

Today you will read two documents that were written at the time of the American Revolution and read a transcript of a video that gives further information about one of these documents. As you study these sources, pay particular attention to the rhetorical features of each source and the audience to which each one was addressed. At the end of the task, you will be asked to write an analytical essay.

Read the “Declaration of Independence,” which was written by Thomas Jefferson and signed on July 4, 1776. Then answer questions 13 and 14.

Declaration of Independence

by Thomas Jefferson

IN CONGRESS, July 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,

- 1 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.
- 2 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.

- 3 He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.
- 4 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.
- 5 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.
- 6 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.
- 7 He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.
- 8 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.
- 9 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.
- 10 He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers.
- 11 He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.
- 12 He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harrass our people, and eat out their substance.

- 13 He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.
- 14 He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power.
- 15 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:
- 16 For Quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:
- 17 For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:
- 18 For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world:
- 19 For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:
- 20 For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury:
- 21 For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences
- 22 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:
- 23 For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:
- 24 For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.
- 25 He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.
- 26 He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.
- 27 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.
- 28 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.

- 29 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.
- 30 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.
- 31 Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our Brittish 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.
- 32 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.

“Declaration of Independence” by Thomas Jefferson—Public Domain

13. Part A

Which statement expresses a general principle that serves as a foundational basis for the argument Jefferson sets forth in the “Declaration of Independence”?

- A.** The king is guilty of crimes against the colonies.
- B.** The king’s government should be abolished.
- C.** Governments that abuse people’s rights should be transformed or removed.
- D.** Colonists have a right to exist free and independent of Great Britain.

Part B

Which quotation from the “Declaration of Independence” **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- A.** “. . . a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.” (paragraph 1)
- B.** “. . . 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 . . .” (paragraph 2)
- C.** “We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here.” (paragraph 31)
- D.** “. . . that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved . . .” (paragraph 32)

14. Part A

Jefferson begins the majority of the paragraphs in the “Declaration of Independence” with the words “He has.” Why is this structure effective in helping Jefferson make his argument?

- A.** It enables the reader to determine which of the king’s offenses are the most severe.
- B.** It emphasizes the king’s role in inflicting multiple forms of injustice.
- C.** It contrasts the king’s behavior with that of his deputies.
- D.** It proposes a clear series of actions to oppose the king’s mistreatment.

Part B

Which aspect of the “Declaration of Independence” provides support for the answer to Part A?

- A.** the metaphor of “political bands” (paragraph 1)
- B.** the reference to “a long train of abuses and usurpations” (paragraph 2)
- C.** the reference to “native justice and magnanimity” (paragraph 31)
- D.** the appeal to “the protection of divine Providence” (paragraph 32)

Read the passage from a speech delivered by Patrick Henry on March 23, 1776, to the Second Virginia Convention in Richmond, Virginia, as quoted in William Wirt's *Sketches of the Life and Character of Patrick Henry* (1817). Then answer questions 15 through 17.

from "Speech to the Second Virginia Convention"

by Patrick Henry

- 1 "Ask yourselves how this gracious reception of our petition, comports with those warlike preparations which cover our waters and darken our land? Are fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and reconciliation? Have we shown ourselves so unwilling to be reconciled, that force must be called in to win back our love? Let us not deceive ourselves, sir. These are the implements of war and subjugation—the last arguments to which kings resort. I ask gentlemen, sir, what means this martial array, if its purpose be not to force us to submission? Can gentlemen assign any other possible motive for it? Has Great Britain any enemy in this quarter of the world, to call for all this accumulation of navies and armies? No, sir: she has none. They are meant for us: they can be meant for no other. They are sent over to bind and rivet upon us those chains, which the British ministry have been so long forging. And what have we to oppose to them? Shall we try argument? Sir, we have been trying that for the last ten years. Have we any thing new to offer upon the subject? Nothing. We have held the subject up in every light of which it is capable; but it has been all in vain. Shall we resort to entreaty and humble supplication? What terms shall we find, which have not been already exhausted? Let us not, I beseech you, sir, deceive ourselves longer. Sir, we have done every thing that could be done, to avert the storm which is now coming on. We have petitioned—we have remonstrated—we have supplicated—we have prostrated ourselves before the throne, and have implored its interposition to arrest the tyrannical hands of the ministry and parliament. Our petitions have been slighted; our remonstrances have produced additional violence and insult; our supplications have been disregarded; and we have been spurned, with contempt, from the foot of the throne. In vain, after these things, may we indulge the fond hope of peace and reconciliation. *There is no longer any room for hope.* If we wish to be free—if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending—if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon, until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained—we must fight!—I repeat it, sir,

we must fight!! An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts, is all that is left us!"

- 2 "They tell us, sir," continued Mr. Henry, "that we are weak—unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed; and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance, by lying supinely on our backs, and hugging the delusive phantom of hope, until our enemies shall have bound us, hand and foot? Sir, we are not weak, if we make a proper use of those means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. Three millions of people, armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations; and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, sir, we have no election. If we were base enough to desire it, it is now too late to retire from the contest. There is no retreat, but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged. Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable—and let it come!! I repeat it, sir, let it come!!!"
- 3 "It is in vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry, Peace, Peace—but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north, will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains, and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God!—I know not what course others may take; but as for me," cried he, with both his arms extended aloft, his brows knit, every feature marked with the resolute purpose of his soul, and his voice swelled to its boldest note of exclamation—"give me liberty, or give me death!"

"Speech to the Second Virginia Convention" by Patrick Henry—Public Domain

15. Part A

In paragraph 1, Henry says of the colonists, “we have **prostrated** ourselves before the throne.” In this context, what does it mean to **prostrate** oneself?

- A. to put oneself in a humble and submissive position
- B. to use up one’s physical and mental resources
- C. to waste one’s time in a hopeless cause
- D. to put oneself in an advantageous situation

Part B

What points does Henry seek to make in saying that the colonists have **prostrated** themselves before the throne? Select **two** correct answers.

- A. They continue to behave as if they are subjects of the king.
- B. Their efforts have attracted the sympathy of the king.
- C. They would be better advised to stand up to the king.
- D. Their actions have caused a division between the king and parliament.
- E. Their actions are testing the king’s patience.
- F. They are unknowingly imitating the king’s behavior.

16. Part A

What is Henry’s overall purpose in his speech?

- A. to urge caution
- B. to warn of danger
- C. to incite action
- D. to reveal information

Part B

Which quotation from paragraph 1 **most** directly supports the answer to Part A?

- A. “Ask yourselves how this gracious reception of our petition, comports with those warlike preparations which cover our waters and darken our land? Are fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and reconciliation?”
- B. “I ask, gentlemen, sir, what means this martial array, if its purpose be not to force us to submission? Can gentlemen assign any other possible motive for it? Has Great Britain any enemy in this quarter of the world, to call for all this accumulation of navies and armies?”
- C. “Sir, we have done every thing that could be done, to avert the storm which is now coming on. We have petitioned—we have remonstrated—we have supplicated—we have prostrated ourselves before the throne, and have implored its interposition to arrest the tyrannical hands of the ministry and parliament.”
- D. “If we wish to be free—if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending—if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon, until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained—we must fight!—I repeat it, sir, we must fight!!”

17. Part A

Which **two** statements **best** describe Henry’s views about those who continue to strive for reconciliation with the British?

- A. They demonstrate admirable loyalty toward the king.
- B. They have ignored the truth about Britain’s intentions toward the colonists.
- C. They are victims of the king’s lies.
- D. They make the colonists more vulnerable to British tyranny.
- E. They consider themselves morally superior to those who advocate fighting.
- F. They are pursuing an alternative course toward the same goal.

Part B

Select **two** quotations from Henry’s speech that **most** directly support the answers to Part A.

- A. “Have we shown ourselves so unwilling to be reconciled, that force must be called in to win back our love?” (paragraph 1)
- B. “Have we any thing new to offer upon the subject? Nothing. We have held the subject up in every light of which it is capable” (paragraph 1)
- C. “Our petitions have been slighted; our remonstrances have produced additional violence and insult; our supplications have been disregarded; and we have been spurned, with contempt, from the foot of the throne. In vain, after these things, may we indulge the fond hope of peace and reconciliation.” (paragraph 1)
- D. “Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance, by lying supinely on our backs, and hugging the delusive phantom of hope, until our enemies shall have bound us, hand and foot?” (paragraph 2)
- E. “There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations; and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us.” (paragraph 2)
- F. “Our chains are forged. Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston!” (paragraph 2)

GO ON TO NEXT PAGE

Read the transcript of a video by the Kettering Foundation about a recent finding about the “Declaration of Independence.” Then answer question 18.

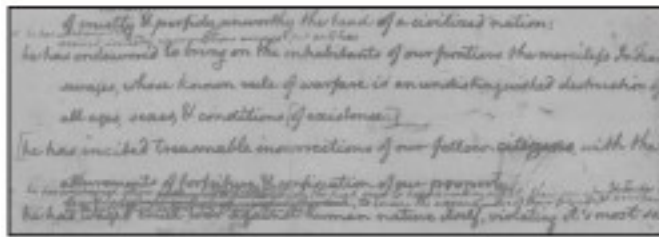
Transcript of “From Subjects to Citizens”

by the Kettering Foundation

- 1 New advances in science have uncovered a fascinating twist in the writing of the Declaration of Independence, one that’s still of interest to the Kettering Foundation today.
- 2 Spectral imaging technology shows that in writing the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson had first referred to the American colonists as “subjects.” But, in the course of revising the document, he then carefully expunged the word, smearing the ink and overwriting it with the word “citizens,” so as to completely obliterate the original word.
- 3 The sentence in which Jefferson made the change didn’t make it into the final document, but the word “citizens” is also used elsewhere in the final Declaration, while “subjects” is not.
- 4 This finding reveals an important shift in the Founders’ thinking: that the people’s allegiance was to one another, not to a distant king.
- 5 That change in thinking, from “subject” to “citizen,” is the starting point for Kettering Foundation’s view of democracy.



Courtesy of Library of Congress



Courtesy of Library of Congress

"From Subjects to Citizens," contributed by the Charles F. Kettering Foundation.
www.kettering.org

18. Part A

The transcript refers to the fact that Jefferson **expunged** the word “subjects” from an early draft of the “Declaration of Independence.” What does the word **expunged** mean in this context?

- A. deleted
- B. directed
- C. recopied
- D. emphasized

Part B

Which word from paragraph 2 of the transcript **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- A. referred
- B. revising
- C. overwriting
- D. obliterate

Unit 2

Refer to the “Declaration of Independence,” and the transcript of a video about the “Declaration of Independence.” Then answer question 19.

19. Part A

Paragraph 4 of the transcript contains the claim that the discovery “reveals an important shift in the Founders’ thinking: that the people’s allegiance was to one another.” Which quotation from the “Declaration of Independence” **best** illustrates this view of “the Founders’ thinking”?

- A. “. . . Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury.” (paragraph 30)
- B. “We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here.” (paragraph 31)
- C. “. . . 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.” (paragraph 32)
- D. “. . . with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.” (paragraph 32)

Part B

Which paragraph of the “Declaration of Independence” **most** directly reflects “the Founders’ thinking” as discussed in the transcript?

- A. paragraph 5
- B. paragraph 7
- C. paragraph 26
- D. paragraph 28

Refer to the “Declaration of Independence,” a passage from “Speech to the Second Virginia Convention,” and the transcript of a video about the “Declaration of Independence.” Then answer questions 20 and 21.

20. Part A

Based on all three sources, what was a major assumption shared by Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry?

- A.** Even though they are right to rebel against Britain, the colonists should be equally aware of the dangers of conflict within the colonies themselves.
- B.** Even though they are right to sever ties with the British, the colonists should exercise moderation in their approach.
- C.** Even though they have little reason to be optimistic about a conflict with Britain, the colonists should begin to prepare for war.
- D.** Even though they are still considered British subjects, the colonists’ foremost loyalty should be to each other.

Part B

Select **two** quotations that **best** support the answer to Part A. Quotations from any of the three sources may be used.

- A.** “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.” (“Declaration of Independence,” paragraph 2)
- B.** “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.” (“Declaration of Independence,” paragraph 8)
- C.** “Ask yourselves how this gracious reception of our petition, comports with those warlike preparations which cover our waters and darken our land?” (“Speech to the Second Virginia Convention,” paragraph 1)
- D.** “. . . I know not what course others may take; but as for me,’ cried he, with both his arms extended aloft, his brows knit, every feature marked with the resolute purpose of his soul, and his voice swelled to its boldest note of exclamation—‘give me liberty, or give me death!’” (“Speech to the Second Virginia Convention,” paragraph 3)
- E.** “The sentence in which Jefferson made the change didn’t make it into the final document” (“From Subjects to Citizens,” paragraph 3)
- F.** “This finding reveals an important shift in the Founders’ thinking: that the people’s allegiance was to one another, not to a distant king.” (“From Subjects to Citizens,” paragraph 4)

21. You have studied three sources involving the establishment of American independence from Great Britain. The sources are:

- “Declaration of Independence,” signed on July 4, 1776
- A passage from Patrick Henry’s March 23, 1776, “Speech to the Second Virginia Convention”
- The transcript of the video “From Subjects to Citizens”

An important idea presented in the sources involves the colonists’ notions of the purpose of government. Write an essay in which you explore the perspectives offered in the source documents regarding government’s purpose and its relationship to the people it governs. Use evidence from all three source documents to support your ideas.