

The Declaration of Independence

Notes

The Declaration of Independence is found on pages 43 - 47 of your Textbook.

Important Background Information Regarding the Declaration

Purpose of the Declaration

1. It announced to the world the separation of the thirteen colonies from Great Britain.
2. It established the United States of America.

Why was Thomas Jefferson chosen to write the Declaration of Independence?

1. He had a way with words! (*a good writer*)
2. He already wrote a pamphlet called "*A Summary View of the Rights of British America*"

Date of the Declaration

1. July 4, 1776
2. The day Continental Congress approved the final draft of the Declaration.

Signing the Declaration

1. On July 19, 1776, the Continental Congress ordered a formal copy of the Declaration to be made for signing.
2. On August 2, the final parchment was presented to Congress and the signing began.
3. Over time 56 delegates signed the formal copy, but some present at the vote on July 4 never signed.

The Outline of Our Declaration of Independence

Section I (1st Paragraph)

1. It is important to justify (give reasons) why the colonists are breaking political ties with Great Britain.

Section II (Natural Rights)

1. The basic rights that all men are guaranteed. (Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of happiness)
2. When a government ignores the rights of its people, the people have the right to establish a new government.

Section III (Colonists' Complaints against the King)

1. The long list of things the king has done to the colonists.

Write in some of the complaints the colonists included in the Declaration.

Section IV (An Independent United States)

1. The colonists declared their independence from Great Britain.
2. The colonies will be known as the United States of America.