

Case for Freedom

Track principles, complaints, and the argument for independence.

SS.7.CG.1.6 "Analyze the ideas and grievances set forth in the Declaration of Independence."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each statement about rights or government. Circle each grievance against the king, then write a 1 beside the sentence that explains how the grievances support independence.

Building an Argument for Independence

- ① In July 1776, delegates from thirteen American colonies approved the Declaration of Independence. The document did more than announce a break from Britain. It explained why the colonies believed separation was justified. Its opening ideas state that people are born equal and have rights that cannot rightly be taken away. These rights include life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The writers argued that governments are created to protect rights, and government power comes from the consent of the governed.
- ② After stating these ideas, the Declaration presents grievances, or complaints, against King George III. The writers said he had refused to approve needed colonial laws and had dissolved representative assemblies when they opposed him. They also charged that he kept standing armies in the colonies during peacetime and made the military independent of civil authority. Another grievance was imposing taxes without colonial consent. Each example was meant to show that British rule had failed to protect colonists' rights and representative government.
- ③ The Declaration says that people may change or abolish a government that becomes destructive of their rights, then create a new one. The writers did not claim that governments should be changed for small or temporary problems. Instead, they described a long pattern of abuses and argued that the king was seeking unchecked power. In its final section, the Declaration announces that the colonies are free and independent states. The grievances serve as evidence supporting that conclusion, while the opening ideas explain the principles behind it.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What did the writers say governments are created to do, and where does government power come from?

2 Choose one grievance from the passage. How does it show that British rule had failed to protect rights or representative government?

3 Why did the writers describe a long pattern of abuses instead of only one small problem?

4 How do the grievances support the Declaration's conclusion that the colonies should be free and independent states?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write four sentences that make a claim about why the colonies believed independence was justified. Include one grievance from the passage, connect it to an idea about rights or government, and state your conclusion.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each statement about rights or government. Circle each grievance against the king, then write a 1 beside the sentence that explains how the grievances support independence. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What did the writers say governments are created to do, and where does government power come from?	Governments are created to protect rights, and their power comes from the consent of the governed.
2	Choose one grievance from the passage. How does it show that British rule had failed to protect rights or representative government?	Answers will vary. For example, imposing taxes without colonial consent showed that colonists had no say in a decision that affected them.
3	Why did the writers describe a long pattern of abuses instead of only one small problem?	They wanted to show that the king's actions were serious and repeated, which justified changing or abolishing the government.
4	How do the grievances support the Declaration's conclusion that the colonies should be free and independent states?	The grievances are evidence that British rule had become destructive of colonists' rights and representative government, supporting independence.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Declaration says government power comes from the consent of the governed. The king imposed taxes without colonial consent, according to the writers. This grievance suggests British rule ignored representative government and failed to protect colonists' rights. Therefore, it supports the writers' claim that the colonies could create a new government.

Accept equivalent explanations that accurately connect a named grievance to rights, consent, or representative government. For the open response, accept a clear four-sentence claim, evidence, connection, and conclusion grounded in the passage.