

“If the Declaration of Independence could talk, what story would it tell?”

Part Two: Essay

Topic:	If the Declaration of Independence could talk, what story would it tell?”									
Objective:	Students will write an essay demonstrating their knowledge of the Declaration of Independence and its value over the past 250 years, including how it impacts them personally.									
Standards:	<p>Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects 6–12 WRIST</p> <p>The standards below begin at grade 6; standards for K–5 writing in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects are integrated into the K–5 Writing standards. The CCR anchor standards and high school standards in literacy work in tandem to define college and career readiness expectations—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr style="background-color: #800000; color: white;"> <th style="width: 33%;">Grades 6–8 students:</th> <th style="width: 33%;">Grades 9–10 students:</th> <th style="width: 33%;">Grades 11–12 students:</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr style="background-color: #d3d3d3;"> <td colspan="3">Text Types and Purposes</td> </tr> <tr> <td> <p>1. Write arguments focused on <i>discipline-specific content</i>.</p> <p>a. 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Materials Needed:	Declaration of Independence (Made Easy) from previous lesson. Notebooks, writing utensils/chromebooks									
Introduction: (5 Minutes)	Based on our last lesson, we discussed that one of the most famous lines from the Declaration is: <i>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. We mentioned that a modern translation of that might be “It is obvious that all people have the right to equal treatment and that God (or a Creator) gives people rights to Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness that can’t be taken or given away.” (paraphrased from DOI Made Easy).</i> The Mason County District Library has challenged us to write essays responding to the prompt, “If the Declaration of Independence could talk, what story would it tell?” Take a few minutes to talk with a partner about some of the ways our country has held true to this document. Would the Declaration of Independence say that we have consistently followed this example? Are there times we strayed from this mission? Are there times you can site where you have personally benefitted from these truths? Or examples of when you have not benefitted?									

<p>Body: (40 minutes)</p>	<p>Take a few minutes to write an introductory statement about your general thoughts of the story the DOI could/would tell. You may rephrase the prompt or come up with your own way to introduce your ideas.</p> <p>Next, record three to five examples that support your introductory statement. These can be personal situations, local, state, and/or national.</p> <p>Once you have your intro statement and examples, take time to expound on each of the examples you have given. Tell the story of how that impacted you.</p> <p>An example is: If the Declaration of Independence could talk, it would tell many changing stories about how the United States of America has worked to achieve our “self-evident truths”.</p> <p>Equal treatment: providing all citizens (not just white men per the original document) the right to vote through Constitutional amendments.</p> <p>Pursuit of Happiness: my parents were able to buy our home. We get to go on vacations sometimes. We live near a Great Lake and get to go swimming there for free.</p> <p>Life: We have a right to life but if you break the law, we also have the death penalty for people who have committed unredeemable crimes.</p> <p>Once you have expanded on those ideas, begin writing a rough draft of your essay.</p>
<p>Check for Understanding: (10 minutes)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students will share their writing with a partner and begin discussing how to expand on their topics. ● *Have students work on the essay during future class periods before writing a final draft. Use the rubric as a guide
<p>Resources</p>	<p>PBS Explore the Declaration Lesson Plan American Battlefield Trust Declaration Lesson Plan National Archives Declaration of Independence https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eIO-7dFz2JU</p>