

The Declaration of Independence: Close Reading & Rewrite

Name: _____ Date: _____

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Students will analyze the structure and key ideas of the Declaration of Independence and restate them in modern language.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- printed or accessed copy of the Declaration of Independence
- highlighters or colored pencils
- notebook paper
- poster board (optional)

HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

1. Read the Preamble of the Declaration of Independence and highlight the phrase describing the 'unalienable rights.'
2. Choose 5 grievances against King George III from the list in the Declaration and summarize each in your own words.
3. Rewrite the Preamble's most famous sentence, 'We hold these truths to be self-evident...', in your own modern, everyday words while keeping its original meaning.
4. Design a small 'declaration' poster for a cause you personally care about, listing 3 grievances and 1 self-evident truth in the same style, as a creative parallel exercise.
5. Compare your modern-day mini-declaration to the real one, noting what tone or structural choices you borrowed.

QUESTIONS

1. **According to the Declaration, what are the 3 unalienable rights listed?**
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2. **Name one grievance colonists listed against King George III.**
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3. **What is the purpose of the list of grievances within the document's structure?**
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4. What tone or structural choice did you borrow from the real Declaration for your own mini-declaration, and why?
