



Making a Declaration - Beginning

Overview

Students investigate the importance of the Declaration of Independence as a founding document of the United States, then consider the historical and contemporary relevance of its most famous phrase and how it relates to a personal vision of the American dream.

Teacher Background

- [Declaration of Independence Terms to Know](#) Center for Civic Education

Digital Resources

- [Primary source record](#)
- [Declaration of Independence](#) Ben's Guide

Materials

- Computer with Internet access & digital display
- Digital document, white/chalkboard or chart paper
- [Primary source](#) 1 for each group
- [Primary source analysis tool](#) 1 for each student

Implementation

Spark Inquiry (10 minutes)

1. Divide students into small groups and give each group a copy of the primary source image and each group member a primary source analysis tool (see Materials). Instruct groups to analyze the image together with each group member completing a primary source analysis tool.
2. Discuss student observations, reflections, and questions, noting them in a digital document, on the board, or on chart paper.

Deepen Inquiry (20 minutes)

3. Display the [source record](#) and point out the summary.
4. Ask students to jot down what they know about the Declaration of Independence.
5. Direct students to read the [article about the Declaration of Independence](#), adding to and/or correcting their notes.
6. Discuss and record student findings and highlight the famous phrase noted in the article, making sure that students understand the vocabulary (e.g., self-evident – obvious; unalienable – modern inalienable – cannot be taken away [by the government]).



Connect & Act (20 minutes)

7. Discuss what students think of the importance of the phrase back in 1776, its relevance today, and how it relates to the American dream, recording student ideas; take a photo to document lesson notations if written on the board or chart paper.
8. Direct students to create a drawing that represents their vision of the American Dream that incorporates key words from the Declaration of Independence (the words might be used as a title for the piece or incorporated directly into the piece). Display and share student work.