

JOHN LOCKE AND THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE – Sample Answers

Directions: As a whole class, review each excerpt from the Declaration of Independence. Summarize the excerpt in your own words and then determine how John Locke influenced the excerpt from the Declaration of Independence.

Excerpt from the Declaration of Independence	Summary of excerpt in your own words	Connection to the ideas of John Locke
<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.</i>	All men are created equal and all men have the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.	natural rights
<i>Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed</i>	Government gets its power from the consent of the governed.	consent of the governed
<i>...whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it...</i>	It is the right of the people to change or end government if it becomes destructive.	consent of the governed and social contract
<i>A Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.</i>	A tyrant is unfit to rule a free people.	natural rights

The Impact of John Locke on the Founding Fathers
President John Quincy Adams once stated that: “The Declaration of Independence was founded upon one and the same theory of government: the writings of Locke.” Based on this statement, how would you summarize the impact of John Locke on the Founding Fathers?
Based on this quote from President Adams, I can summarize that John Locke had a large impact on the Founding Fathers. According to Adams, John Locke’s ideas are the main ideas in the Declaration of Independence.

Adapted from: John Locke: A Philosophical Founder of America: <http://www.wallbuilders.com/libissuesarticles.asp?id=99156>