Building Bridges: Dialogue on Race and other issues of our time

Topic: Declaration of Independence

(Dec. 2017, updated Sept. 2020) (copyright)

Version: Online. This guide script combines with linked slides to make a complete set for presentation. There also are several handouts for participants.

Objective: To invite participants into a gracious time and space to experience a constructive dialogue on the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America.

Type of Group: Adults and older teens from diverse backgrounds (race, ethnicity, age, gender, economic status, etc.)

Size of Group: 6-12; for more participants and/or to have smaller sharing groups, use breakout rooms, each with a facilitator.

Time Required: About 2 hours, more or less, depending on the size of the group and the processes used.

Preparing to Facilitate This Dialogue

The presentation consists of this script, the linked slides, streamed internet materials (such as from YouTube), and handouts. *Note: clicking on this link opens a thumbnail; click on it to open the preview, and at the top of the preview find the icon to "open in new tab" and click on it to open the set of slides.*

The facilitator downloads copies of the Script and Slides onto their Google Drive. Only the facilitator uses the Google Doc script. Participants see only the Zoom screen (or other online format), the slides, the streamed materials, and the handouts. *Find the handouts at the end of this script. Distribute the handouts to participants before the dialogue. We recommend that they print them so they can easily read and write on them, but it is always possible for participants to create any worksheets on blank paper during the session.*

Preview the entire session beforehand.

Select the portions of the dialogue process you will use. For example, there may be several videos to choose from, and you decide to use just one. Or adjust the length of time provided for small group discussion in order to keep to your allotted schedule. Or divide the dialogue process into two sessions in order to use all the resources and have plenty of time for dialogue.

Plan the meeting, day, time, and online format (Zoom or other platform).

Invite participants to the meeting. Prepare a gracious invitation (future link). Send out the invitation, including instructions for pre-registration, if any. Consider sending a gentle reminder the day before the meeting. Send the handouts to them for printing.

Be familiar with Kaleidoscope Institute tools including Respectful Communication Guidelines, Mutual Invitation, *Conocimientos*, etc., **and with the tools of your meeting platform,** such as screen-sharing, breakout rooms, chat box, etc.

Overview of This Dialogue Process

1. **Gathering, Welcome, and Framing for Dialogue** *(estimated 10 minutes or less)*
2. **Introduce (or Review) Respectful Communication Guidelines** *(3-10 minutes)*
3. **Focusing Video: *NPR interviews Americans on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., July 4, 2013*** *(2:15 minutes)*
4. **Introductions using *Conocimientos* and Mutual Invitation** *(20-30 minutes)*
5. **1st Dialogue Process: *First Impression of the Declaration of Independence (handout, text sharing)*** *(10 minutes at most, using chat box)*
6. **2nd Dialogue Process: *Nine Concepts that Everyone Should Know (video)*** *(11-minute video plus 20 minute small group session, total 30 minutes)*
7. **Reflection on the Experience: *What are we called to do?*** *(25 minutes, includes 20 minute dialogue)*
8. **Commitment for Future Participation** *(1-3 minutes)*
9. **Closing and Sending** *(10 minutes)*
10. **GracEconomics request for support** *(1 minute)*

Presenting This Dialogue

1. **The facilitators' script** for the dialogue session is in two places: this document (most comprehensive version) and the speaker notes portion of the Google Slides (abbreviated version).
    a. **Print the Google Doc script ahead of time** and write all your notes on it (recommended).
    b. Or, when screen sharing the Google Slides in Zoom, select Presenter View from the Present menu; the one sharing their screen will see the speaker notes, but participants won't.
    a. Or have the Google Slides open on one monitor or screen (the one you share on Zoom) and read the Google Script from another monitor or screen.

2. **Slides** may be accessed from Google Drive or downloaded to the presenter's computer

(as PowerPoint or another format).

3. **Check the internet connection** for smooth streaming.
4. **When you screen share a video or anything with sound on Zoom**, be sure to select two boxes on the Screen Share page, "Share computer sound" and "Optimize screen sharing for video clip."
5. Be on your platform **early enough** to welcome dialogue participants.
6. The Google Slides **presentation begins at Slide 6** after a blank transitional slide. **Insert** your sponsor or sponsoring group's name on Slide 6.

How to Proceed

In this script, instructions and suggestions for the facilitator are in italic red type.
Words to be spoken by the facilitator are in regular black type.

Instructions are given for Zoom; please translate to the webinar format you use.

1. Gathering, Welcome, and Framing for Dialogue

1.1. *(Optional) START SCREEN SHARE and show **SLIDE 6**: Title slide. Leave this on as participants arrive, **or you can begin the screen sharing later at step 1.5.***
***Note:** Enter your group name on the slide beforehand.*
***Important:** When you start screen share, be sure to select two boxes on the Screen Share page, "Share computer sound" and "Optimize screen sharing for video clip" because you will be sharing a video later.*

1.1. *As participants arrive, invite each one to type on their Zoom screen their name and other identifying information of interest. For example, name, location, and organization they affiliate with--if they are from different locations and organizations! Ask for information that will be helpful and interesting to the group.*

1.2. *Tell participants if you would like them muted or not, video on or not.*

1.3. *Make certain participants have something to write on and with.*

1.4. *If you haven't already, START SCREEN SHARE (selecting the two boxes on the Screen Share page, "Share computer sound" and "Optimize screen sharing for video clip") and show **SLIDE 6**: Title slide (enter your group name on the slide beforehand).*

Say: Welcome to Building Bridges Now: The Declaration of Independence. This program is sponsored by __(your sponsoring group name)__ and the Kaleidoscope Institute to provide a gracious space to have constructive conversations in our community on race relations and other important issues of our time.

1.5. *Show **SLIDE 7**: The purpose of dialogue*
Say: The purpose of dialogue is to bring together people with diverse backgrounds, viewpoints, and experiences to have meaningful conversation on a common subject.

1.6. *Show **SLIDE 8**: Dialogue does not force…*
Say: We invite you into a time of dialogue remembering that:
Dialogue does not force anyone to change.
It is not a debate in which we try to convince others that we are right.
It is about arriving at a mutual understanding.

1.7. *Show **SLIDE 9**: Dialogue is not about finger pointing…*
Say: We invite you into a time of dialogue remembering that:
Dialogue IS NOT about finger pointing, demonizing, or punishing individuals or groups. Truth dialogue invites each one of us to commit to sharing one's own truth while being willing to listen deeply to another's truth.

1.8. *Show **SLIDE 10**: Dialogue does not avoid our history…*
Say: We invite you into a time of dialogue remembering that:
Dialogue does not avoid our history and our present differences, pretending that everything is okay.
Dialogue acknowledges our history and our present differences, and trusts that by sharing our different experiences, we can achieve greater understanding of the issue and move toward potential reconciliation, fostering constructive change in our community.

1.9. *Show **SLIDE 11:** A facilitator is not/is…*
Say: A facilitator is not a teacher or an expert. A facilitator is someone who supports the group by establishing gracious space, time, and processes for respectful and authentic conversation.

1.10. *Show **SLIDE 12**: Topic slide*
Say: Today's topic is "The Declaration of Independence."

1.11. *Show **SLIDE 13**: Conocimientos*

Note: Facilitator has a choice about where participants may write their answers to the Conocimientos prompts. Either they may enter them in the chat box, or they may jot them on their own paper and look at their answers later when Conocimientos is shared.

** If the chat box is used, say:* In order to help us get to know each other better, I invite you to complete the Conocimientos questions listed on the screen. "Conocimientos" is a Spanish word meaning "knowledge." Use the chat box to type and share your answers. Try to enter all your answers in one group. You may number your answers 1 through 3 to help distinguish them from each other, without pressing "enter" until you are ready to post them all. The questions are:
0. Your name *(This is already on the Zoom participant screen)*
1. In order for me to be able to live a good life, I . . .
2. In order for me to be able to have liberty, I . . .
3. In order for me to be able to pursue happiness, I . . .

Are there any questions about what you're invited to do?
Please write your responses now and post them when you are done.
Answers will be shared later, so they do not need to be read aloud as they appear in the chat box, but participants may scroll through and read the responses while they wait.

** If the chat box is not used, reword the invitation to invite participants to jot their answers on their own papers for sharing later.*

2. Introduce (or Review) Respectful Communication Guidelines

2.1. *Refer participants to **Participant Handout 1:** Respectful Communication Guidelines.*

2.2. *Show **SLIDE 14**: Respectful Communication Guidelines*
A facilitator gives the following explanation. Two or more facilitators may take turns reading.
***Note:** An abbreviated version can be used if there are no new members joining the group since the last gathering.*
Guidelines will appear one at a time when a facilitator clicks forward.

Say: We, people from different cultural backgrounds, bring with us different assumptions of communication styles. Sometimes, these different assumptions may cause communication breakdown. Therefore, before we begin our dialogue, I invite you to consider a set of Respectful Communication Guidelines. They are

written as an acronym of the word “RESPECT.”

R = take RESPONSIBILITY for what you say and feel without blaming others.
Avoid judgmental language which can cause defensiveness and cut off communication. Instead, use “I” statements. Begin what you want to say with “I” and therefore claim what is yours. For example, I feel, I know, I believe I think I notice, I wonder, etc.

E = use EMPATHETIC listening
Put yourself in the other person’s shoes and attempt to see and experience the issue from the speaker’s perspective. This is a commitment that we make to try as hard as we can to understand each other knowing our limits. Therefore it is okay to ask clarifying questions. It is also okay to give feedback to check if you have understood what the speaker was saying.

S = be SENSITIVE to differences in communication styles
When someone behaves differently from you, don’t just simply interpret that behavior using your own assumptions of what is good communication. Remind yourself that this person might be communicating in a very different way and there might be opportunities to learn more about how the other communicates.

P = PONDER what you hear and feel before you speak
Think before you speak.

E = EXAMINE your own assumptions and perceptions
As you ponder, ask yourself what caused you to feel, think, or react in a certain way. Where might these ideas come from for you? If you are able to notice your own assumptions, you are more able to take responsibility for your own thinking and feeling.

C = keep CONFIDENTIALITY
In order to uphold the wellbeing of each person in this group, I invite you to keep the personal information shared here in confidence. This way we can feel safer in talking about real issues that concern our lives and our communities without the fear that they might be shared outside without the full benefit and trust developed in this group.

T = TRUST ambiguity because we are NOT here to debate who is right or wrong
In order to address these issues constructively, we must be willing and able to listen to each other’s different experiences and points of view, even though at times the ambiguity might be uncomfortable for some of us. By listening

empathetically without judgment or debate, we, as a community, may gain a fuller description of the issues we are trying to address. In this way, instead of being divided, we can move forward, working together to find constructive ways to address them.

Say: Are there questions about any of these guidelines?

Be prepared to give concrete behavioral examples of each guideline. Answer any questions before going on to the next slide.

2.3. *Show **SLIDE 15**: Agreement to Respect*
Say: Do we have an agreement to uphold these guidelines for the rest of our time together? I need a sign or gesture from all of you to indicate that you agree.
Facilitator may suggest a sign, such as showing a thumbs-up and/or signing the handout.
If nobody disagrees, the facilitator can click so the check mark appears and then continue with the dialogue process.
If there are reservations, discuss them until there is an agreement and then click the check mark and continue on with the dialogue process.
If you cannot get an agreement, we recommend that you suspend the dialogue until another time or continue only if those unwilling to use these guidelines leave the meeting.
Anticipated learning: Defining some parameters for respectful communication is crucial in dialogue work. We can find ourselves in destructive situations if we do not take care in helping participants at the beginning of our gathering to think through how they would behave as we go along.

3. Focusing Video: *July 4, 2013, on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. (NPR)*

3.1. *Show **SLIDE 16**: July 4, 2013, on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. (NPR)*
Say: In this dialogue session, we will have opportunities to dialogue on the Declaration of Independence of the United States. To help us focus our time together, I will show an NPR clip from 2013 of Americans on the National Mall sharing their impressions of the Declaration of Independence.
*Click on the link on SLIDE 15. **Note:** You will be taken to a page with an article, a recording, and a video. Click on the video, the arrow on the picture of a boy in front of a microphone (below the blue banner that says "8-Minute Listen").*
https://www.npr.org/2013/07/04/197722022/the-declaration-what-does-independence-mean-to-you?jwsource=cl (July 4, 2013. 2:13 minutes.)

3.2. *Pause, then say:* Take a moment to notice what came up for you as you watched. *Pause briefly for pondering time.*

4. Introductions using *Conocimientos* and Mutual Invitation

4.1. *Refer participants to **Participant Handout 2:** Mutual Invitation.*

4.2. *A facilitator gives the following instructions to introduce the process of Mutual Invitation. STOP SCREEN SHARE to give the Mutual Invitation instructions orally. Note: If there are no new members joining the group, remind participants that we will be using Mutual Invitation again for the next process, skip the detailed instructions, and continue at 4.3 (showing the Mutual Invitation reminder SLIDE 16) or at 4.5.*

4.3. *Say:* In order to help us get to know each other better, you will be invited to introduce yourselves using the categories you wrote about earlier (in the chat box *or* on your own paper). In order to ensure that everyone who wants to share HAS the opportunity to speak, we will use a process called Mutual Invitation.
In Mutual Invitation, the leader or a designated person shares first. After that person has spoken, they invite another to share.
Optional instruction, depending on your platform/circumstances: Try not to invite the person next to you so that we won't move into the habit of going around in a circle.
After the next person has spoken, that person is given the privilege of inviting another to share.
If you are not ready to share, say "I pass for now," and we will invite you to share later on. If you don't want to say anything at all, simply say, "Pass," and proceed to invite another to share.
We will do this until everyone has been invited.
We invite you to listen and not to respond to someone's sharing immediately. There will be time to respond and to ask clarifying questions after everyone has shared.

4.4. *START SCREEN SHARE and show **SLIDE 17**: Mutual Invitation*

MUTUAL INVITATION
When you are invited, 3 options: Share, Pass for now, Pass.
Then invite someone else

Are there any questions?
Facilitator may decide to demonstrate Mutual Invitation by inviting the group to

share, "What is your favorite ice cream?" For this demonstration, it helps to have someone prepared to Pass or Pass for Now.

4.5. *STOP SCREEN SHARE.*

4.6. *Say:* In order to help us get to know each other better, you are invited to introduce yourselves using the categories you wrote about earlier (in the chat box *or* on your own paper), using Mutual Invitation.

POSSIBLE BREAKOUT ROOMS. If the group is larger than 12, you will need to divide the group into smaller breakout groups of no more than 12 with a facilitator for each group. Even if the group is smaller than 12, you may wish to divide the group into smaller breakout groups so that sharing will take less of the total time. Six is a better size for a small group than 12.
Note: If breakout rooms will be used, the facilitator's screen share will not be visible. Tell participants that you will put the Conocimientos questions in the chat box to remind them of the categories they wrote about earlier. If you do not use breakout rooms, the next slide repeats the Conocimientos questions.

Be sure to decide ahead of time the parameter for sharing. Say: We have set aside about ___ minutes for this process. That means each person will have ___ minutes to share. I ask you to respect other people's time as you share.
Are there any questions? *Answer any questions.*

4.7. *If you remain in one group, START SCREEN SHARE and show* ***SLIDE 18****: Conocimientos Sharing.*
Otherwise send participants into breakout rooms and type the Conocimientos prompts in the chat box.
Facilitator begins the sharing process by introducing him/her/themself.
Problem to anticipate in this process: People sometimes forget to invite others after they finish speaking. Do not invite for them. Simply remind them they have the privilege to invite the next person.
Anticipated learning through this process:

1. *Participants find out who is in the meeting and some things about them.*
2. *Participants may find out commonality and differences in why they come to the dialogue session.*

4.8. *End breakout rooms, if used.*
When everyone has introduced themselves (and when the breakout rooms, if used, have returned to the main screen),

*START or CONTINUE SCREEN SHARE and show **SLIDE 19**: Debrief Conocimientos. Facilitator debriefs the group by asking participants to complete the sentences:*

I noticed…

I wonder…

At the facilitator's discretion, answers to these prompts may be shared using Mutual Invitation (if the group is small enough), through the chat box, or "popcorn style" (at random, participants speak without invitation; not all need to share). Read the chat box posts aloud, if used.

5. First Dialogue Process: *First Impression of the Declaration of Independence (text sharing, Participant Handout 3)*

5.1. ***Participant Handout 3** included with this session includes three excerpts from the Declaration of Independence. Invite participants to follow along on their handouts.*

5.2. *START or CONTINUE SCREEN SHARE and show **SLIDE 20**: Excerpts from the Declaration of Independence (1 of 3)*
Say: Now I invite you to listen to three excerpts from the Declaration of Independence. As you listen, capture a word, a phrase, or an image that stands out for you.

5.3. *Read aloud:* . . . 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 among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and 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 the separation. . . .

5.4. *Show **SLIDE 21:** Excerpts from the Declaration of Independence (2 of 3)*
Read aloud: . . . 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.—That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, —That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. . . .

5.5. *Show **SLIDE 22:** Excerpts from the Declaration of Independence (3 of 3)*
Read aloud: . . . 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; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. 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.

5.6. *Say:* Take a moment in silence to capture a word, a phrase, or an image that stood out for you in this text.
Give time for participants to reflect and/or write on the worksheet/handout.

5.7. *Say:* I invite you to share your word, phrase, or image in the chat box. You can scroll through and read the chat box responses after you have entered your response.
Allow time.

6. Second Dialogue Process: Dialogue using the video *"Declaration of Independence - 9 Key Concepts Everyone Should Know"*

6.1. *Show **SLIDE 23**: Watch a video*
Say: Craig Seibert, from the grassroots movement uscivicstraining.org, has prepared a ten-minute analysis of the Declaration of Independence.
Play the video.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cS-tshQ9sys&ab_channel=cmseibert
April 16, 2009. 10:44 minutes. Craig Seibert.

6.2. *Say:* I now invite you to ponder these questions:
1. What caught your attention as we watched this video?
2. How does the information in this video inform you about living in the United States?
Give participants time to ponder the questions.

6.3. *Say:* In a moment, we will use Mutual Invitation [in breakout rooms] and invite each one of you to share your insights from watching this video.
We've set aside 20 minutes [or 30 or length that fits your schedule] to share our reflections.
Please share only what you are comfortable sharing with the group.
Each person will have about ___ minutes to share. *(20 minutes or other length of time divided by number of persons in the group)*

Send participants to breakout rooms, if using. In order for participants to see the reflection questions from the breakout rooms, write them in the chat box.

7. Reflection on the Experience: *What Are We Called to Do?*

7.1. *When all have returned to the main screen, say:*
Now I invite you to listen to the excerpts from the Declaration of Independence one more time. As you listen, reflect on the question:

What are you called to do, be, or change as a result of studying this text?

Invite someone, or more than one person, to read the excerpts.
*START (or continue) SCREEN SHARE and show **SLIDES 20, 21, and 22**: Excerpts from the Declaration of Independence (3 slides)*

7.2. *Show **SLIDE 24:** Reflect on the experience*
Say: Take a moment in silence to reflect on the question:

What are you called to do, be or change as a result of studying this text?

Give time for participants to reflect and/or write on the worksheet/handout.

7.3. *Say:* In a moment, we will use Mutual Invitation [in breakout rooms] and invite each one of you to share your reflections.
We've set aside 20 minutes [or 30 or length that fits your schedule] to share our reflections.
Each person will have about ___ minutes to share. *(20 minutes or other length of time divided by number of persons in the group)*

Send participants to breakout rooms, if using. In order for participants to see the reflection questions while in the breakout rooms, write them in the chat box.

7.4. *When the time for sharing is over and all are on the main screen, go to the next slide.*

8. Commitment for Future Participation

8.1. *Show **SLIDE 25:** Commitment for future participation*
Facilitator invites participants to the next dialogue meeting and invites sharing of tasks. For any upcoming meeting, some may help write the gracious invitation and publicize it or serve as Zoom co-hosts. For a meeting in the same physical space, some may serve as hosts, bring refreshments, provide transportation, and so on. Discuss as needed.

9. Closing and Sending

9.1. *Show **SLIDE 26**: Closing, "I am thankful today… My hopes are…"*
Invite participants to complete these two sentences:

I am thankful today . . .
My hopes are . . .

After pausing to let participants ponder their answers, invite them to share their sentences. To stay together as the whole group on the main screen, use Mutual Invitation if the group is small enough, or share responses using the chat box, or ask participants to speak at random "popcorn style."

9.2. *Show **SLIDE 27:** Sending forth: Nourished by understanding…*
A facilitator sends participants out into the world. The sending is adapted from Leonard Nimoy, whose hand gesture as Mr. Spock from Star Trek is pictured. The facilitator may read the piece or invite all to read aloud with them.

Nourished by understanding
Warmed by friends
Fed by loved ones
Matured by wisdom
Tempered by tears
Made holy by caring and sharing
Go forth in peace!

10. GracEconomics request for support

10.1. *Show **SLIDE 28**: GracEconomic Request*
A facilitator reads the GracEconomic Request to participants:
If you appreciated this dialogue process,
please make a donation (between $1 and $100) to the Kaleidoscope Institute
so that we can continue to develop more resources
to empower more people for truth dialogues,
including those who have little financial resource.
www.kscopeinstitute.org

Thank you!

10.2. *STOP SCREEN SHARE*

Declaration of Independence: Participant Handout 1

Respectful Communication Guidelines

R = take RESPONSIBILITY for what you say and feel without blaming others

E = use EMPATHETIC listening

S = be SENSITIVE to differences in communication styles

P = PONDER what you hear and feel before you speak

E = EXAMINE your own assumptions and perceptions

C = keep CONFIDENTIALITY (Share CONSTRUCTIVELY to uphold the well-being of the COMMUNITY)

T = TRUST ambiguity because we are not here to debate who is right or wrong

From *The Bush Was Blazing But Not Consumed* by Eric H. F. Law
(St. Louis: Chalice Press, 1996), 87

I agree to uphold these guidelines for the time we have together.

_____ _____

SIGNATURE DATE

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Bill of Rights I-IV: Participant Handout 2

Mutual Invitation

In order to ensure that everyone who wants to share has the opportunity to speak, we will proceed in the following way:

● The leader or a designated person will share first.

● After that person has spoken, he/she/they then invites another to share. The one you invite does not need to be the person next to you.

● After the next person has spoken, that person is given the privilege to invite another to share.

● If you have something to say but are not ready yet, say "pass for now" and then invite another to share. You will be invited again later.

● If you don't want to say anything, simply say "pass" and proceed to invite another to share.

● We will do this until everyone has been invited.

● We invite you to listen and not to respond to someone's sharing immediately. There will be time to respond and to ask clarifying questions after everyone has had an opportunity to share.

from *The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb by Eric H. F. Law,* Chapter 9

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Declaration of Independence: Participant Handout 3

3 Excerpts from the Declaration of Independence

. . . 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 among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and 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 the separation.

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.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. . . .

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; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. 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.

First Reading:

Capture a word, phrase, or image.

Response to Video *(9 Concepts)*:

What caught your attention as you watched this video?

How does the information in this video inform you about living in the United States?

Third Reading:

What are you called to do, be, or change as a result of studying this text?

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