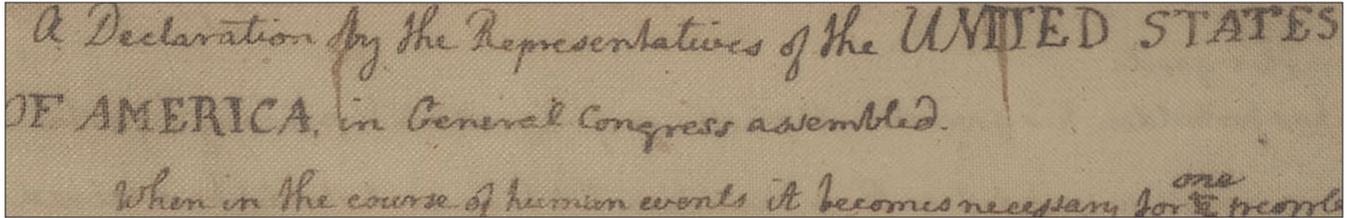


A LIBRARY OF CONGRESS PRIMARY SOURCE STARTER

THOMAS JEFFERSON'S ROUGH DRAFT OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE



Quick and easy activity ideas to start using Library of Congress primary sources in the classroom

Teacher Instructions

Goal

Students can explore Thomas Jefferson's rough draft of the Declaration of Independence to think critically about the story behind the edits.

Background

Every teacher knows how important it is to write a good rough draft, but what about studying a rough draft?

When Thomas Jefferson was asked to write what would become the Declaration of Independence, he was careful to start with a rough draft. After he finished it, he gave it to a group of reviewers, including Benjamin Franklin and future president John Adams, who read it and suggested several changes.

Jefferson's "original rough draught" [<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/trt001.html>], available on the Library of Congress Web site, lets students see all the scratched-out text and inserted words that Jefferson added as he and his reviewers discussed their edits.

Activities

Teachers can have students:

- Compare this draft to the final version of the Declaration
- Speculate about why different changes were proposed
- Brainstorm ways in which the government of the United States might have been different if some changes hadn't been made.

You can use the Library's primary source analysis tool and teacher guides to help students analyze Jefferson's rough draft in further depth.

For more information on the Declaration of Independence:

Creating the United States

<http://myloc.gov/Exhibitions/creatingtheus/DeclarationofIndependence/Pages/default.aspx>

For more classroom materials and other teacher resources from the Library of Congress, visit loc.gov/teachers

Primary Source

Thomas Jefferson's Rough Draft of the Declaration of Independence

Thomas Jefferson. June-July 1776. From Library of Congress: *The Thomas Jefferson Papers*.
<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/trt001.html>



A Declaration by the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in General Congress assembled.

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for ^{one} people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to ~~assume~~ ^{assume} among the powers of the earth the ^{separate and equal} ~~separate and equal~~ station to which the laws of nature & of nature's god entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to ~~that~~ ^{the} separation.

We hold these truths to be ^{self-evident} ~~self-evident~~ that all men are created equal & independent that ^{they are endowed by their creator with certain} ~~from that equal creation they derive~~ rights, that ^{rights that} ~~rights that~~ are inalienable, among ^{which} ~~which~~ are ^{life, liberty, & the pursuit of happiness;} ~~life, liberty, & the pursuit of happiness;~~ that to secure these ^{rights} ~~rights~~, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government ~~shall~~ becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, & to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles & organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety & happiness. prudence indeed will dictate that governments long established should not be ~~changed~~ ^{changed} for light & transient causes: and accordingly all experience hath shewn 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 & usurpations [began at a distinguished period, &] pressing invariably the same object, evinces a design to ~~reduce~~ ^{reduce} them ^{under absolute Despotism} ~~under absolute Despotism~~, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such

government, & to provide new guards for their future security. such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; & such is now the necessity which constrains them to ^{alter} ~~exchange~~ their former systems of government. the history of ^{the} ~~the~~ present ^{King of Great Britain} ~~King of Great Britain~~ is a history of ^{repeated} ~~repeated~~ injuries and usurpations, [among which, ^{appears no solitary fact} ~~appears no solitary fact~~ to contradict the uniform tenor of the rest, ^{in all} ~~in all~~ ^{of which} ~~of which~~ have in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. to prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world, [for the truth of which we pledge a faith yet unshaken by falsehood.]



PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS TOOL

OBSERVE

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REFLECT

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QUESTION

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FURTHER INVESTIGATION

http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/resources/Primary_Source_Analysis_Tool.pdf

TEACHER'S GUIDE ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES



Guide students with the sample questions as they respond to the primary source. Encourage them to go back and forth between the columns; there is no correct order.

OBSERVE

Have students identify and note details.

Sample Questions:

What do you notice first? · Find something small but interesting. · What do you notice that you didn't expect? · What do you notice that you can't explain? · What do you notice now that you didn't earlier?

REFLECT

Encourage students to generate and test hypotheses about the source.

Where do you think this came from? · Why do you think somebody made this? · What do you think was happening when this was made? · Who do you think was the audience for this item? · What tool was used to create this? · Why do you think this item is important? · If someone made this today, what would be different? · What can you learn from examining this?

QUESTION

Have students ask questions to lead to more observations and reflections.

What do you wonder about...
who? · what? · when? · where? · why? · how?

FURTHER INVESTIGATION

Help students to identify questions appropriate for further investigation, and to develop a research strategy for finding answers.

Sample Question: What more do you want to know, and how can you find out?

A few follow-up activity ideas:

Beginning

Have students compare two related primary source items.

Intermediate

Have students expand or alter textbook explanations of history based on primary sources they study.

Advanced

Ask students to consider how a series of primary sources support or challenge information and understanding on a particular topic. Have students refine or revise conclusions based on their study of each subsequent primary source.

For more tips on using primary sources, go to

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers>

http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/resources/Analyzing_Primary_Sources.pdf

TEACHER'S GUIDE ANALYZING MANUSCRIPTS



Guide students with the sample questions as they respond to the primary source. Encourage them to go back and forth between the columns; there is no correct order.

OBSERVE

Have students identify and note details.

Sample Questions:

- Describe what you see. · What do you notice first?
- How much of the text can you read? What does it say? · What do you see that looks strange or unfamiliar? · How are the words arranged? · What do you notice about the page the writing appears on? · What size is the page? · What do you see on the page besides writing? · What other details can you see?

REFLECT

Encourage students to generate and test hypotheses about the manuscript.

- Why do you think this manuscript was made? · Who do you think created it? · Who do you think was intended to read it, if anyone? · What do you think was happening when it was created? · What tools and materials were used to create it? · What can you learn from examining this? · If someone created something like this today, what would be different? · What would be the same?

QUESTION

Have students ask questions to lead to more observations and reflections.

- What do you wonder about...
who? · what? · when? · where? · why? · how?

FURTHER INVESTIGATION

Help students to identify questions appropriate for further investigation, and to develop a research strategy for finding answers.

Sample Question: What more do you want to know, and how can you find out?

A few follow-up activity ideas:

- Beginning*
Have students choose a section of the manuscript and put it in their own words.
- Intermediate*
Select a section of a manuscript. Speculate about the purpose of the manuscript, and what the person, or people, who created it expected it to accomplish. Do you think it achieved their goals? Explain why you think so.
- Advanced*
Examine a section of the manuscript. Think about what you already know about this period in history. How does the manuscript support or contradict your current understanding of this period? Can you see any clues to the point of view of the person who created this manuscript?

For more tips on using primary sources, go to <http://www.loc.gov/teachers>

http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/resources/Analyzing_Manuscripts.pdf