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 duty to throw off such government and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of the women under this government, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to demand the equal station to which they are entitled.

The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her.

To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise.

He has compelled her to submit to law in the formation of which she had no voice.

He has withheld from her rights which are given to the most ignorant and degraded men, both natives and foreigners.

Having deprived her of this first right as a citizen, the elective franchise, thereby leaving her without representation in the halls of legislation, he has oppressed her on all sides.

He has made her, if married, in the eye of the law, civilly dead.

He has taken from her all right in property, even to the wages she earns.

He has made her morally, an irresponsible being, as she can commit many crimes with impunity, provided they be done in the presence of her husband. In the covenant of marriage, she is compelled to promise obedience to her husband, he becoming, to all intents and purposes, her master—the law giving him power to deprive her of her liberty and to administer chastisement.

He has so framed the laws of divorce, as to what shall be the proper causes and, in case of separation, to whom the guardianship of the children shall be given, as to be wholly regardless of the happiness of the women—the law, in all cases, going upon a false supposition of the supremacy of man and giving all power into his hands.

After depriving her of all rights as a married woman, if single and the owner of property, he has taxed her to support a government which recognizes her only when her property can be made profitable to it.

He has monopolized nearly all the profitable employments, and from those she is permitted to follow, she receives but a scanty remuneration. He closes against her all the avenues to wealth and distinction which he considers most honorable to himself. As a teacher of theology, medicine, or law, she is not known.

He has denied her the facilities for obtaining a thorough education, all colleges being closed against her.

He allows her in church, as well as state, but a subordinate position, claiming apostolic authority for her exclusion from the ministry, and, with some exceptions, from any public participation in the affairs of the church.

He has created a false public sentiment by giving to the world a different code of morals for men and women, by which moral delinquencies which exclude women from society are not only tolerated but deemed of little account in man.

He has usurped the prerogative of Jehovah himself, claiming it as his right to assign for her a sphere of action, when that belongs to her conscience and to her God.

He has endeavored, in every way that he could, to destroy her confidence in her own powers, to lessen her self-respect, and to make her willing to lead a dependent and abject life.

Now, in view of this entire disfranchisement of one-half the people of this country, their social and religious degradation, in view of the unjust laws above mentioned, and because women do feel themselves aggrieved, oppressed, and fraudulently deprived of their most sacred rights, we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of the United States.

In entering upon the great work before us, we anticipate no small amount of misconception, misrepresentation, and ridicule; but we shall use every instrumentality within our power to effect our object. We shall employ agents, circulate tracts, petition the state and national legislatures, and endeavor to enlist the pulpit and the press in our behalf. We hope this Convention will be followed by a series of conventions embracing every part of the country.

Resolutions

Whereas, the great precept of nature is conceded to be that "man shall pursue his own true and substantial happiness." Blackstone in his *Commentaries* remarks that this law of nature, being coeval with mankind and dictated by God himself, is, of course, superior in obligation to any other. It is binding over all the globe, in all countries and at all times; no human laws are of any validity if contrary to this, and such of them as are valid derive all their force, and all their validity, and all their authority, mediately and immediately, from this original; therefore,

Resolved, that the speedy success of our cause depends upon the zealous and untiring efforts of both men and women for the overthrow of the monopoly of the pulpit, and for the securing to woman an equal participation with men in the various trades, professions, and commerce.

Resolved, therefore, that, being invested by the Creator with the same capabilities and same consciousness of responsibility for their exercise, it is demonstrably the right and duty of woman, equally with man, to promote every righteous cause by every righteous means; and especially in regard to the great subjects of morals and religion, it is self-evidently her right to participate with her brother in teaching them, both in private and in public, by writing and by speaking, by any instrumentalities proper to be used, and in any assemblies proper to be held; and this being a self-evident truth growing out of the divinely implanted principles of human nature, any custom or authority adverse to it, whether modern or wearing the hoary sanction of antiquity, is to be regarded as a self-evident falsehood, and at war with mankind.

Additional Middle School Activities and Strategies (Grade 6-9)

- Research and discuss significant events leading to the adoption and signing of the Declaration of Independence. Create a time line of events. Have students choose specific events from the time-line and create a political cartoon depicting the selected event.
- List and discuss the many grievances of the colonists. Ask students to imagine they are colonists living in Virginia in 1776. Have each student write a letter of complaint to King George III.
- Provide students with a copy of the Declaration of Independence (included). After discussion and analysis, have students (individually or in small groups) explore the questions below. According to the Declaration of Independence:
 - What is the purpose of government? Can people get rid of their government, and if so, under what conditions?
 - What are people's basic human rights?
- Using individual copies of the Declaration of Independence, identify wrongs done by the King. Have students create posters that might be placed around colonial towns and villages listing their grievances.
- Have students work in small groups to compare and contrast Thomas Jefferson's rough draft of the Declaration of Independence with the final version. The rough draft of the Declaration is available online (see web resources section of this packet).
- Hold a mock trial for King George III. Students will take the roles of: King George III, witnesses (British Soldier, loyalist, John Hancock - or other patriot, colonist), prosecutor, defense attorney, jury, and judge. Students will determine the charges against the king as well as the format of the mock trial.
- Students will select 10 sentences from the Declaration of Independence (5 complaints against the King and 5 Whereas and/or Resolved statements.) Each student should rewrite these sentences into present day English.
- Have students stage a dramatic reading of the entire Declaration of Independence.
- Describe and list the sections of the Declaration of Independence and explain the basic purpose of each section.
- Create a mural or classroom display that depicts different aspects of the Declaration of Independence. Sections might include quotations from the document, pictures of the signing, lists of grievances, political cartoons,

information on the signers, or interpretations of parts of the document.

- Have students take the role of one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. As such, they should write a journal entry describing their thoughts and motives for signing the document.
- Working alone or in small groups, students should draft their own declarations. The transcript of the Declaration of Independence will serve as a model; student documents should contain the same sections. They should start with their reasons for writing (preamble), as discussed above. Tell students they can model their statement after the Preamble to the Declaration. For example, they can begin with the words "When, in the course of human events...."
- Have students conduct research into the historical events that led to the colonists' complaints and dissatisfaction with British rule. What were some of the specific complaints? After reviewing the complaints, the students should look for specific events related to the grievances listed. They can use their own textbooks and other sources available at school.

Additional Senior High School Activities and Strategies (9-12)

- View the video of the musical *1776*. The following website has a lesson plan for using this video as a teaching tool and includes detailed information clarifying minimal historical inaccuracies: <http://www.teachwithmovies.org/guides/1776.html>
- Students should read the original draft of the Declaration of Independence as written by Thomas Jefferson and the final version as we know it today. Working in groups, students should identify the differences between the two versions. Students should speculate as to why the changes were made and whether they would have made the same changes. The original draft and final version of the Declaration of Independence are available at: http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/00-2/lp2046.shtml
- Students often complain. Ask them to make a list of general complaints about (you insert the topic). In small groups, students should reach consensus regarding ten complaints. Each group should share its list of complaints with the class. Ultimately, the class should prioritize the complaints to develop a class list. After establishing the class list, the students should then divide into groups to integrate the complaints into a class document which resembles the format of the Declaration of Independence. Expanded ideas for the above lesson are available at: http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?ID=282

**INTERNET RESOURCES
AND THE FULL TEXT OF THE
DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE**

INTERNET RESOURCES

The following sites may be useful to teachers for background information and/or for additional reading for students:

The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration links students and teachers to resources on primary documents:

<http://www.archives.gov>

Have students research the history of and personally sign a copy of the Declaration of Independence at:

http://www.archives.gov/national_archives_experience/charters/declaration_join_the_signers.html

Information, lessons, and activities related to our government. This site is extremely simplified, relevant and useful for teachers and students. The information on the site is divided by grades K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12, and for Parents and Teachers:

<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/>

The John Hancock Organization provides information, background, history, transcripts and engravings of the Declaration of Independence.

www.johnhancock.org

This site, *Education World*, presents lesson plans for teaching about three important freedom documents -- the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. <http://www.educationworld.com>

For information on American holidays, including July 4th go to:

<http://www.usa.gov/citizens/holidays.shtml>

Lesson plans for teachers prepared by teachers:

<http://www.lessonplanspage.com//4thOfJuly.htm>

Library of Congress exhibits on the Declaration of Independence:

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/declara/declara3.html>

Includes lessons about Benjamin Franklin and other important leaders:

<http://school.discovery.com>

"The American Revolution: The Declaration and Beyond" centers on Thomas' Paine's Common Sense. The site includes resources from literature and the Internet:

<http://school.discovery.com/lessonplans/programs/revwar2/>

We the People..... The Citizen and the Constitution:"Why Do We Need a Government?"

"How Can Citizens Participate?"

<http://www.civiced.org/lesson-plans.html>

INTERNET RESOURCES (continued)

White House for Kids, Information, "Lessons of Liberty on the Freedom Time line:"
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/kids/index.html>

U.S. History.org - History of the Declaration of Independence and Benjamin Franklin:
<http://www.ushistory.org>

Kings Park Elementary School, Springfield, Virginia – This website offers brief biographies of famous Americans, including Thomas Jefferson.
<http://www.fcps.edu/KingsParkES/technology/bios/>

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 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 harrass 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 compleat 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 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.

Nor 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 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.

The 56 signatures on the Declaration appear in the positions indicated:

Column 1

Georgia:

Button Gwinnett

Lyman Hall

George Walton

Column 2

North Carolina:

William Hooper

Joseph Hewes

John Penn

South Carolina:

Edward Rutledge

Thomas Heyward, Jr.

Thomas Lynch, Jr.

Arthur Middleton

Column 3

Massachusetts:

John Hancock

Virginia

George Wythe

Maryland:
Samuel Chase
William Paca
Thomas Stone
Charles Carroll of Carrollton

Richard Henry Lee
Thomas Jefferson
Benjamin Harrison
Thomas Nelson, Jr.
Francis Lightfoot Lee
Carter Braxton

Column 4

Pennsylvania:
Robert Morris
Benjamin Rush
Benjamin Franklin
John Morton
George Clymer
James Smith
George Taylor
James Wilson
George Ross
Delaware:
Caesar Rodney
George Read
Thomas McKean

Column 5

New York
William Floyd
Philip Livingston
Francis Lewis
Lewis Morris
New Jersey
Richard Stockton
John Witherspoon
Francis Hopkinson
John Hart
Abraham Clark

Column 6

New Hampshire:
Josiah Bartlett
William Whipple
Massachusetts:
Samuel Adams
John Adams
Robert Treat Paine
Elbridge Gerry
Rhode Island:
Stephen Hopkins
William Ellery

Connecticut:
Roger Sherman
Samuel Huntington
William Williams
Oliver Wolcott
New Hampshire:
Matthew Thornton

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. . . .



The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, adheres to a policy of nondiscrimination in employment and educational programs/activities and programs/activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department of Education, and strives affirmatively to provide equal opportunity for all as required by:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, or national origin.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 - prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender.

Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA), as amended - prohibits discrimination on the basis of age with respect to individuals who are at least 40.

The Equal Pay Act of 1963, as amended - prohibits sex discrimination in payment of wages to women and men performing substantially equal work in the same establishment.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 - prohibits discrimination against the disabled.

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) - prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in employment, public service, public accommodations and telecommunications.

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) - requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to "eligible" employees for certain family and medical reasons.

The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

Florida Educational Equity Act (FEEA) - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, gender, national origin, marital status, or handicap against a student or employee.

Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992 - secures for all individuals within the state freedom from discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, or marital status.

School Board Rules 6Gx13- 4A-1.01, 6Gx13- 4A-1.32, and 6Gx13- 5D-1.10 - prohibit harassment and/or discrimination against a student or employee on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, ethnic or national origin, political beliefs, marital status, age, sexual orientation, social and family background, linguistic preference, pregnancy, or disability.

Veterans are provided re-employment rights in accordance with P.L. 93-508 (Federal Law) and Section 295.07 (Florida Statutes), which stipulate categorical preferences for employment.