



1

# THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

Designed by  
David Deis

Title Page:

The Declaration of Independence

By John Trumbull

[Source](#)



Congress Voting the Declaration of Independence.

By: Robert Edge Pine & Edward Savage

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The Declaration of Independence is the founding document of the United States of America. This document has been a major influence on other events in American History. In this lesson, students will be comparing the Declaration of Independence and the Declaration of Sentiments.

***Generative Question:***

***How does one document influence other documents written later?***

# Declaration of Independence

The Declaration of Independence was delivered to the British Government (King George III and Parliament) explaining the reasons for why the American Colonies were seceding from the British Empire. This document explains all the grievances that the Colonial governments have attempted to seek redress through the proper channels. However, due to the continued injury visited upon the colonies, they have no choice but to dissolve the political ties that bound the colonies to their mother country (England).

This document was written primarily by Thomas Jefferson, a Virginian Representative to the Continental Congress. He was assisted by Benjamin Franklin (Pennsylvania) and John Adams (Massachusetts), men who would edit his work in to a finished product.

The Declaration of Independence was Ratified on July 2, 1776.

## Scaffolding Questions:

**What purposes are served by writing a formal document of separation (independence)?**

**Are there any names that seem familiar to you?**

## INTERACTIVE 1.1 The Declaration of Independence



## Declaration of Sentiments



Signed the Declaration of Their Independence  
By: J. Ottmann Lith. Co.  
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The **Seneca Falls Convention** was one of the founding events of the American Feminist movement. This event served to promote the early forms of feminism in America as well as give the movement a sense of legitimacy.

At this convention, the leaders of the movement created a “Declaration of Sentiments” meant to address the myriad of issues that they believed prevented the equal treatment of women throughout the nation.

The image to the left is a cartoonists depiction of what he believed this convention to look like. This was meant to be a satire of the event itself.

**Scaffolding Questions:**  
**Why do you think the artist decided to remake the image of Trumbull's “Declaration of Independence”?**

# The Preambles

## Declaration of Independence

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



### Scaffolding Questions:

***What about the Declaration of Sentiments is similar to the Declaration of Independence?***

***Why do you think that the women at this convention chose to mirror the language of the Declaration?***

## Declaration of 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

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# Grievances

## Declaration of Independence

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 inva-



## Declaration of Sentiments

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

He has compelled her to submit to laws, 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 of 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.<sup>4</sup>

He has taken from her all right in property, even to the wages she earns.<sup>5</sup>

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

### Scaffolding Questions:

***To whom are each set of grievances addressed?  
How does this affect the way the grievances are written?***

***Are there any grievances that are shared between these documents? (i.e. similar grievances)***

## Reflection

The creation of a DBL (Document Based Lesson) has been an interesting one. Originally, I looked at the task as if I was creating a DBQ (Document Based Question) such as one that would be found on the AP US History test. However, I soon realized that this is only one aspect of a DBL. For a DBL to work, the students must answer a general question through the use of very specific source material. This hindered my generation of ideas with which to create a DBL. I eventually did decide on a solid topic: The effects that a singular event can have on another event that occurs many decades later.

To answer this question, I am having students examine the Declaration of Independence as compared to the Declaration of Sentiments. For this I have having the students read sections of each work as well as images depicting the events in question. The compare and contrast elements of the assignment are meant to help the students come to a deeper understanding that little in history happens in a vacuum. Almost everything has had some sort of influence acted upon it.

I greatly enjoyed the creating of the Book because it allows for a degree of creativity. The use of this digital medium allows for a more interactive version of a lesson. The use of scrolling texts widgets allows the writer/teacher to place large snippets of text in a condensed area. This allows for the reading to become less daunting than a solid block of static text and it allows the creator to add in additional material—such as images—onto the page. This makes it so the students don't have to use only text but can use the text in context/conjunction with the images.



# FROM EXPLORING HISTORY: VOL III

Available free at [iTunes](#)

This eBook is a collaborative project of Peter Pappas and his Fall 2015 Social Studies Methods Class  
[School of Education](#) ~ University of Portland, Portland Ore.

Graduate and undergraduate level pre-service teachers were assigned the task of developing an engaging research question, researching supportive documents and curating them into a DBQ suitable for middle or high school students.

For more on this class, visit the course blog [EdMethods](#)  
For more on this book project and work flow tap [here](#).

## Chapters in chronological order

1. *Finding Egyptian Needles in Western Haystacks*  
by Heidi Kershner
2. *Pompeii* by Caleb Wilson
3. *Samurai: Sources of Warrior Identity in Medieval Japan*  
by Ben Heebner
4. *The Declaration of Independence* by David Deis
5. *Reconstruction in Political Cartoons*  
by EmmaLee Kuhlmann
6. *Regulation Through the Years*  
by Chenoa Musillo Olson / Sarah Wiekking
7. *Battle of the Somme* by John Hunt

8. *The Lynching of Leo Frank* by Jeff Smith
9. *The Waco Horror* by Alekz Wray
10. *The Harlem Renaissance* by Monica Portugal
11. *A Date of Infamy* by Mollie Carter
12. *Anti-Vietnam War Imagery* by Felicia Teba
13. *Examining the Ongoing Evolution of American Government* by Eric Cole

**Peter Pappas, editor**

**School of Education ~ University of Portland**

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Cover image: Door knocker

Amsterdam NL Photograph by Peter Pappas