

Primary Source Document Analysis Worksheet – *Sample Answers*

Adapted from the "Written Document Analysis Worksheet" from the National Archives

https://www.archives.gov/files/education/lessons/worksheets/written_document_analysis_worksheet_former.pdf

Document Title: Declaration of Independence

1.	<p>What type of document is this? (check one):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Report <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Memo <input type="checkbox"/> Letter</p> <p>Other (please explain):</p>
2.	<p>What are some unique <u>visual</u> characteristics of this document? (check all that apply)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interesting Letterhead <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Handwritten <input type="checkbox"/> Typed</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Seals/Stamps <input type="checkbox"/> Notations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Signatures</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> "Received" Stamp <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain): _____</p>
3.	<p>What is the date of this document?</p> <p>July 4, 1776</p>
4.	<p>Who is the author (or creator) of this document?</p> <p>The Representatives of the United States</p> <p>What is their position? What words does the author use to make their position known to the reader?</p> <p>We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States...</p>
5.	<p>Who is intended to read this? Do you think they read it?</p> <p>He (King George III)</p>

6. Key Information – Using the document, answer the questions that follow:

A. What is the author's purpose for writing this document?

To declare independence from England and explain the reasons why.

B. What evidence helps you understand why it was written? (Choose a specific quote from the document)

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States...

C. How is the concept of "natural rights" discussed in this document? (Choose a specific quote from the document)

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.

D. How are "natural rights" and the government connected? (Choose a specific quote from the document)

That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed

E. What are some grievances that the colonists express in the document?

1. He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.

2....He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

3... He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers.

4... He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.

5... For Quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:

6...For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent.

7...For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury

F. Which grievances listed violate the colonists "natural rights"?

All

G. What were the colonists willing to give up by signing this document?

And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.