



COMMON CORE: Literacy

Lessons for Social Studies Educators

Reading Standard 9. TEXT COMPARISONS

Reading Standards: Gr. 6-8	Reading Standard: Gr. 9-10	Reading Standard: Gr. 11-12
Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.	<i>Compare and contrast</i> treatments of the same topic <i>in several primary and secondary sources.</i>	<i>Integrate information</i> from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, <i>into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.</i>

Overview: History and related social studies disciplines require students to actively engage in analysis of past and contemporary events, drawing conclusions based upon multiple forms of often contradictory evidence drawn from both primary and secondary sources. This skill demands rigorous practice over time, offering students frequent opportunities to weigh the treatment of various sources toward the same event or topic. In able to accomplish this goal, the classroom instructor is encouraged to research and incorporate collections of supplemental resources beyond the textbook.

Lesson Ideas:

1. One effective approach toward comparison of key ideas from multiple sources focusing on the same topic is to provide students with common ideas easily identifiable in a collection of primary and/or secondary sources. The Declaration of Independence has been adapted and utilized over time by many groups of people, therefore, providing ample opportunities for comparison of its major ideas. Ask students to work in pairs, examining the final version of the Declaration of Independence. Using a set of four different colored markers, highlighters, or colored pencils, student pairs will highlight specific passages in the document which reflect four major ideas: Self-Government, Unalienable Rights, Purpose of Government, and Abuse of Government.
2. Share with the class different versions of the Declaration of Independence, written in more modern language than Jefferson used in 1776. Such versions might include “Jefferson’s Original Draft”, “The Declaration of Independence in American” by H.L. Mencken, and “Declaration of Independence in Modern Language”. Using the four-way Venn diagram provided in this lesson, ask students note commonalities and differences in both language and ideas presented in the final document versus other versions.
3. Introduce the lasting impact of the Declaration of Independence on world revolutions and pro-democracy movements into modern times by providing students with copies of the following documents for comparison: Declaration of Rights of Man (1789), Unanimous Declaration of Independence of the People of Texas (1836), Declaration of Sentiments (1948), Declaration of Indigenous Peoples (2007). Ask students to identify passages from each document, reflecting the four common topics (claims) on the chart provided in the lesson.
4. Option: Using these four major ideas (claims), students will create their own Declaration of Independence from required attendance to school.

Lesson Developed by Pam Merrill, Edmond Public Schools, Brenda Chapman, Putnam City Schools, and Bill Sutton, Mid-Del Schools

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America

(Paragraph 1.) 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.

(Paragraph 2.) 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.

(Paragraph 3.) 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.

(Paragraph 4.) 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.

Line 4.1 He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

Line 4.2 He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance...

Line 4.3 He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people...

Line 4.4 He has sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people and eat out their substance...

Line 4.5 He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures...

Line 4.6 For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us...

Line 4.7 For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world...

Line 4.8 For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent...

Line 4.9 For depriving us in many cases, of the benefit of Trial by Jury...

Line 4.10 He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people...

Line 4.11 He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages...

Line 4.12 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...

(Paragraph 5.) 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.

New Hampshire: Josiah Bartlett, William Whipple, Matthew Thornton

Massachusetts: John Hancock, Samuel Adams, John Adams, Robert Treat Paine, Elbridge Gerry

Rhode Island: Stephen Hopkins, William Ellery

Connecticut: Roger Sherman, Samuel Huntington, William Williams, Oliver Wolcott

New York: William Floyd, Philip Livingston, Francis Lewis, Lewis Morris

New Jersey: Richard Stockton, John Witherspoon, Francis Hopkinson, John Hart, Abraham Clark

Pennsylvania: Robert Morris, Benjamin Rush, Benjamin Franklin, John Morton, George Clymer, James Smith, George Taylor, James Wilson, George Ross

Delaware: Caesar Rodney, George Read, Thomas McKean

Maryland: Samuel Chase, William Paca, Thomas Stone, Charles Carroll of Carrollton

Virginia: George Wythe, Richard Henry Lee, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Harrison, Thomas Nelson, Jr., Francis Lightfoot Lee, Carter Braxton

North Carolina: William Hooper, Joseph Hewes, John Penn

South Carolina: Edward Rutledge, Thomas Heyward, Jr., Thomas Lynch, Jr., Arthur Middleton

Georgia: Button Gwinnett, Lyman Hall, George Walton

Title of Document: *Declaration of Independence*

Title of Document:

*"Essay in American" by Mencken,
Baltimore Evening Sun, Nov. 7, 1921.*

Common Language and Ideas:

Title of Document: *Modern Version
of the Declaration of Independence*

Title of Document: *Jefferson's Original Draft
of the Declaration of Independence*

WORLD PRIMARY DOCUMENTS COMPARISON CHART

Review the four major claims expressed in the Declaration of Independence as listed on the left side of the chart below. As you read the four primary source documents look for these major claims in each source. If you find a claim included in the document, place a checkmark in the column next to the claim, copy the actual passage, and note where (paragraph #) in the document it was found.

	Declaration of the Rights of Man -1789 (France)	The Unanimous Declaration of the People of Texas - 1836	The Declaration of Sentiments – Seneca Falls Convention - 1848	United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples - 2007
Self Government				
Unalienable Rights				
Purpose of Government				
Abuse of Authority				

Jefferson's Original Draft of the Declaration of Independence

(Paragraph One) When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for a people to advance from that subordination in which they have hitherto remained, & to assume among the powers of the earth the equal & independent station to which the laws of nature & 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 change.

(Paragraph Two) We hold these truths to be sacred & undeniable; that all men are created equal & independent, that from that equal creation they derive rights inherent & inalienable, among which are the preservation of life, & liberty, & the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these ends, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government shall become destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, & to institute new government, laying it's foundation on such principles & organizing it's powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their safety & happiness.

(Paragraph Three) Prudence indeed will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light & transient causes: and accordingly all experience hath shown 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 & usurpations, begun at a distinguished period, & pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to subject them to arbitrary power, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government & to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; & such is now the necessity which constrains them to expunge their former systems of government.

(Paragraph Four) The history of his present majesty is a history of unremitting injuries and usurpations, among which no one fact stands single or solitary to contradict the uniform tenor of the rest, all of which have in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. to prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world, for the truth of which we pledge a faith yet unsullied by falsehood.

(list of grievances)

In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms; our repeated petitions have been answered by repeated injury.

(Paragraph Five) We therefore the representatives of the United States of America in General Congress assembled do, in the name & by authority of the good people of these states, reject and renounce all allegiance & subjection to the kings of Great Britain & all others who may hereafter claim by, through, or under them; we utterly dissolve & break off political connection which may have heretofore subsisted between us & the people or parliament of Great Britain; and finally we do assert and declare these a colonies to be free and independent states, and that as free & independent states they shall hereafter have power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, & to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And for the support of this declaration we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, & our sacred honor.

Declaration of the Rights of Man - 1789

The representatives of the French people, organized as a National Assembly, believing that the ignorance, neglect, or contempt of the rights of man are the sole cause of public calamities and of the corruption of governments, have determined to set forth in a solemn declaration the natural, unalienable, and sacred rights of man, in order that this declaration, being constantly before all the members of the Social body, shall remind them continually of their rights and duties; in order that the acts of the legislative power, as well as those of the executive power...based hereafter upon simple and incontestable principles, shall tend to the maintenance of the constitution...Therefore the National Assembly recognizes and proclaims, in the presence and under the auspices of the Supreme Being, the following rights of man and of the citizen:

Articles:

1. Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded only upon the general good.
2. The aim of all political association is the preservation of the natural rights of man. These rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.
3. The principle of all sovereignty resides essentially in the nation.
4. Liberty consists in the freedom to do everything which injures no one else.
5. Law can only prohibit such actions as are hurtful to society.
6. Law is the expression of the general will. Every citizen has a right to participate personally, or through his representative... All citizens, being equal in the eyes of the law, are equally eligible to all public positions and occupations.
7. No person shall be accused, arrested, or imprisoned except in the cases and according to the forms prescribed by law.
8. No one shall suffer punishment except it be legally inflicted in virtue of a law.
9. As all persons are held innocent until they shall have been declared guilty.
10. No one shall be disquieted on account of his opinions, including his religious views.
11. The free communication of ideas and opinions is one of the most precious of the rights of man. Every citizen may, accordingly, speak, write, and print with freedom, but shall be responsible for such abuses of this freedom as shall be defined by law.
13. A common contribution is essential for the maintenance of the public forces and for the cost of administration. This should be equitably distributed among all the citizens in proportion to their means.

The Declaration of Independence in American

by H. L. Mencken

From *THE AMERICAN LANGUAGE, THIRD EDITION, 1923.*

First printed as "Essay in American" in the *Baltimore Evening Sun*, Nov. 7, 1921.

(Paragraph One) WHEN things get so (bad) that the people of a country got to cut loose from some other country, and go it on their own, without asking no permission from nobody, then they ought to let everybody know why they done it.

(Paragraph Two) All we got to say on this proposition is this: first, me and you is as good as anybody else...second, nobody ain't got no right to take away none of our rights; third, every man has got a right to live, to come and go as he pleases, so long as he don't interfere with nobody else. That (if) any government that don't give a man them rights, the people ought to choose the kind of government they want themselves, and nobody else ought to have no say in the matter.

(Paragraph Three) Of course, that don't mean having a revolution every day... But when things get so bad that a man ain't hardly got no rights at all no more, then everybody ought to get together and throw the (cheats) out, and put in new ones ...and then watch them. This is the proposition the people of these Colonies is up against, and they have got tired of it, and won't stand it no more. The administration of the present King, George III, has been rotten from the start...Here is some of the rough stuff he has pulled:

He vetoed bills in the Legislature that everybody was in favor of.

He wouldn't allow no law to be passed without it was first put up to him, and then he didn't pay no attention.

When people gone to him and asked him to put through a law, he give them their choice: either they had to shut down the Legislature and let him pass it all by himself.

Without no war going on, he kept an army loafing around the country, no matter how much people (complained) about it.

Interfering with business. Making us pay taxes without asking us whether we thought the things we had to pay taxes for was something that was worth paying taxes for or not.

When a man was arrested and asked for a jury trial, not letting him have no jury trial.

He has burned down towns, shot down people like dogs, and (attacked) us out on the ocean.

He hired whole regiments of foreigners to fight us, and told them they could have anything they wanted if they could take it away from us.

He stirred up the Indians, and give them arms and ammunition, and told them to go to it.

When we complained to the English we didn't get no more satisfaction.

(Paragraph Five) Therefore be it resolved, That we, the representatives of the people of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, hereby declare as follows: That the United States, which was the United Colonies in former times, is now a free country, and ought to be; that we have throwed out the English King and don't want to have nothing to do with him no more, and are not taking no more English orders no more; and that, being as we are now a free country, we can do anything that free countries can do, especially declare war, make peace, sign treaties, go into business, etc. And we swear on the Bible, one and all, and agree to stick to it no matter what happens, whether we win or we lose, and no matter whether we lose all our property by it or even get hung for it.

***The Unanimous Declaration of Independence made by the Delegates
of the People of Texas in General Convention
at the town of Washington on the 2nd day of March 1836.***

When a government has ceased to protect the lives, liberty and property of the people, from whom its legitimate powers are derived, and for the advancement of whose happiness it was instituted, and so far from being a guarantee for the enjoyment of those inestimable and inalienable rights, becomes an instrument in the hands of evil rulers for their oppression.

When ...the whole nature of their government has been forcibly changed, without their consent, from a republic, composed of sovereign states, to a military despotism...

When, long after the spirit of the constitution has departed...and mercenary armies sent forth to force a new government upon them at the point of the bayonet.

When, in consequence of such acts...anarchy prevails, and civil society is dissolved... In such a crisis, the first law of nature, the right of self-preservation, the inherent and inalienable rights of the people to appeal to first principles, and take their political affairs into their own hands in extreme cases, enjoins it as a right towards themselves, and a sacred obligation to their posterity, to abolish such government, and create another in its stead, and to secure their future welfare and happiness.

...A statement of a part of our grievances is therefore submitted to an impartial world, in justification of the hazardous but unavoidable step now taken, of severing our political connection with the Mexican people, and assuming an independent attitude among the nations of the earth.

The Mexican government, by its colonization laws, invited and induced the Anglo-American population of Texas to colonize its wilderness under the pledged faith of a written constitution, that they should continue to enjoy that constitutional liberty and republican government...

In this expectation they have been cruelly disappointed.

It incarcerated in a dungeon our citizens, for no other cause but a zealous endeavor to procure the acceptance of our constitution...

It has failed and refused to secure, on a firm basis, the right of trial by jury...

It has suffered the military commandants, stationed among us, to exercise arbitrary acts of oppression and tyranny, thus trampling upon the most sacred rights of the citizens, and rendering the military superior to the civil power.

It has dissolved, by force of arms, the state Congress of Texas...thus depriving us of the fundamental political right of representation.

It has made piratical attacks upon our commerce...to seize our vessels, and convey the property of our citizens to far distant ports for confiscation.

It denies us the right of worshipping the Almighty according to the dictates of our own conscience, by the support of a national religion...

It has invaded our country both by sea and by land, with intent to lay waste our territory, and drive us from our homes; and has now a large mercenary army advancing, to carry on against us a war of extermination...

These, and other grievances, were patiently borne by the people of Texas, until they reached that point at which forbearance ceases to be a virtue...Though months have elapsed, no sympathetic response has yet been heard...

The necessity of self-preservation, therefore, now decrees our eternal political separation.

We, therefore...do hereby resolve and declare, that our political connection with the Mexican nation has forever ended, and that the people of Texas do now constitute a free, Sovereign, and independent republic, and are fully invested with all the rights and attributes which properly belong to independent nations; we fearlessly and confidently commit the issue to the decision of the Supreme arbiter of the destinies of nations.

The Declaration of Sentiments, Seneca Falls Conference, 1848

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one portion of the family of man to assume among the people of the earth a position different from that which they have hitherto occupied, but one 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 that impel them to such a course.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of those who suffer from it to refuse allegiance to it, and to insist upon the institution of a 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...Such has been the patient sufferance of the women under this government, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to demand the equal station to which they are entitled. The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise.

He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which she had no voice.

He has taken from her all right in property, even to the wages she earns.

He has so framed the laws of divorce, and in case of separation, to whom the guardianship of the children shall be given...giving all power into his hands.

...if single, and the owner of property, he has taxed her to support a government which recognizes her only when her property can be made profitable to it.

He has monopolized nearly all the profitable employments, and from those she is permitted to follow, she receives but a scanty remuneration. He closes against her all the avenues to wealth and distinction which he considers most honorable to himself.

He has denied her the facilities for obtaining a thorough education, all colleges being closed against her.

Now, in view of this entire disfranchisement of one-half the people of this country, in view of the unjust laws above mentioned, and because women do feel themselves aggrieved, oppressed, and fraudulently deprived of their most sacred rights, we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of the United States.

Primary author Elizabeth Cady Stanton

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Adopted by General Assembly on 13 September 2007

Affirming that indigenous peoples are equal to all other peoples, while recognizing the right of all peoples to be different, to consider themselves different, and to be respected as such,

Affirming also that all peoples contribute to the diversity and richness of civilizations and cultures, which constitute the common heritage of humankind,

Affirming further that all doctrines, policies and practices based on or advocating superiority of peoples on the basis of national origin or racial, religious, ethnic or cultural differences are legally invalid, morally condemnable and socially unjust,

Concerned that indigenous peoples have suffered from historic injustices as a result of their colonization and dispossession of their lands, territories and resources,

Recognizing the urgent need to respect and promote the inherent rights of indigenous peoples,

Convinced that control by indigenous peoples over developments affecting them and their lands, territories and resources will enable them to maintain and strengthen their institutions, cultures and traditions,

Convinced that the recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples in this Declaration will enhance harmonious and cooperative relations between the State and indigenous peoples, based on principles of justice, democracy, respect for human rights,

Solemnly proclaims the following United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a standard of achievement to be pursued in a spirit of partnership and mutual respect:

Article 1

Indigenous peoples have the right to the full enjoyment, as a collective or as individuals, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Article 4

Indigenous peoples, in exercising their right to self-determination, have the right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs.

Article 8

Indigenous peoples and individuals have the right not to be subjected to forced assimilation or destruction of their culture.

Article 10

Indigenous peoples shall not be forcibly removed from their lands or territories. No relocation shall take place without the free, prior and informed consent of the indigenous peoples.

Article 12

Indigenous peoples have the right to manifest, practice, develop and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, privacy to their religious and cultural sites.

Article 14

Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and

Article 19

States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them.

Article 26

Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned.

Article 37

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the recognition, observance and enforcement of treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements concluded with States or their successors and to have States honor and respect such treaties, and agreements.

Article 42

The United Nations and States shall promote respect for and full application of the provisions of this Declaration and follow up the effectiveness of this Declaration.