

1st Grade

Discover America

Course 4 - Teacher Guide

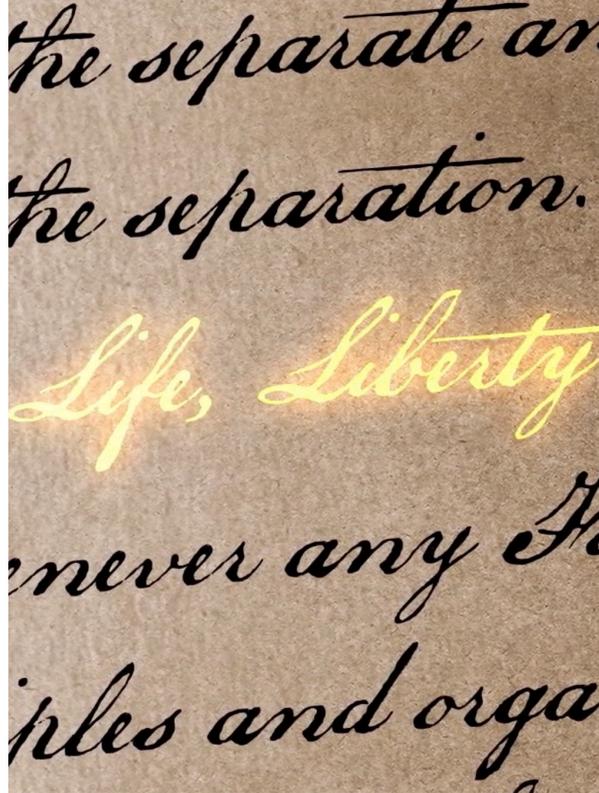


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1st Grade

Teacher Guide



Key Themes

- Equity
- Freedom
- Independence

Core Values

- Community
- Faith
- Life
- Liberty

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Define independence.
- Explain the significance of the Declaration of Independence.
- List two reasons why the colonies were unhappy with Great Britain.



The Declaration of Independence - 1st Grade

Key Terms

- 01 **colonist** - a person who settles in a new colony or moves to a new country.
- 02 **declare** - to say something in a clear and strong way.
- 03 **independence** - having the freedom to make choices and do things on your own.
- 04 **tax** - money that adults give to the government to help pay for important things like school, parks, and safety.
- 05 **unite** - to come together in agreement.

The Declaration of Independence - 1st Grade

Introduction

TELL Students

Begin by asking students if they know what independence means. Encourage responses and simplify the concept by explaining that independence means having the freedom to make choices and do things on your own.

As a class, make a list of the ways each student exerts independence in the classroom. Examples include: selecting a spot on the carpet for storytime, deciding which activity to do on the playground, and choosing between options in the cafeteria.

Tell students that these are examples of independent choices.

ASK Students

How would you feel if you had a clubhouse but your friend made all of the rules and only allowed you to play games that they wanted to play?

Is that fair?

(allow students to respond)

The Declaration of Independence - 1st Grade

Introduction

TELL Students

A group of five smart, brave men wrote the Declaration of Independence. It was a special letter they sent to the British king. They told the king they wanted to make their own rules and be in charge of their own country. They wanted independence. In the Declaration of Independence, the colonists said that everyone should be treated equally and with fairness. When everyone is treated fair in your clubhouse, you share and help each other. The colonists also told the British king that they had a right to be safe and happy. They wanted the chance to have fun and feel safe, just like how you want to feel in your clubhouse. Let's watch another episode of Star Spangled Adventures to learn more about the Declaration of Independence.



Excerpt from the Declaration of Independence, written in 1776.

WATCH

Star Spangled Adventures:
The Declaration of Independence



The Declaration of Independence - 1st Grade

Lesson

ASK Students

In the summer of 1776, five important men began to write the document that explained why the colonies wanted independence, or freedom, from Great Britain.

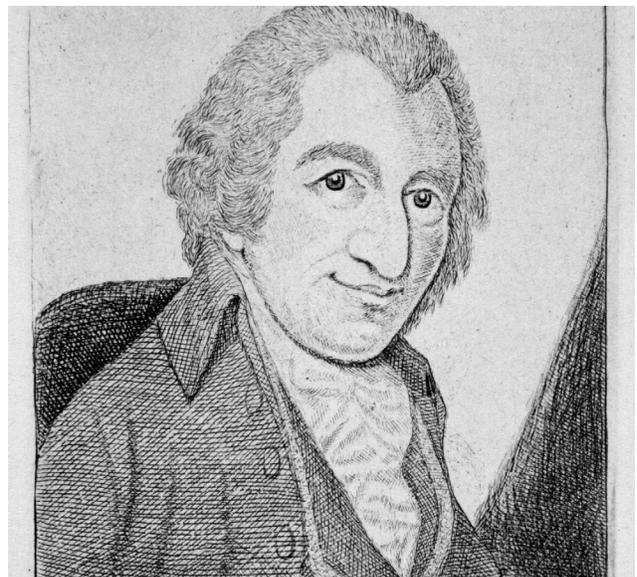
What is this document called?

Do you think it was easy for these five men to work together to create the Declaration of Independence?

(allow students to respond)

TELL Students

A man named Thomas Paine wrote a book called *Common Sense* in 1776. This book helped the colonists to unite, or come together. The colonists united behind the idea of independence from Great Britain.



Portrait drawing of author, Thomas Paine.

The Declaration of Independence - 1st Grade

Lesson

ASK Students

The Declaration of Independence told the British king that the colonists would no longer follow his rules.

When the British king heard this, what did he decide to do?

(allow students to respond)

TELL Students

The British king sent troops, known as Redcoats, to control the colonists. However, this did not work. The colonists stood up for themselves and decided to fight for their freedom.

ASK Students

The colonists were _____. (*brave*)

(allow students to respond)



British Redcoats marching in formation.

The Declaration of Independence - 1st Grade

Lesson

TELL Students

Did you know that the day the Declaration of Independence was agreed to is often referred to as America's birthday? That is why we celebrate the Fourth of July. We remember the day when the American colonists decided to declare freedom from the British king. To declare means to say something in a clear and strong way.



The Declaration of Independence is a very important document that tells the story of how our country started. It tells us that in the United States, we have the chance to be happy and independent. It also tells us that in the United States, people are treated with fairness.

The Declaration of Independence - 1st Grade

Lesson

TELL Students

We are going to play a game. You will pretend to be the American colonists. I will pretend to be the British king. Give each child five M&Ms. Place board games around the room. Explain that students may play board games after they pay their M&M tax. Walk around the room and retrieve every M&M from every student.

ASK Students

Is it fair that I took all of your M&Ms?

(allow students to respond)

TELL Students

The British king also took a lot of taxes from the colonists. And, the colonists lived a very long way from the British king!

ASK Students

How did the British king treat the colonists?
How did they respond?

(allow students to respond)



Map showing the distance from Great Britain to the American colonies.

The Declaration of Independence - 1st Grade

Declaration of Candy Freedom

objective

Students will understand the concept of independence and apply it to a fun scenario by creating their own Declaration of Candy Freedom, expressing their desire for fair treatment.

materials

1. M&M candies (or pictures of M&Ms)
2. large paper or poster board
3. markers or crayons
4. paper
5. pencils

introduction

- Gather students and review what they learned about the Declaration of Independence.
- Simplify the concept of independence by relating it to having the freedom to make choices and be treated fairly.
- Reintroduce the scenario of the M&M board game tax, where students pretend they are being unfairly taxed for a game they love.

discussion

- Engage students in a discussion about fairness and why it is important.
- Ask questions like:
 - "What does it mean to be fair?"
 - "How do you feel when things are not fair?"
 - "Why is it important for everyone to have an equal chance to play?"

The Declaration of Independence - 1st Grade

Declaration of Candy Freedom

activity

- Explain that students will now have the opportunity to create their own Declaration of Candy Freedom.
- Distribute paper and pencils to each student.
- Encourage students to think about what they would like to declare independence from and why.
- Provide prompts if needed, such as:
 - "What rule in the game feels unfair?"
 - "How would you like things to be different?"
- Once students have written their declarations, allow them to illustrate their ideas.

sharing & reflection

- Invite students to share their declarations with the class.
- Hang the declarations on a bulletin board or display area for all to see.
- Lead a brief discussion about the similarities and differences among the declarations.
- Ask students to reflect on what they learned about independence.

conclusion

- Summarize the lesson by making connections between the Declaration of Independence and the declarations created by students.
- Challenge students to come up with solutions to the fairness issues presented in their declarations, encouraging critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

The Declaration of Independence

Resource List

- 01 <https://www.loc.gov/item/today-in-history/april-19/>
- 02 <https://www.nps.gov/mima/learn/historyculture/the-militia-and-minute-men-of-1775.htm>
- 03 <https://www.history.com/topics/american-revolution/battles-of-lexington-and-concord>
- 04 <https://www.nps.gov/inde/learn/historyculture/resources-declaration-secondcontinentalcongress.htm>
- 05 <https://www.history.com/news/thomas-paine-common-sense-revolution>
- 06 <https://www.nps.gov/inde/learn/historyculture/resources-declaration-secondcontinentalcongress.htm>
- 07 <https://www.monticello.org/thomas-jefferson/brief-biography-of-jefferson/>
- 08 Monticello: The Official Guide to Thomas Jefferson’s World
- 09 <https://www.nps.gov/inde/learn/education/classrooms/resources-declarationoverview.htm>
- 10 <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration/what-does-it-say>
- 11 <https://www.nps.gov/inde/learn/education/classrooms/resources-declarationoverview.htm>
- 12 <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript>
- 13 <https://www.monticello.org/slavery/paradox-of-liberty/thomas-jefferson-liberty-slavery/jefferson-and-the-enlightenment/the-declaration-of-independence/>
- 14 <https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/creating-the-united-states/interactives/declaration-of-independence/equal/index.html>
- 15 <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/signers-factsheet>

