

Freedom Takes Shape

Read how two Virginia documents shaped rights and government.

VS.6.b “explaining the development of founding Virginia documents, including the Virginia Declaration of Rights (written by George Mason) and the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom (written by Thomas Jefferson);”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle each document title and its writer, then underline the sentences that tell how each document shaped freedom or government.

Virginia's New Ideas

- ① During the American Revolution, Virginians wanted a new government that protected people's freedoms. In 1776, delegates met at a convention in Williamsburg to create rules for the new state. George Mason wrote the Virginia Declaration of Rights. It said that people have natural rights, such as life, liberty, property, and the chance to seek happiness and safety. These rights shaped the new state government.
- ② The declaration was adopted on June 12, 1776, before Virginia's first constitution was completed. Its ideas helped guide that constitution and later influenced the Bill of Rights added to the United States Constitution. The document showed that a government should protect rights and that the people are the source of a government's power in a free state.
- ③ Thomas Jefferson wrote the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, which the General Assembly passed in 1786. It said that no person should be forced to attend or support a church. It also said that a person's religious beliefs should not take away civil rights. Together, these Virginia documents helped define freedom and limited government power over people in important ways.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Who wrote the Virginia Declaration of Rights, and who wrote the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom?

2 How did the Virginia Declaration of Rights help develop Virginia's new government?

3 What religious freedom did the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom protect?

4 How did the two Virginia documents together affect freedom and government power?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write exactly three sentences for a new Virginia government. Explain why it should use both documents, naming one freedom protected by each document and telling how the documents limit government power.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Circle each document title and its writer, then underline the sentences that tell how each document shaped freedom or government. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Who wrote the Virginia Declaration of Rights, and who wrote the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom?	George Mason wrote the Virginia Declaration of Rights. Thomas Jefferson wrote the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom.
2	How did the Virginia Declaration of Rights help develop Virginia's new government?	Its ideas helped guide Virginia's first constitution. It said that government should protect rights and that people are the source of government power.
3	What religious freedom did the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom protect?	It said that people should not be forced to attend or support a church, and that religious beliefs should not take away civil rights.
4	How did the two Virginia documents together affect freedom and government power?	They helped define freedom and limited government power over people.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Virginia Declaration of Rights would help our new state protect people's natural rights. The Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom would protect each person's choice about religion. Together, the two documents would limit government power and protect freedom.

Accept clear paraphrases that correctly connect Mason to the Declaration of Rights and Jefferson to the Statute for Religious Freedom. For Part 3, accept exactly three sentences that name both documents, describe a correct protection from each, and explain that government power is limited.