

The Declaration of Independence



The Declaration of Independence was written over 200 years ago. Thomas Jefferson was its main writer. Other people helped him.

At that time, our country was 13 separate colonies. The colonies were considered part of the country of England. The people living in the colonies wanted to have their own country.

The declaration said that the colonies would be free from England. They would become the United States of America. The Declaration of Independence is now in Washington, D.C. Every year on July 4, we celebrate the declaration and our independence.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: For questions 1-4, circle the correct answer.

1. What does the Declaration of Independence say?

- a) The people living in the 13 colonies are angry at England.
- b) The 13 colonies are free from England and will become the United States of America.
- c) The capital of America should be Washington, D.C.

2. This passage describes the Declaration of Independence. Who wrote the Declaration of Independence?

- a) Thomas Jefferson wrote it with the help of other people.
- b) The people who lived in England wrote it.
- c) Thomas Jefferson wrote it all by himself.

3. The colonies were considered part of the country of England. The people living in the colonies wanted to have their own country.

What information from the passage shows that the people living in the colonies wanted to have their own country?

- a) The Declaration of Independence is now in Washington, D.C.
- b) The Declaration of Independence said that the colonies would be free from England.
- c) The Declaration of Independence was written over 200 years ago.

4. What is the main idea of "The Declaration of Independence"?

- a) Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence with the help of other people.

- b) You can see the Declaration of Independence in Washington, D.C.
- c) The Declaration of Independence is an important part of American history.

5. A) When do Americans celebrate the Declaration of Independence and freedom from England?

Americans celebrate the Declaration of Independence and freedom from England on

B) Draw a picture of the Declaration of Independence.



6. What did you learn from "The Declaration of Independence"?

7. Class Discussion Question: Was there such a thing as the United States of America when the Declaration of Independence was written? Please explain your thinking and support your ideas with details from the passage.

Teacher Guide & Answers

Note to Teacher: Read each question out loud to your students and have each student complete the worksheet independently. For questions 5 A) and 6, you can have students draw their answers, answer orally, or write their answers depending on your students' progress. If you have them write their answers, you may want to write the word(s) on the board for them to copy. Question 7 is a class discussion question.

Passage Reading Level: Lexile 550

Directions: For questions 1-4, circle the correct answer.

1. What does the Declaration of Independence say?

- a) The people living in the 13 colonies are angry at England.
- b) The 13 colonies are free from England and will become the United States of America.**
- c) The capital of America should be Washington, D.C.

2. This passage describes the Declaration of Independence. Who wrote the Declaration of Independence?

- a) Thomas Jefferson wrote it with the help of other people.**
- b) The people who lived in England wrote it.
- c) Thomas Jefferson wrote it all by himself.

3. The colonies were considered part of the country of England. The people living in the colonies wanted to have their own country.

What information from the passage shows that the people living in the colonies wanted to have their own country?

- a) The Declaration of Independence is now in Washington, D.C.
- b) The Declaration of Independence said that the colonies would be free from England.**
- c) The Declaration of Independence was written over 200 years ago.

4. What is the main idea of "The Declaration of Independence"?

- a) Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence with the help of other people.
- b) You can see the Declaration of Independence in Washington, D.C.
- c) The Declaration of Independence is an important part of American history.**

5. A) *Note to Teacher: See note at the top of the first page.*

When do Americans celebrate the Declaration of Independence and freedom from England?

Suggested answer: Americans celebrate the Declaration of Independence and freedom from England on *July 4th*.

- B) Draw a picture of the Declaration of Independence.

Suggested answer: Students' pictures may vary but should include an old looking piece of paper with words (the words may look like scribbles or they may include ideas from the passage such as, "we want to be free" or "we are the United States of America"). Advanced pictures might also show Thomas Jefferson writing the Declaration or show that it is displayed in Washington, D.C.

6. *Note to Teacher: See note at the top of the first page.*

What did you learn from "The Declaration of Independence"?

Suggested answer: Answers may vary and should be supported by the passage.

7. *Note to Teacher: See note at the top of the first page.*

Class Discussion Question: Was there such a thing as the United States of America when the Declaration of Independence was written? Please explain your thinking and support your ideas with details from the passage.

Suggested answer: Answers may vary but students should explain that the United States of America did not exist when the Declaration of Independence was written. At that time, the country was 13 separate colonies that were part of England. Advanced answers might further explain that the people in America were not happy being part of England. They wanted to become the United States of America. That is why they wrote the Declaration of Independence.