

## Developing the Declaration



### TIME NEEDED

4-5 class periods

### MATERIALS

[Hey, King: Get Off Our Backs!](#) (lesson)

[The Enlightenment](#) (mini-lesson)

[John Locke](#) (mini-lesson)

[America's Founding Preambles](#)

(DBQuest)

[Investigation Declaration](#) (game)

### HANDOUTS

Make copies of each lesson's reading and activity pages as needed

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ✓ Identify the people, ideas, and movements that influenced the Declaration of Independence
- ✓ Describe how British policies affected the American colonists and how they led to the colonists' demand for independence
- ✓ Recognize how various individuals contributed to the ideas in the Declaration of Independence
- ✓ Analyze the text of the Declaration of Independence
- ✓ Track a set of Enlightenment ideas that inspired and followed the Declaration of Independence, particularly between 1750 and 1850

## Step by Step

### DAY 1:

**FOLLOW** the Teacher's Guide lesson plan that accompanies [Hey, King: Get Off Our Backs!](#) Collect students' work.

### DAY 2:

**REVIEW** what was learned on Day 1. Ask: Why did the American colonists decide to break away from Great Britain? What document was written to express this idea? Explain that students will take a deeper look at the Declaration. Pass back page 6 of the [Hey, King: Get Off Our Backs!](#) Review students' answers for activities F and G.

**EXPLAIN** that Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence but the ideas he expressed in it were not new. Tell students that they will look at some of the people and ideas that helped shape the Declaration of Independence.

**DISTRIBUTE** [The Enlightenment](#) reading pages. Read the reading as a class. Pause to check for understanding by asking: What were people discussion in salons of the 1700s? (*how governments should be run*) What are natural rights? (*fundamental, basic rights that humans are born with*)

**ALLOW** students time to complete the activities. Review their answers. Have students look at Activity F from [Hey, King: Get Off Our Backs!](#) Ask them to draw a box around words that describe natural rights, the social contract, and the consent of the governed. Review their answers.

**REINFORCE** that many ideas in the Declaration of Independence were influenced by Enlightenment philosophers, especially the work of John Locke. Tell students they will be reading about Locke's ideas for homework.

**ASSIGN** the [John Locke](#) mini-lesson reading and Activity A for homework.

## Step by Step

### DAY 3:

- REVIEW** the terms and ideas that came out of the Enlightenment and the homework reading. Ask: What are the three basic rights Locke said all humans shared? (*life, liberty, property*). What did Locke mean that these were “natural” rights? (people were born with them, they weren’t given by kings) What famous phrase in the Declaration of Independence did Locke’s ideas influence? (life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness).
- ASK** students to share their answers to Activity A of the John Locke activities. Review the idea of the social contract to ensure student comprehension.
- DIVIDE** students into pairs. Allow time for them to complete Activities B and C. Review student answers.
- ASK** the class to provide examples of government services at any level. For example, military protection, highways, paved roads, parks, public schools, etc. Ask: What do citizens do in return? Answers may include: pay taxes, follow the laws, support their communities. Explain that this is how the social contract works in every day life, which can find its roots in the Declaration of Independence.
- TELL** students they will now take a closer look at the text of the Declaration of Independence. Staying in their pairs, have them go into the iCivics site and launch the [America's Founding Preambles](#) DBQuest. Explain that they will only complete the section that deals with the Declaration of Independence.
- CLOSE** by having students read their final answers. Ask them to identify any concepts that came from the Enlightenment or John Locke (*social contract, consent of the governed, natural rights*).

### DAY 4:

- REVIEW** what has been learned by asking students to explain the purpose of the Declaration of Independence and define social contract and natural rights.
- TELL** students that they will use the knowledge they have gained to play the game, [Investigation Declaration](#). Divide students into small groups of 4 or 5. From the Investigation Declaration Extension Pack, have students complete the Pre-game Activities. Review a definition of state sovereignty and play the game’s trailer.
- DISTRIBUTE** the the Mission Journal and People and Places Guide. Allow time for students to play [Investigation Declaration](#).

### DAY 5:

- ALLOW** time for students to continue playing Investigation Declaration (20 minutes).
- DISTRIBUTE** or display the post-game activities from the Extension Pack. If time allows, review the discussion questions and provide time for students to share ideas.
- CLOSE** by reinforcing that ideas travel and have the ability shape the lives of people in other parts of the world. Explain that the ideas in the Declaration of Independence influenced the writing of the U.S. Constitution and how our government is structured. The ideas continue to affect the laws and values of our nation today.