

## Declaration of Independence: Making Comparisons

Name:

Directions: Read through each version and circle or underline unfamiliar words. Then make notes, or draw lines and arrows, to identify or indicate differences between the "Rough draught" and the first printed version.

### Thomas Jefferson's "original Rough draught" of the Declaration of Independence\*

### First printed version of the Declaration of Independence\*\*

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A Declaration by the Representatives  
of the UNITED STATES OF  
AMERICA, in General Congress  
assembled.

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 and 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  
change.

\*This is a transcription of Thomas Jefferson's "original Rough draught" of the Declaration of Independence, June 1776, before it was revised by the other members of the Committee of Five and by Congress.

\*\*This is a transcription of the first printed version of the Declaration of Independence, July 1776.

In Congress, July 4, 1776.

A Declaration by the Representatives  
of the United States of  
America, in General Congress  
Assembled.

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.

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We hold these truths to be sacred & undeniable;

that all men are created equal & independent;

that from that equal creation they derive in 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 abolish it, & to institute new government, laying it's foundation on such principles & organising it's powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety & happiness.

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.

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prudence indeed will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light & 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 & 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.

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.

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**Name:**

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.

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.