**The Declaration of Independence Worksheet**

The Declaration of Independence: An Interactive Worksheet

1) Which words indicate that Jefferson was worried about world opinion as to why the colonies were declaring their independence from England?

2) List all of the instances that the author makes a reference to God.

3) Define the term "unalienable."

4) Which rights does Jefferson describe as "unalienable?"

5) Which other important document in American history contains wording similar to the rights Jefferson describes?

6) Which phrase does Jefferson use to say "power to govern comes from permission given by the people?"

7) Which of the sentences below were the first in the document to justify the treason of the revolutionaries against the rule of the British crown and Parliament?

8) In the list of the grievances against the King of England, which sentence describes the Proclamation of 1763?

9) Which sentence can be seen as an allusion to the Courts of Admiralty that prevented the colonists from prosecuting British soldiers for crimes committed in the Colonies?

10) Which sentence is a reference to the Quebec Act, which was designed to weaken the colonies by causing conflict with Canada?

11) Which phrase relates to the Navigation Acts that were enforced after 1763?

12) Which phrase refers to the Stamp and Townsend Acts?

13) Which phrase can be seen as a reference to the Declaratory Act of 1766, which claimed Parliament had a monopoly on colonial rule?

14) Locate the paragraph that refers to the use of Hessian mercenaries by the British Crown.

15) Which sentence captures the essence of the Quartering Act of 1764?

16) Locate the paragraph that outlines the efforts of the First and Second Continental Congresses to find some sort of reconciliation with the King.

17) Which sentences or phrases shows that the American colonists had drifted in culture and politics from the people and culture of Great Britain?

18) Include all the sentences where Jefferson describes the sovereignty of the new United States.

19) Which phrase demonstrates to the world that Jefferson and the revolutionaries knew that they were taking a risk in declaring independence?

20) Had the United States lost the War for Independence, how would the Declaration have been used at Jefferson's trial: as evidence in his defense or in his prosecution for treason? Make a case on this issue in either direction.

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776

                              A DECLARATION

                              BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE

                              UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

[Preamble]

IN GENERAL CONGRESS ASSEMBLED

     WHEN in the Course of human Events, it becomes necessary for one People to dissolve the Political Bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the Powers of the Earth, the separate and equal Station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent Respect to the Opinions of Mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the Separation.

[Principles of American Democracy]

     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 shown 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.

[List of Grievances]

     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 endeavored to prevent the Population of these States; for that Purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their Migrations hither, and raising the Conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

     HE has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary Powers.

     HE has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the Tenure of their Offices, and the Amount and Payment of their Salaries.

     HE has erected a Multitude of new Offices, and sent hither Swarms of Officers to harass our People, and eat out their Substance.

     HE has kept among us, in Times of Peace, Standing Armies, without the consent of our Legislatures.

     HE has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil Power.

     HE has combined with others to subject us to a Jurisdiction foreign to our Constitution, and unacknowledged by our Laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

          FOR quartering large Bodies of Armed Troops among us:

          FOR protecting them, by a mock Trial, from Punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:

          FOR cutting off our Trade with all Parts of the World:

          FOR imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:

          FOR depriving us, in many Cases, of the Benefits of Trial by Jury:

          FOR transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended Offenses:

          FOR abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighboring 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 and Perfidy, scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous Ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized Nation.

     HE has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the Executioners of their Friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

     HE has excited domestic Insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored 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.

[The Colonists' Efforts]

     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.

[The Declaration]

     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 the Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly Publish and Declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political Connection between them and the State of Great-Britain is, and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which INDEPENDENT STATES may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm Reliance on the Protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.

                          Signed by ORDER and in BEHALF of the CONGRESS,

     ATTEST.   
     CHARLES THOMPSON, SECRETARY.   
 

        JOHN HANCOCK, PRESIDENT.   
      New Hampshire   
                            Delaware   
      Josiah Bartlett,   
                            Caesar Rodney,   
      Wm. Whipple,   
                            Geo. Read,   
      Matthew Thornton.   
                            [Tho M:Kean.]   
      Massachusetts   
                            Maryland   
      [John Hancock]   
                            Samuel Chase,   
      Saml. Adams,   
                            Wm. Paca,   
      John Adams,   
                            Thos. Stone,   
      Robt. Treat Paine,   
                            Charles Carroll, of Carrollton.   
      Elbridge Gerry.   
                            Virginia   
      Rhode Island   
                            George Wythe,   
      Step. Hopkins,   
                            Richard Henry Lee,   
      William Ellery.   
                            Ths. Jefferson,   
                            Benja. Harrison,   
      Connecticut   
                            Thos. Nelson, jr.   
      Roger Sherman,   
                            Francis Lightfoot Lee,   
      Saml. Huntington,   
                            Carter Braxton.   
      Wm. Williams,   
                            North Carolina   
      New York   
                            Wm. Hooper,   
      Wm. Floyd,   
                            Joseph Hewes,   
      Phil. Livingston,   
                            John Penn.   
      Frans. Lewis,   
      Lewis Morris   
                            South Carolina   
                            Edward Rutledge   
      New Jersey   
                            Thos. Heyward, junr.   
      Richd. Stockton,   
                            Thomas Lynch, junr.   
      Jno. Witherspoon,   
                            Arthur Middleton.   
      Fras. Hopkinson,   
      John Hart,   
                            Georgia   
      Abra. Clark.   
                            Button Gwinnett,   
                            Lyman Hall,   
      Pennsylvania   
                            Geo. Walton.   
      Robt. Morris,   
      Benjamin Rush,   
      Benja. Franklin,   
      John Morton,   
      Geo. Clymer,   
      Jas. Smith,   
      Geo. Taylor,   
      James Wilson,   
      Geo. Ross.