

Name: _____

The Declaration of Independence

“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.”

Declaration of Independence:

- Historical
- One of the most important documents of the United States
- Primary source document
- Written by Thomas Jefferson to tell King George III that the colonists thought the laws and taxes were unfair.
- Written in Philadelphia
- July 4th, 1776: the colonies voted to send the Declaration to King George III

Main Ideas:

- The Declaration of Independence told England that Americans wanted to be free.
- The Declaration of Independence is the paper stating that the American colonists wanted to be free from English rule.

The Four Parts of the Declaration:

Part 1: The Introduction

The first paragraph of the Declaration of Independence told what the document was about. It said that the colonists wanted the rest of the world to understand why they wanted to be free.

Part 2: Human Rights

The second part of the Declaration explained that Americans believed in basic human rights. It said that everyone has a right to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” It also explained that governments are supposed to protect basic human rights.

Part 3: List of Complaints

The third part of the Declaration listed everything that King George had done wrong. Some of the items in the list were:

- He has refused to agree to laws we need.
- He has imposed taxes on us without our consent.
- He has waged war against us.

Part 4: Declaring Freedom

The last part of the Declaration broke all ties with England. It said the former colonies would be free.