

The Declaration of Independence

Week 26 • Tuesday • The Paper That Declared Freedom

Reading Time

In the hot summer of 1776, leaders from all thirteen colonies met in Philadelphia. They asked Thomas Jefferson to write a very important letter to the world.

The letter was called the **Declaration of Independence**. To **declare** means to say something loud and clear. The paper said: the colonies are now free states, no longer ruled by the king!

It also shared a beautiful idea — that all people are created **equal** and have rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. On **July 4, 1776**, the leaders approved the Declaration. Many signed their names, including John Hancock, who wrote his name extra big and bold!

Reading Questions

1. Who wrote the Declaration of Independence?

2. What does the word declare mean?

3. What date was the Declaration approved?

4. What beautiful idea did the Declaration share?

Vocabulary Grid

Write what each word means in your own words.

declare

independence

equal

rights

liberty

signature

True or False

Write T for true or F for false in each circle.

- ☐ The Declaration was written in 1776.
- ☐ The leaders met in Philadelphia.
- ☐ The Declaration said the king should rule forever.
- ☐ The Declaration says all people are created equal.
- ☐ John Hancock signed his name extra big.
- ☐ To declare means to whisper a secret.

Order the Story

Number these events 1 to 4 in the order they happened.

Event	Order (1-4)
The leaders approve the Declaration on July 4.	
Leaders from the colonies meet in Philadelphia.	
John Hancock and others sign their names.	
Thomas Jefferson writes the Declaration.	

Think About It

1. Why do you think John Hancock signed his name so big and bold?

2. What does 'all people are created equal' mean to you?

Fill in the Blanks

Jefferson Philadelphia declare equal July Hancock

1. The leaders met in the city of _____.
2. Thomas _____ wrote the Declaration.
3. To _____ means to say something loud and clear.
4. The paper says all people are created _____.
5. It was approved on the Fourth of _____, 1776.
6. John _____ signed his name big and bold.

Practice Your Signature

When the Founding Fathers signed the Declaration, their signatures made it official. Practice writing your own fancy signature three times below — make the last one big and bold like John Hancock!

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Review

I learned...	Circle one
What the Declaration of Independence says	YES / NOT YET
Why July 4, 1776 is special	YES / NOT YET
Who wrote and signed it	YES / NOT YET