

Independence Day

“Would those of you who say it can’t be done stop bothering those of us who are doing it?”

— Unknown

(Foundations for Life, Secondary, Volume 1, Issue 3, #35)

Overview:

Students will read and discuss the Declaration of Independence and how the rights of the colonists were being violated. They will consider the events that led to the Declaration of Independence. Students will discuss their own rights and write their own Declaration of Independence in the manner of the original document.

Objectives:

- Students will deepen their understanding of the events that led to the writing of the Declaration of Independence.
- Students will discuss in what ways the colonists felt their rights were being violated.
- Students will compare the circumstances of the colonists in terms of human rights to their own.
- Students will discuss and write about how their own rights are neglected, or otherwise.

Materials:

- Declaration of Independence
- Background to the Declaration of Independence. Print a copy for each student from here: (http://www.age-of-the-sage.org/philosophy/declaration_of_independence.html)
- Template of Personal Declaration of Independence

Procedure:

1. Distribute information on the background to the Declaration of Independence. Discuss the events that led to the Declaration of Independence.
2. Distribute the Declaration of Independence text. Have the students identify key parts of the document. i.e. the introduction, the preamble, the two sections of the main body, and the conclusion.
3. Discuss the specific arguments within the declaration which support the claim to independence.
4. Ask students about how their rights are being violated or neglected. This could be in school or outside. Be aware that this discussion will need careful management. Select a moderator from the class.
5. Discuss and develop logical arguments about rights and distribute the Personal Declaration Template. Have students write their own Declaration of Independence in the manner in which the original was written.
6. Work that pertains to the environment outside school can be sent to a local government representative. Consider inviting a representative to the class to participate in a panel discussion involving the rights of youth in relation to the original Declaration of Independence.



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Secondary Independence day
Template for Personal Declaration of Independence

Name: _____

Date: _____

INTRODUCTION:

PREAMBLE:

MAIN BODY PT I:

MAIN BODY PT II:

CONCLUSION:



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