

A Case for Freedom

Read how the Declaration builds an argument for independence.

SS8H3.b "Interpret the three parts of the Declaration of Independence (preamble, grievances, and declaration) and identify the three Georgia signers of the document."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Write 1, 2, or 3 beside each paragraph to show whether it gives principles, complaints, or the final declaration. Circle the three names of Georgia's signers.

How the Declaration Makes Its Case

- ① In July 1776, the Continental Congress approved the Declaration of Independence, a document explaining why the thirteen colonies would separate from Great Britain. Its preamble begins with broad ideas about equality and natural rights, including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. It says governments receive their power from the consent of the governed. It also explains that people may change or replace a government that destroys their rights. These principles gave the document a reason for declaring independence.
- ② The longest section lists grievances, or complaints, against King George III. The writers charged that he had kept standing armies in the colonies during peacetime, taxed colonists without their consent, and interfered with colonial laws. They argued that these repeated actions showed a pattern of tyranny. By giving specific examples, the grievances tried to prove that the king had failed to protect colonists' rights. This evidence connected broad principles in the preamble to the political conflict with Britain.
- ③ After presenting its principles and evidence, the final declaration states that the colonies were free and independent states. It announces that they no longer owed allegiance to the British Crown and could make war, make peace, form alliances, and trade as independent states. Three men from Georgia signed the document: Button Gwinnett, Lyman Hall, and George Walton. Their signatures showed Georgia's support for the decision. Together, the three parts move from ideas, to evidence, to an official break with Britain.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What main ideas does the preamble give as reasons for declaring independence?

2 How do the grievances support the principles in the preamble?

3 What does the final declaration announce about the colonies' relationship with Britain?

4 Name the three men from Georgia who signed the Declaration of Independence.

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write three labeled sentences for an imaginary colony's argument for independence. Your Preamble sentence must state a right or principle, your Grievances sentence must give one specific complaint, and your Declaration sentence must announce separation.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Write 1, 2, or 3 beside each paragraph to show whether it gives principles, complaints, or the final declaration. Circle the three names of Georgia's signers. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What main ideas does the preamble give as reasons for declaring independence?	It gives the ideas of equality, natural rights, government by consent of the governed, and the right to change a government that destroys rights.
2	How do the grievances support the principles in the preamble?	They provide specific complaints against King George III to show that he had failed to protect colonists' rights.
3	What does the final declaration announce about the colonies' relationship with Britain?	It announces that the colonies are free and independent states that no longer owe allegiance to the British Crown.
4	Name the three men from Georgia who signed the Declaration of Independence.	Button Gwinnett, Lyman Hall, and George Walton.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Preamble: People have the right to choose leaders who listen to them. Grievances: The ruler closed the colony's elected assembly and collected fees without its approval. Declaration: Therefore, the colony announces that it will govern itself rather than obey that ruler.

Accept equivalent descriptions of the three sections when students connect the preamble to principles, grievances to evidence of wrongdoing, and the declaration to independence. For the open response, accept varied fictional details if all three labeled parts perform the required role.