

CONTINUOUS DISTANCE LEARNING LESSON

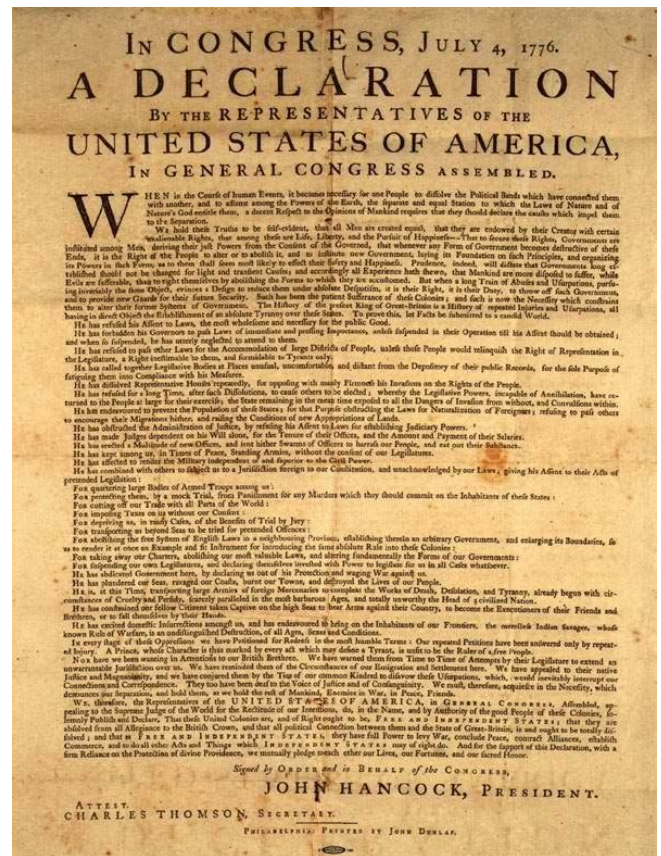
Lesson Title: The Declaration of Independence
7th - 8th Grade

The Declaration of Independence Close Reading

You will be doing a close reading of the Declaration of Independence—one of the most important documents in American history. This document set in motion a series of events that is still being argued about today. From what the phrase “all men are created equal” means to whether women should be protected under the law that would come out of this document: the Constitution.

Your task is to read the Declaration of Independence below and complete the activities that go along with it:

1. Read the text aloud and identify who or what is being referred to in the words in **red**.
2. Use [thesaurus.com](https://www.thesaurus.com) to look up and write down an a synonym for each word in **bold**.
3. Use the text to answer the questions that follow each section.



Section I

1 We hold these truths to be **self-evident**,
2 that all men are created equal,
3 that they are endowed by **their** Creator with
certain **unalienable** Rights,
4 that among **these** are Life, Liberty and the
pursuit of Happiness.
5 That to secure these rights,
6 Governments are **instituted** among Men,
7 **deriving** **their** just powers from the **consent**
of the governed.

1. What are the three unalienable rights listed in Section I?

2. What is usually done to secure those rights?

3. Where should the power of those governments come from?

Section II

8 That whenever any Form of Government
becomes **destructive** of **these ends**,
9 it is the Right of the People to alter or to
abolish it,
10 and to **institute** new Government,
11 laying **its** foundation on such **principles** and
organizing its powers in such form,
12 as to **them** shall seem most likely to affect
their Safety and Happiness.

1. When should people abolish their government?

2. How should they decide how to structure the new government they put in place?

Section III

13 **He** has refused his **Assent** to Laws,
14 the most wholesome and necessary for the
public good.
15 He has kept among **us**, in times of peace,
Standing Armies without the Consent of
our **legislatures**.
16 He has combined with others to subject us to
a **jurisdiction** foreign to our constitution,

<p>17 and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:</p> <p>18 He has cut off our Trade with all parts of the world:</p> <p>19 He imposes Taxes on us without our Consent:</p> <p>20 He deprives us, in many cases, of the benefit of Trial by Jury:</p> <p>21 He transports us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences:</p> <p>22 He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.</p>	
1. How would it disadvantage the colonists to be cut off from trade with other countries?	
2. How is the King working with other countries to harm the colonists?	
3. How would it disadvantage the colonists to be deprived of a trial by jury?	

Section IV	
<p>23 We, therefore, declare, that as Free and Independent States,</p> <p>24 [we] have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce,</p> <p>25 and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do.</p> <p>26 And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence,</p> <p>27 we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.</p>	
1. What four examples are given about what they can now do as free states?	
2. We know that Britain went to war with the colonists after this Declaration. Why?	