

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Declaration of Independence Study Guide**

(The Declaration can be found on page 164 of your textbook)

- A. Read the PREAMBLE. Place a mark beside any ideas that are in the Preamble which you believe Thomas Jefferson and the *Continental Congress* wanted readers to understand after reading the Declaration of Independence.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. It is important for people to know why the colonies want their freedom.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 2. All people have basic rights that the government should protect.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The King and the Parliament have done a good job ruling the colonies.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 4. A government gets its power from the people.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 5. People should change their government whenever they feel like it.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The colonies have many justifiable reasons for splitting with England.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The colonies are no longer a part of England.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 8. By simply signing this document, the colonies are officially independent from England and will be known as the United States of America from this day forward.
- B. John Locke wrote about the *natural rights* that all people had. In the DECLARATION OF NATURAL RIGHTS portion of the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson reviews Locke's key ideas. How did Jefferson rephrased John Locke's idea of *natural rights* in the Declaration?

Furthermore, Locke stated that a government's main job was to protect our *natural rights*. This is a government's responsibility in the *social compact*. According to Locke and Jefferson, what should citizens do if their government fails to protect the *natural rights* of their citizens? Why do you think the explanation of this idea is included in the Declaration of Independence?

- C. ***In your own words***, rewrite five of the grievances or complaints from the LIST OF GRIEVANCES that Thomas Jefferson listed against the King and *Parliament*. Why do you think this is the longest section of the document?
- 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.
  - 5.

- D. Look over the following list of individuals. Place a Y for “yes” next to the people you believe would have been excited about the Declaration being approved by Congress. Put an N of “no” next to those who would have been upset. Be prepared to support your opinion.
- \_\_\_ 1. A member of Parliament.
  - \_\_\_ 2. A slave in South Carolina.
  - \_\_\_ 3. A member of the Rhode Island colonial militia.
  - \_\_\_ 4. John Locke.
  - \_\_\_ 5. A *patriot* in Boston.
  - \_\_\_ 6. A *loyalist* in Philadelphia.
  - \_\_\_ 7. King Louis XVI of France.
  - \_\_\_ 8. King George III of England.
- E. Do you believe it was important for the *colonies* to let the world know the *colonies* were no longer part of England’s *empire*? Explain why or why not.
- F. Suggest a different title for the Declaration of Independence. Your title must convey the meaning of this important document.
- G. The Declaration of Independence was formally approved by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776. This is the reason we celebrate the Fourth of July. It is written in four sections. Briefly summarize the purpose of each section. Page 152 of your text might help you with this.
- H. Some people claim the Declaration of Independence is the most important document in the history of the United States. Would you agree or disagree? State your opinion and **provide two reasons** to support your opinion.
- I. The Declaration of Independence is a famous **example of which specific type of protesting?**