Declaration of Independence: Analysis with Picture and Document

Lesson Overview

Overview: Using primary sources (The Declaration of Independence and an artist rendition of the signing) to study the document setting us free from Great Britain. Students will look at and analyze the picture first before reading the document.

Grade Range: 9-12

Objective: After completing this activity students will be able to:
- Understand the written document of the Declaration of Independence.
- Analyze how this document affected the people living during this time period.
- Discuss how this is the foundation of our democracy today.

Time Required: One and a half class periods of 40 minutes

Discipline/Subject: Civics, Social Studies

Topic/Subject: Government, Law

Era: The American Revolution, 1763-1783

Standards

Illinois Learning Standards:
Social Studies:
14.E.4 Analyze historical trends of United States foreign policy (e.g., emergence as a world leader-military, industrial, financial).
14.F.3a Analyze historical influences on the development of political ideas and practices as enumerated in the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, the Bill of Rights and the Illinois Constitution.
14.F.4a Determine the historical events and processes that brought about changes in United States political ideas and traditions (e.g., the New Deal, Civil War).

Materials

Handouts: Analysis Tools


Books: American Government by Prentice Hall Textbooks

PowerPoint:
**Library of Congress Items:**

- **Title of Source:** Declaration of Independence
- **URL of Source:** [http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/det1994023134/PP/](http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/det1994023134/PP/)
- **Title of Source:** Declaration of Independence
- **URL of Source:** [http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/DeclarInd.html](http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/DeclarInd.html)

**Procedures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure Step #</th>
<th>Resource or Material Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Have LOC Declaration of Independence image up on Smart board when students enter classroom and hand out photo analysis worksheet. Go over questions with the students then allow them time to look at the photo and to answer the questions.</td>
<td>LOC Item Analysis Tool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Go over questions with the students. Interject questions about women not being in photo, windows covered, papers on table, etc.</td>
<td>LOC Item Analysis Tool</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Day Two:**

1. Have students open up their textbooks to the Declaration of Independence (p.40) and put up the picture of the broadside.

2. Have students look at the Written Document Analysis sheet and go over as a class the First Look portion.

3. Break students into small groups and have them read the Declaration of Independence and answer the Content Information portion of the analysis sheet.

4. As a class go over Content Information: Why would the colonist list all their problems with the King? What were they hoping to gain by doing this?

5. Have students take a quiz over the Declaration of Independence using PowerPoint slide

**Evaluation**

During classroom discussion ascertain student understanding. Rotate through groups to clarify questions and listen to small group discussions. Collect written pages, analyze work for understanding and give feedback. Students will take a quiz over the work discussed.

**Extension**

**Author Credits:**

M.Kirby
Sullivan High School
### What I See (observe)
Describe exactly what you see in the photo.
*What people and objects are shown? How are they arranged? What is the physical setting? What other details can you see?*

### What I Infer (deduction)
Summarize what you already know about the situation and time period shown and people and objects that appear.  *I see ___ and I think ___*

### Interpretation
Write what you conclude from what you see.
*What is going on in the picture? Who are the people and what are they doing? What might be the function of the objects? What can we conclude about the time period?*

Why do you believe the photo was taken?

Why do you believe this photo was saved?

### What I Need to Investigate
What are three questions you have about the photo?
1.  
2.  
3.  
Where can you research the answers to your questions?
## First Look

**Type of Document (Check):**
- [ ] Newspaper
- [ ] Map
- [ ] Report
- [ ] Congressional Record
- [ ] Letter
- [ ] Telegram
- [ ] Memorandum
- [ ] Census Report
- [ ] Patent
- [ ] Press Release
- [ ] Advertisement
- [ ] Other ____________________

**Unique Physical Characteristics of the Document (check one or more):**
- [ ] Interesting Letterhead
- [ ] Handwritten
- [ ] Typed
- [ ] Seals
- [ ] Notations
- [ ] Received stamp
- [ ] Other ____________________

**Date(s) of the Document:**

**Author (or Creator) of the Document:**

**Position (Title):**

**For what audience was the document written?**

## Document Content Information

**List three phrases or statements that caught your attention or you think are important.**

1. 

2. 

3. 

**Why do you think this document was written?**

**What in the document helps you know why it was written?** Quote from the document.

**Why do you think this document was saved?**

**Was the document meant to be viewed by the public or a specific person or group?**

**List two things the document tells you about life in the United States at the time it was written.**

1. 

2. 

**Write a question to the author that is left unanswered by the document.**

*Declaration of Independence: Analysis with Picture and Document*
In Congress, July 4, 1776.

A Declaration

By the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress Assembled.

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. — That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the consent of the governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its Foundation on such Principles, and organizing its Powers in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient Causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their Right, it is their Duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future Security. Such hath been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The History of the present King of Great Britain is a History of repeated Injuries and Invasions, all having in direct Object the Establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid World.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, for suppressing such Mercenaries as are necessary for the public Good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing Importance, unless suspended in their Operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has refused to assent to them.

He has refused to pass other Laws for the Accommodation of large Districts of People, unless those People would relinquish the Right of Representation in the Legislative; a Right in which the torrent of popular opinion must be regarded as sacred.

He has sent the Members of Congress from these States, repeatedly to the Congress of the United States, to petition for the redress of their Grievances; but he has so shaunted their Addresses with推迟 and搪塞, and so far from granting their desires, has refuted them with fresh Despotism.

He has maintained intercepted All Laws for controlling it's own Districts of Trade, previous to the DECLARATION of Independent.

He has constrained our Planters to relinquish their Property, to various Manners and Degrees, from the 17th Century to the Year 1763.

In every Stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress; in every Stage We have submitted to Foundations for redressing them; but in either Case, the Beloved of the People have refrained from the Use of our last Resource; a Submission to Dictates, which is Armed with the Saiety and Liberty of a Nation.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the World for the rectitude of our Intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are free and Independent States; that they are absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political Connections between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may do. And for the support of this Declaration, with firm reliance on the Protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.