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Lesson 5.3: Who Declared Independence?

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Freedom Petition Submitted by Enslaved People to the New Hampshire State Legislature, page 1 Courtesy of the New Hampshire State Archives



Lesson 5.3: Who Declared Independence?

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Freedom Petition Submitted by Enslaved People to the New Hampshire State Legislature, page 3 Courtesy of the New Hampshire State Archives



Name	

Selections from the Declaration of Independence

These quotes are from the Declaration of Independence that the founding fathers wrote to the king of England in 1776. The main idea is that the colonists should be free because the king was abusing their rights. Read selections from the petition and answer the questions to find out how the writers tried to persuade their audience to agree with that main idea.

1. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries ... all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute **Tyranny** over these States.

What is the problem this declaration is trying to fix?

(tyranny: cruel power)

2. We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, Assembled ... solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States...

What do the people writing this declaration want?

 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. Why do they believe they should have what the declaration is asking for?

(self-evident: obvious) (endowed: given)

(unalienable: something you can't

give up)





Selections from Freedom Petition Submitted by Enslaved People to the New Hampshire State Legislature

These quotes are from the petition for freedom that 20 enslaved people wrote to the government of New Hampshire in 1779. The main idea is that they should be free because they are equal to all people. Read selections from the petition and answer the questions to find out how the writers tried to persuade their audience to agree with that main idea.

1. ...they ... were seized, imprisoned, and transported from their native country, where they are compelled ... to drag on their lives in miserable **servitude**.

What is the problem this petition is trying to fix?

(servitude: slavery)

2. Therefore, your humble slaves most devoutly pray ... for the sake of justice, humanity, and the rights of mankind ... that your honors would ... **enact** such laws ... as ... we may regain our liberty and ... that the name of slave may no more be heard in a land gloriously contending for the sweets of freedom.

What do the people writing this petition want?

(enact: to make into law)

...that the God of Nature gave [the enslaved people] life and freedom ... of the most perfect equality with other men; that freedom is an inherent right of the human species, not to be surrendered ... that ... tyranny and slavery, are alike detestable...

(inherent: essential) (tyranny: unfair power) (detestable: hateful) Why do they believe they should have what the petition is asking for?



Name	Answer Key	V

Selections from the Declaration of Independence

These quotes are from the Declaration of Independence that the founding fathers wrote to the king of England in 1776. The main idea is that the colonists should be free because the king was abusing their rights. Read selections from the petition and answer the questions to find out how the writers tried to persuade their audience to agree with that main idea.

1. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries ... all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute **Tyranny** over these States.

What is the problem this declaration is trying to fix?

The problem is that the king of Great Britain has been using his cruel power to hurt the states, again and again.

(tyranny: cruel power)

2. We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, Assembled ... solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States...

What do the people writing this declaration want?

They want the colonies to be free and independent from Great Britain.

 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. Why do they believe they should have what the declaration is asking for?

They believe they should have independence because they think all men are created equal, with rights that cannot be taken away from them. These rights include life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

(self-evident: obvious) (endowed: given)

(unalienable: something you can't

give up)



Name	Answer Ke	V

Selections from Freedom Petition Submitted by Enslaved People to the New Hampshire State Legislature

These quotes are from the petition for freedom that 20 enslaved people wrote to the government of New Hampshire in 1779. The main idea is that they should be free because they are equal to all people. Read selections from the petition and answer the questions to find out how the writers tried to persuade their audience to agree with that main idea.

1. ...they ... were seized, imprisoned, and transported from their native country, where they are compelled ... to drag on their lives in miserable **servitude**.

(servitude: slavery)

2. Therefore, your humble slaves most devoutly pray ... for the sake of justice, humanity, and the rights of mankind ... that your honors would ... **enact** such laws ... as ... we may regain our liberty and ... that the name of slave may no more be heard in a land gloriously contending for the sweets of freedom.

(enact: to make into law)

 ...that the God of Nature gave [the enslaved people] life and freedom ... of the most perfect equality with other men; that freedom is an **inherent** right of the human species, not to be surrendered ... that ... tyranny and slavery, are alike detestable...

(inherent: essential) (tyranny: cruel power) (detestable: hateful) What is the problem this petition is trying to fix?

The problem is that the people writing the petition have been kidnapped, imprisoned, taken away from their country, and now are made to live in slavery.

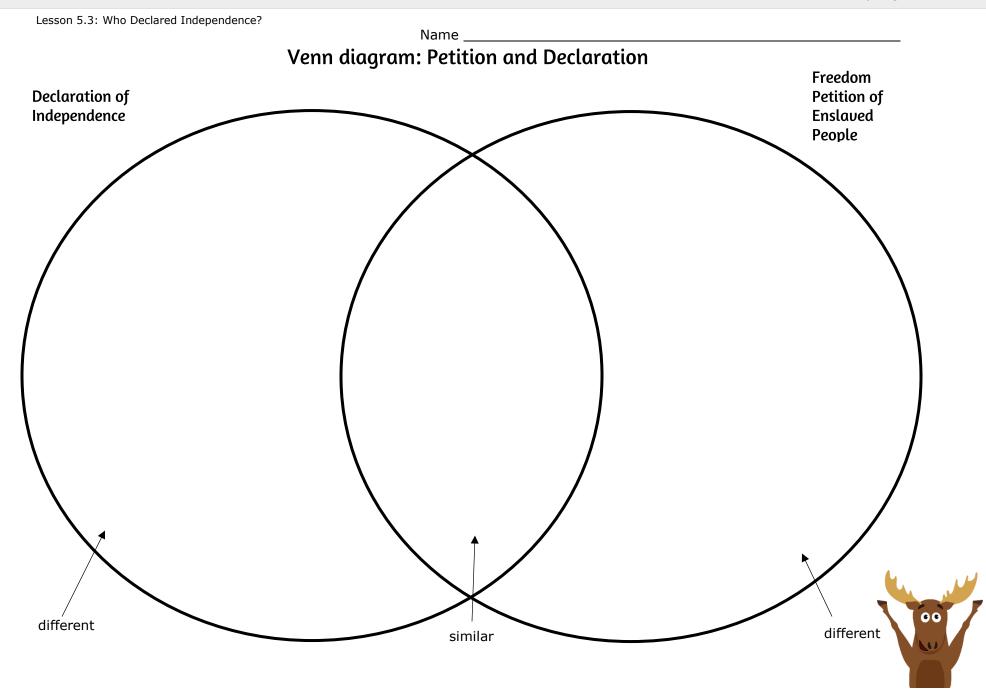
What do the people writing this petition want?

They want the government of New Hampshire to make laws that will give the enslaved people liberty. They want to not hear the name of slave any more in a country that is fighting for its own freedom.

Why do they believe they should have what the petition is asking for?

They believe that God gave them life and freedom and equality with other men. They believe that freedom is an essential right of humans that is not to be given up. They believe that cruel power and slavery are both hateful.







Answer Key Name _____ Venn diagram: Petition and Declaration Freedom **Declaration of** Petition of Independence **Enslaved** People Written in 1776 by Written in 1779 by enslaved black men white men Written by men trying Written by men trying to get themselves free to get their country free Both about the from slavery from an oppressive rights of Asking for freedom, government human beings does not state that it • States that • Both say that will happen independence is Writers are working all men should happening, does not within the government have freedom ask to get freedom • Both against • Writers are leaving the tyranny government to get freedom different different similar



Name	
etition or Declaration?	

Petition: Declaration: something asked, a formal request made to an official making known person

making known officially, an announcement

Consider the definitions of the words "petition" and "declaration" and read the situations below. Choose whether each situation would be appropriate for a petition or a declaration.

Situation	Petition or Declaration?	Why?
Parents want the town to increase the number of crosswalks near an elementary school.		
A community center wants to establish a new set of rules for the people who use it.		
Two rival summer camps want to compete to see who has better spirit.		
Employees want longer lunch time and better quality of food available.		
A candidate wants to run for president.		
A child wants to have more technology time on the weekends.		



Name	Answer Ke	/

Petition or Declaration?

Petition: Declaration:

something asked, a formal request made to an official person

making known officially, an announcement

Consider the definitions of the words "petition" and "declaration" and read the situations below. Choose whether each situation would be appropriate for a petition or a declaration.

Situation	Petition or Declaration?	Why?
Parents want the town to increase the number of crosswalks near an elementary school.	Petition	The parents petition the town to increase the number of crosswalks and work with the town government to make it happen.
A community center wants to establish a new set of rules for the people who use it.	Declaration	The community center makes a declaration of the new rules. It has the power to decide and enforce them, and make them official.
3. Two rival summer camps want to compete to see who has better spirit.	Declaration	The summer camps make a declaration of a competition. There is no higher authority for them to appeal to.
4. Employees want longer lunch time and better quality of food available.	Petition	Employees petition their employer for what they want. They need to work within the rules and ask.
5. A candidate wants to run for president.	Declaration	A person makes a declaration about running for president. They have the power to make it official.
6. A child wants to have more technology time on the weekends.	Petition	A child petitions their parents for more screen time. Children do not have the power to make the decision themselves.