

Which Words are in the Declaration of Independence?

Circle all of the words that you think are in the text of the Declaration of Independence

TIME

KING

VOTE

LAWS

PROTEST

MAJESTY

FACTS

GOD

EMIGRATION

RECONCILIATION

GOVERNMENT

REPRESENTATIVE

SALARIES

TYRANNY

SAVAGES

MILITARY

TREATIES

TRADE

DUTY

DELUSION

LIGHT

INDEPENDENT

VOICE

QUARTERING

TAXES

LIBERTY

FRIENDS

PARLIAMENT

MURDERS

PARDONS

SEAS

SLAVERY

BRAVERY

EQUAL

INSTRUMENT

SAFETY

rights, Ben, facts, history, POWERS
constitution, On, some, holding
Declaration
Resources
Project, declare
equality, war, oppressed
Peace, causes, purpose, future, Colonies

Which Words are in the Declaration of Independence?

Answer Sheet

YES: Time, Laws, Facts, Salaries, Military, Duty, Independent, Taxes, Seas, Equal, King, God, Government, Tyranny, Voice, Liberty, Murders, Instrument, Emigration, Representative, Savages, Trade, Light, Quartering, Friends

NO: Reconciliation, Parliament, Protest, Treaties, Delusion, Slavery, Vote, Majesty, Pardons, Bravery

TIME

Time/Times can be found six times in the Declaration of Independence

Example: "He has refused for a long **Time**, after such Dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative Powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean **time** exposed to all the Dangers of Invasion from without, and Convulsions within."

LAWS

Laws can be found nine times in the Declaration of Independence

Example: "For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable **Laws**, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:"

FACTS

Facts can be found one time in the Declaration of Independence

"To prove this, let **Facts** be submitted to a candid World."

RECONCILIATION

Reconciliation is NOT a word in the Declaration of Independence

Previous petitions of the Continental Congress had favored reconciliation; see, for example, in the 1775 Olive Branch petition, which requested, "that your Majesty be pleased to direct some mode, by which the united applications of your faithful Colonists to the Throne, in pursuance of their common counsels, may be improved into a happy and permanent reconciliation..." John Dickinson made one last plea for reconciliation in his July 1, 1776 speech to the Congress, saying, "It is Our Interest to keep Great Britain in the Opinion that We mean Reconciliation as long as possible..." But, the goal of the Declaration of Independence was total separation from Great Britain, not reconciliation.

Definition of reconcile from Merriam-Webster: "to restore to friendship or harmony"

SALARIES

Salaries can be found one time in the Declaration of Independence

"He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the Tenure of their Offices, and the Amount and Payment of their **Salaries**."

MILITARY

Military can be found only one time in the Declaration of Independence

"He has affected to render the **Military** independent of and superior to the Civil Power."

DUTY

Duty can be found one time in the Declaration of Independence

"But when a long Train of Abuses and Usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a Design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their Right, it is their **Duty**, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future Security."

INDEPENDENT

Independent can be found four times in the Declaration of Independence

Example: "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."

TAXES

Taxes can be found only one time in the Declaration of Independence

"For imposing **Taxes** on us without our Consent:"

PARLIAMENT

Parliament is NOT a word in the Declaration of Independence

The word Parliament appeared twice in Thomas Jefferson's original rough draft of the Declaration of Independence, but was cut from the final text; for example, "we utterly dissolve & break off all political connection which may have heretofore subsisted between us & the people or parliament of Great Britain." The grievances in the Declaration are targeted at King George III ("He") rather than at the British Parliament.

SEAS

Seas can be found three times in the Declaration of Independence

Example: "He has plundered our **Seas**, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our Towns, and destroyed the Lives of our People."

EQUAL

Equal can be found two times in the Declaration of Independence

Example: "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."

KING

King can be found only one time in the Declaration of Independence

"The History of the present **King** of Great-Britain is a History of repeated Injuries and Usurpations, all having in direct Object the Establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States."

See also, "A **Prince**, whose Character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the Ruler of a free People."

PROTEST

Protest is NOT a word in the Declaration of Independence

A number of protests took place in the years leading up to the Declaration of Independence, in response to some of the grievances that were eventually listed in the Declaration (examples include the Stamp Act protests and the Boston Tea Party).

GOD

God can be found only one time in 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."

See also, "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."

GOVERNMENT

Government/Governments can be found nine times in the Declaration of Independence

Example: "Such has been the patient Sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the Necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of **Government**."

TYRANNY

Tyranny can be found two times in the Declaration of Independence

Example: "The History of the present King of Great-Britain is a History of repeated Injuries and Usurpations, all having in direct Object the Establishment of an absolute **Tyranny** over these States."

See also, "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."

Definition of tyranny from Merriam-Webster: "oppressive power; a government in which absolute power is vested in a single ruler"

TREATIES

Treaties is NOT a word in the Declaration of Independence

The final paragraph of the Declaration of Independence included "contract Alliances" among the list of acts and things that the United States had the right to do. Part of John Dickinson's argument against declaring independence was, "Not only Treaties with foreign powers but among Ourselves should precede this Declaration."

Definition of treaties from Merriam-Webster: "an agreement or arrangement made by negotiation"

DELUSION

Delusion is NOT a word in the Declaration of Independence

On October 31, 1776, King George III opened the new session of Parliament with a speech to both houses, in which he address the Declaration of Independence. His address began, "Nothing could have afforded me so much satisfaction as to have been able to inform you, at the opening of this session, that the troubles, which have so long distracted my colonies in North America, were at an end; and that my unhappy people, recovered from their delusion, had delivered themselves from the oppression of their leaders, and returned to their duty..."

VOICE

Voice can be found one time in the Declaration of Independence

"They too have been deaf to the **Voice** of Justice and of Consanguinity."

LIBERTY

Liberty can be found only one time in the Declaration of Independence

"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."

MURDERS

Murders can be found one time in the Declaration of Independence

"For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from Punishment for any **Murders** which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:"

SLAVERY

Slavery is NOT a word in the Declaration of Independence

One of the most noteworthy portions of Jefferson's original rough draft that was cut by the Continental Congress was a grievance placing the blame for slavery in the American colonies on King George III: "he has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating it's most sacred rights of life & liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating & carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. this piratical warfare, the opprobrium of *infidel* powers, is the warfare of the CHRISTIAN king of Great Britain. determined to keep open a market where MEN should be bought & sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce: and that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished die, he is now

exciting those very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which *he* has deprived them, by murdering the people upon whom *he* also obtruded them; thus paying off former crimes committed against the *liberties* of one people, with crimes which he urges them to commit against the *lives* of another."

INSTRUMENT

Instrument can be found one time in the Declaration of Independence

"For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an arbitrary Government, and enlarging its Boundaries, so as to render it at once an Example and fit **Instrument** for introducing the same absolute Rule into these Colonies:"

Definition of instrument from Merriam-Webster: "a means whereby something is achieved, performed, or furthered"

VOTE

Vote is NOT a word in the Declaration of Independence

The American colonists were not directly represented in Parliament. The issue of representation in the new United States was addressed after the Declaration of Independence, in the Articles of Confederation and then the U.S. Constitution.

MAJESTY

Majesty is NOT a word in the Declaration of Independence

Previous petitions of the Continental Congress were addressed directly to King George III. The Olive Branch Petition, for example, was addressed, "To the King's Most Excellent Majesty," and referred to the king as "your Majesty" throughout, as a sign of loyalty and respect. In contrast, the Declaration of Independence was addressed "to a candid world."

EMIGRATION

Emigration can be found one time in the Declaration of Independence

"We have reminded them of the Circumstances of our **Emigration** and Settlement here."

See also, "He has endeavoured to prevent the Population of these States; for that Purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their **Migrations** hither, and raising the Conditions of new Appropriations of Lands."

Definition of emigration from Merriam-Webster: "the act of leaving one region or country to live in another"

REPRESENTATIVE

Representative/Representatives can be found two times in the Declaration of Independence

Example: "He has dissolved **Representative** Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly Firmness his Invasions on the Rights of the People."

See also the title, as presented on the Dunlap broadside: "In Congress, July 4, 1776. A Declaration By the **Representatives** of the United States of America, In General Congress assembled."

SAVAGES

Savages can be found one time in the Declaration of Independence

"He has excited domestic Insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the Inhabitants of our Frontiers, the merciless Indian **Savages**, whose known Rule of Warfare, is an undistinguished Destruction, of all Ages, Sexes and Conditions."

TRADE

Trade can be found one time in the Declaration of Independence

"For cutting off our **Trade** with all Parts of the World:"

LIGHT

Light can be found one time in the Declaration of Independence

"Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for **light** and transient Causes; and accordingly all Experience hath shewn, that Mankind are more disposed to suffer, while Evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the Forms to which they are accustomed."

QUARTERING

Quartering can be found one time in the Declaration of Independence

"For **quartering** large Bodies of Armed Troops among us:"

Definition of quarter from Merriam-Webster: "to provide with lodging or shelter"

FRIENDS

Friends can be found two times in the Declaration of Independence

Example: We must, therefore, acquiesce in the Necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of Mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace, **Friends**.

PARDONS

Pardons is NOT a word in the Declaration of Independence

Vice Admiral Lord Howe, one of the king's Commissioners for Restoring Peace, issued a declaration on June 20, 1776, though he and the declaration did not arrive in New York Harbor until July 12, after the Declaration of Independence. Howe's declaration promised to grant "free and general pardons to al those who, in the tumult and disorder of the times, may have deviated from their just allegiance, and who are willing, by a speedy return to their duty to reap the benefits of the royal favour..."

Definition of pardon from Merriam-Webster: "the excusing of an offense without exacting a penalty"

BRAVERY

Bravery is NOT a word in the Declaration of Independence

In his speech to Parliament on October 31, King George III noted "the zeal and bravery of the auxiliary troops in my service..."

SOURCES

- Full text of the Declaration of Independence: <https://declaration.fas.harvard.edu/resources/text>
- Dickinson's speech: <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/arguments-against-the-independence-of-these-colonies/>
- Jefferson's rough draft: <https://jeffersonpapers.princeton.edu/selected-documents/jefferson%E2%80%99s-%E2%80%9Coriginal-rough-draught%E2%80%9D-declaration-independence>
- Olive Branch Petition: https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Olive_Branch_Petition
- Howe's declaration: <https://declaration.fas.harvard.edu/blog/august-howe>
- King George III's speech to Parliament: <https://declaration.fas.harvard.edu/blog/september-kings-speech>

Which Words are in the Declaration of Independence?

Discussion Questions

- From this list of words in the Declaration of Independence, pick one, and explain why it is in the text:
 - Time, Laws, Facts, Salaries, Military, Duty, Independent, Taxes, Seas, Equal, King, God, Government, Tyranny, Voice, Liberty, Murders, Instrument, Emigration, Representative, Savages, Trade, Light, Quartering, Friends
- Is there a word that is in the Declaration of Independence that surprised you? Why?
- Can you think of another word that you thought would be in the Declaration of Independence, but isn't? Read through the full text first to be sure.

Full Text of the Declaration of Independence

Source: Dunlap broadside

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. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient Causes; and accordingly all Experience hath shewn, that Mankind are more disposed to suffer, while Evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the Forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long Train of Abuses and Usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a Design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their Right, it is their Duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future Security. Such has been the patient Sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the Necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The History of the present King of Great-Britain is a History of repeated Injuries and Usurpations, all having in direct Object the Establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid World.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public Good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing Importance, unless suspended in their Operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

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.

He has called together Legislative Bodies at Places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the Depository of their public Records, for the sole Purpose of fatiguing them into Compliance with his Measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly Firmness his Invasions on the Rights of the People.

He has refused for a long Time, after such Dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative Powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the Dangers of Invasion from without, and Convulsions within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the Population of these States; for that Purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their Migrations hither, and raising the

Conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

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

He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the Tenure of their Offices, and the Amount and Payment of their Salaries.

He has erected a Multitude of new Offices, and sent hither Swarms of Officers to harrass our People, and eat out their Substance.

He has kept among us, in Times of Peace, Standing Armies, without the consent of our Legislatures.

He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil Power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a Jurisdiction foreign to our Constitution, and unacknowledged by our Laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

For quartering large Bodies of Armed Troops among us:

For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from Punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:

For cutting off our Trade with all Parts of the World:

For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:

For depriving us, in many Cases, of the Benefits of Trial by Jury:

For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended Offences:

For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an arbitrary Government, and enlarging its Boundaries, so as to render it at once an Example and fit Instrument for introducing the same absolute Rule into these Colonies:

For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:

For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with Power to legislate for us in all Cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

He has plundered our Seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our Towns, and destroyed the Lives of our People.

He is, at this Time, transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the Works of Death, Desolation, and Tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty and Perfidy, scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous Ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized Nation.

He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the Executioners of their Friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

He has excited domestic Insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the Inhabitants of our Frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known Rule of Warfare, is an undistinguished Destruction, of all Ages, Sexes and Conditions.

In every stage of these Oppressions we have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble Terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated Injury. A Prince, whose Character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the Ruler of a free People.

Nor have we been wanting in Attentions to our British Brethren. We have warned them from Time to Time

of Attempts by their Legislature to extend an unwarrantable Jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the Circumstances of our Emigration and Settlement here. We have appealed to their native Justice and Magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the Ties of our common Kindred to disavow these Usurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our Connections and Correspondence. They too have been deaf to the Voice of Justice and of Consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the Necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of Mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace, Friends.

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.