

The Declaration of Independence

[The Document is reprinted in your Textbook on Pages 187-190.]

1. The **Declaration of Independence** consists of four (4) parts:

Preamble | Natural Rights | British Wrongs | Independence

Preamble

2. What is the purpose of the Preamble?

The Preamble explains why the Continental Congress drew up the Declaration.

Natural Rights

2. What are **natural rights**? **Rights that belong to all people from birth.**

3. **Thomas Jefferson** said it best... please complete his thoughts:

"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."

4. According to the Declaration of Independence, why do people form **governments**?

In order to protect their natural rights & liberties.

5. How can governments **exist**? **Only if they have the "consent of the governed."**

6. What if government **fails to protect** the rights of its citizens?

It is the people's "right [and] duty to throw off such government."

British Wrongs

7. Why did Jefferson **condemn** King George III? **For disbanding colonial legislatures and for sending troops to the colonies in peacetime.**

8. What two additional **complaints** did Jefferson have?

Limits on trade and taxes without representation.

9. How did the colonies try to **correct** these injustices? **They had petitioned the king.**

10. What was Jefferson's bold **conclusion** about King George III? **He was a tyrant and not fit to rule.**

Independence

11. The last part of the Declaration of Independence **announces** what?

That the colonies are the United States of America.

12. What has happened to all of our **political ties** with Britain? **All political ties have been cut.**

13. As a **free and independent nation**, the United States has the full power to do four activities:

1. **levy war**

3. **contract alliances**

2. **conclude peace**

4. **establish commerce**

14. The signers closed with this **solemn pledge**:

"...we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."