

American 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 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.

Vocabulary

dissolve: disappear

bands: connections

station: place

impel: force

self-evident: obvious

endowed: given

inalienable: cannot be taken away

to secure: to get

instituted: established

deriving: getting

consent: agreement

In the space below, re-write the Declaration of Independence in your own words: *Re-write EACH paragraph. Use the back if needed.*

Declaration of Independence Grievances Name _____

Directions: Below are most of the grievances from the Declaration of Independence.

- If the grievance seems to be something that would affect only the rich and powerful, write **O** (for ONLY rich and powerful)
- If the grievance seems to be something that would affect all the colonists, write **A** (for ALL the colonists)
- If you don't know who would be affected, write '?'

(1 & 2) He has refused to pass, and forbidden his governors to pass, important and necessary laws. _____

(5 & 6) He has broken up certain legislatures that opposed him, and refused to let others be elected. _____

(8 & 9) He has refused to establish courts of justice, and has made judges dependent on him for their jobs and salaries. _____

(10) He has sent swarms of British officers to harass our people and eat our food. _____

(11 & 12) He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies, without the consent of our legislatures. _____

(16) For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world; _____

(17) For imposing taxes on us without our consent; _____

(18) For depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury; _____

(23 & 24) He is waging war against us; He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burned our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people. _____

(27) He has started fights among us and has also forced us to live near merciless Indian savages. _____

1. Do these grievances seem to be things that upset rich people or everyone?

2. Do you think these complaints would give people reason to go to war and possibly die? Why or why not?