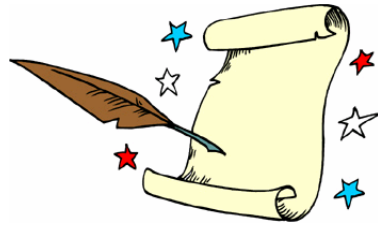


Name _____ Date _____

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE



In the summer of 1776, many of the British colonists in the New World had had enough. They were tired of paying taxes to a faraway government, a government that many colonists didn't think was doing anything to earn the money it was being paid.

King George III had not responded to the letters of complaint that the Continental Congress had written over a year ago. Why were the colonists paying taxes to a King who not only didn't help them, but didn't even answer their letters? The Congress was running itself without much guidance of the British government, and it was getting tired.

King George III eventually responded: he proclaimed that the new "United Colonies" were rebels, and announced that all American ships and properties belonged to the Crown.

The Colonies were being treated like enemies. They decided to act accordingly. In June 1776, Thomas Jefferson was asked to write "A Declaration of Independence". In two weeks, he created an early version of the document that was the beginning of a new, independent country.

The Declaration served two purposes: it declared why the United Colonies were disappointed in the Crown, and it declared why they deserved to be treated as an independent country.

On July 4th, 1776, the Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence as the official announcement of their departure from England. The United Colonies would be the Free and Independent States.

On August 2nd in Philadelphia, the Declaration of Independence was signed by most of the members of Congress. Some members were not present at the signing, and the document traveled across the country, gathering the remaining signatures. In all, fifty-six delegates signed.

The Declaration of Independence is considered the first and one of the most important documents in U.S. history. In addition to its important symbolism as a declaration of liberty, it is simply a beautifully written work. Perfectly composed, with elegant phrases and rich language, the Declaration defines the hopes and potentials of a new country.

Name _____ Date _____

Answer the questions about *THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE*

1. Who wrote the Declaration of Independence
 - a. George Washington
 - b. John Hancock
 - c. King George III
 - d. Thomas Jefferson

2. What is it famous for?
 - a. It has a secret clue on the back
 - b. It announced the United States' division from Britain
 - c. It is written in very fancy letters
 - d. It explained how much the United States paid in taxes

3. Where was it written?
 - a. Philadelphia
 - b. Washington, D.C.
 - c. New York
 - d. England

4. When was it adopted and officially announced?
 - a. July 4th, 1776
 - b. August 2nd, 1776
 - c. June 1776
 - d. May 1775

5. Why is it considered as a symbol of America?
 - a. Because it is was signed by 56 famous people
 - b. Because it is in the National Archives
 - c. Because it was the first American document
 - d. Because it was well written

Name _____ Date _____

Answers to *THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE*

1. d
2. b
3. a
4. a
5. c