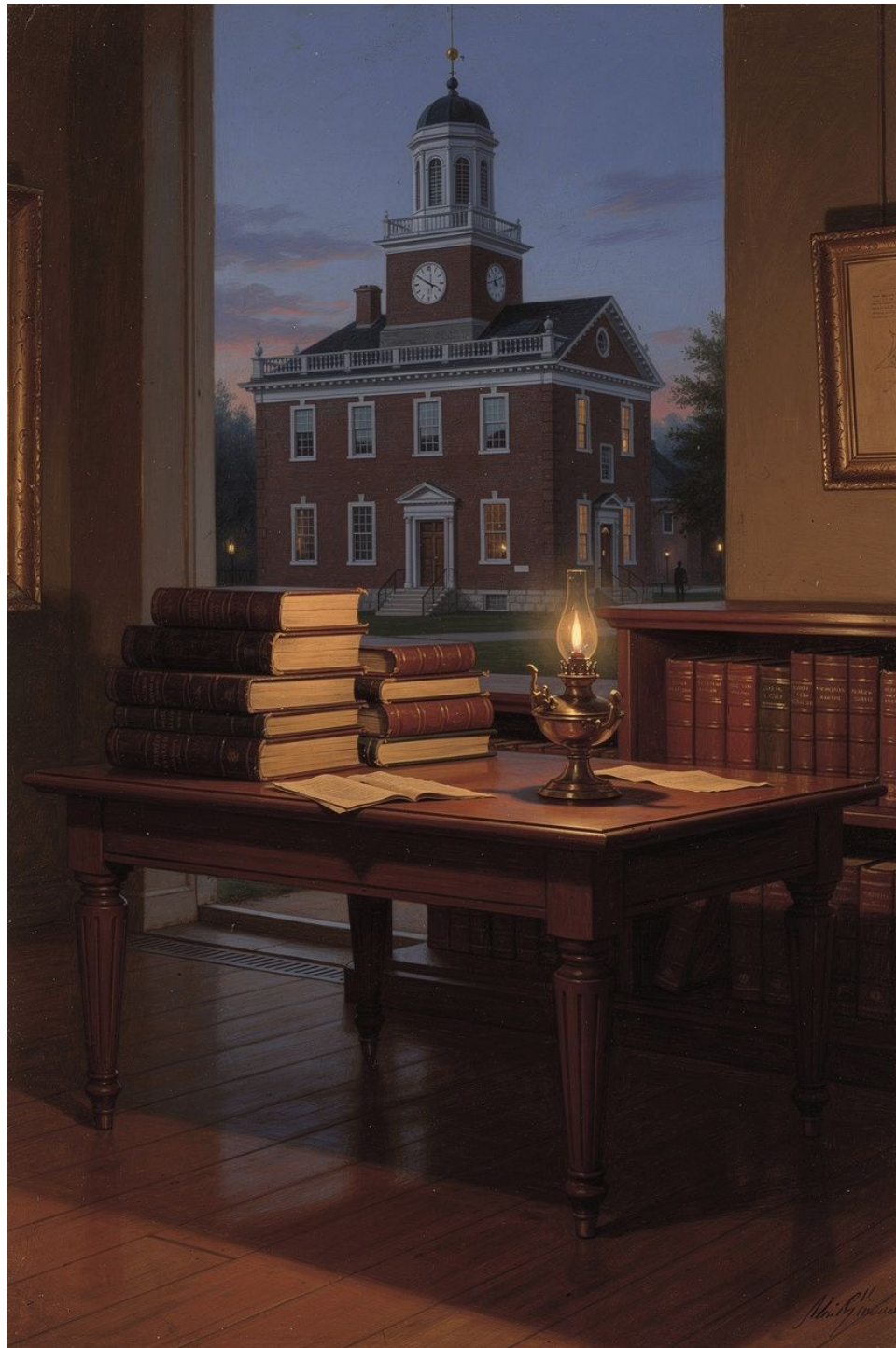




The Manifesto That Outlived the War

WisdomForge Booklet — Ages 15–18

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About This Book

The middle booklet gave you clocks and tables. This one is a brief you have to argue. The Declaration of Independence is not a constitution. It is a 1,337-word political act plus a philosophy that later generations treated as a standard. If you collapse 1776 into 1787, you will not be able to say how slavery could be constitutional and still be a betrayal of the manifesto.

Sitting map as study rules: (1) July 2 is the vote, July 4 the text, August 2 most names — Maier over the mural; (2) “self-evident” is Franklin’s hinge, not a vibe; (3) equality attacked kings and excluded most humans in the room; (4) unalienable rights are a system, happiness is a substitution, “among these” is a door; (5) alter-or-abolish has locks; (6) the second life is Douglass–Lincoln–King, and silence about slavery was a choice.

Each chapter is an essay plus a protocol. Practice items have deliverables. Chapter 6 ends in a Research Prompt (Jefferson’s draft at the Library of Congress versus the enrolled text). The other five end in Reflect. Ghostwriting a term paper from these protocols is refused. Hint-first if someone asks you to write their essay.

Primary text first: National Archives. Then Jefferson’s draft (LOC). Then Locke *Second Treatise*, Paine *Common Sense*, Mason’s Virginia Declaration, Douglass 1852, Lincoln 1858/1863, King 1963. Scholarship: Maier, Allen, Armitage, Wills, Bailyn, Davis, Finkelman, Gordon-Reed.

Keep these sentences on the desk.

Principles:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government...

Prudence lock:

Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes...

Pledge:

And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

Jefferson's cut (draft):

He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating & carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere...

If a paragraph in this booklet violates a study rule, the paragraph is wrong.

How to spend forty-five minutes with 1,337 words, as a protocol not a vibe. Minute 0–8: read the enrolled text aloud once, Archives tab, no commentary. Minute 8–15: mark the four movements — announcement, principles, grievances, declaration — with four pencils or four notes. Minute 15–22: copy the prudence sentence and the closing act. Minute 22–30: find the last grievance and write one sentence that names the slur without repeating it as a chant. Minute 30–38: open Jefferson's draft at LOC and find the slave-trade paragraph; do not yet write the Research Prompt. Minute 38–45: write three dates on a card — 2 July, 4 July, 2 August — and one sentence Adams got right besides the date he got wrong (toil, blood, treasure). If you skip the aloud reading, the rest of the booklet will feel like a recap of a recap. The instrument is short enough. Use the time.

File 3.5 (war and peace), slower: New York City falls September 1776. Philadelphia falls September 1777. Valley Forge is persistence, not a slogan. Saratoga October 1777 convinces France. Yorktown 1781 with French ships. Treaty of Paris 3 September 1783 recognizes the states. The Declaration did not win those winters. It explained why the winters were being spent. Protocol: five military dates, no 4 July among them.

Read the instrument in an Archives tab, not in a recap video. The full text is short enough to read aloud in one sitting. Do that once before Chapter 5's grievance clusters. Do it again after Chapter 6's silence. The second reading will not sound like the first.

File 3.5 (war and peace): the Declaration did not win Saratoga. French ships, luck, and an army that did not dissolve won the first life. File 4.1 (American law): courts bow to the Constitution. File 6.3 (Locke): read chapters 2, 5, 9, and 19 of the *Second Treatise* before you say "Lockean" as a personality type. File 6.4 (Scottish Enlightenment): Hutcheson and Reid

are real names, not seasoning. File 7.4 (original vs living): the fight is about the Constitution more than about 1776, but 1776 is the atmosphere people drag into the fight.

Integrity line, same as the civic sittings: source before summary; disagreements are the Declaration; refuse ghostwriting. If a classmate asks you to write their essay from these protocols, the answer is no. Hint-first: name the Archive, the letter, the chapter of Locke, the LOC draft. Do not produce their pages.

Desk list — grievance heads you must be able to place before you argue Chapter 5. These are from the enrolled text, not a textbook paraphrase:

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

>

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained...

>

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

>

He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers.

>

He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

>

He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.

>

He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power.

>

For Quartering large bodies of armed troops among us.

>

For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world.

>

For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent.

>

For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury.

>

For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences.

>

He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

>

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

The last enrolled grievance includes a slur against Native nations. Do not skip it to keep a clean poster. Do not repeat it as a chant. File 1.2 names it the most shameful passage. Shame is part of the close reading.

Closing act, so Practice 1 has a target:

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States...

If you can recite equality and cannot place a grievance, you have the frosting. If you can recite taxes and cannot place equality, you have the complaint. The brief is both.

Chapter 1: The Quiet Count and the Loud Holiday



Illustration for Chapter 1

The legal story and the holiday story are not the same story. Lee's resolution, 7 June. Committee, 11 June. Vote, 2 July. Text, 4 July. Reading, 8 July. Parchment names, mostly 2

August. Adams's letter to Abigail on 3 July is the tell: he thought the second would be the festival. He understood the act. The culture remembered the words. Put the festival sentences on the desk; naming the letter is not citing it.

The Second Day of July 1776, will be the most memorable Epocha, in the History of America. — I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated, by succeeding Generations, as the great anniversary Festival. It ought to be commemorated, as the Day of Deliverance by solemn Acts of Devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with Pomp and Parade, with Shews, Games, Sports, Guns, Bells, Bonfires and Illuminations from one End of this Continent to the other from this Time forward forever more. — John Adams to Abigail Adams, 3 July 1776 (Massachusetts Historical Society)

He continues, without transporting himself:

You will think me transported with Enthusiasm but I am not. — I am well aware of the Toil and Blood and Treasure, that it will cost Us to maintain this Declaration, and support and defend these States. — same letter

Protocol: the date he names is the vote. The cost he names is the war already on. If a recap video quotes only bells and bonfires, it has cut the second paragraph. Restore it.

Lee's charge, introduced 7 June, voted 2 July:

That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved.

That is the act. Jefferson's draft is the explanation filed with mankind. Dunlap is the first public form. Parchment is the shrine. Do not let the shrine eat the act.

Maier's *American Scripture* is the anti-mural. Dunlap broadsides (~200 printed; 26 known) are the first public form. The engrossed parchment is the shrine. The journal with Hancock and Thomson is the official minute. Three objects. One Declaration. If your timeline ends at a quill circle on the Fourth, you have a painting.

Necessity first. 1763: imperial victory, debt, end of salutary neglect. Stamp Act as the first internal tax fight. Townshend. Massacre as propaganda word. Tea as monopoly-plus-tax. Coercive Acts as charter-killing. First Congress still loyal-subject. Lexington before the Second Congress even convened as a war government. The Declaration explains a war; it does not invent one.

Paine in January made independence common speech. Jefferson in June–July made it a brief to mankind. The pamphlet’s cry is not a caption:

*Every thing that is right or natural pleads for separation. The blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature cries, 'TIS TIME TO PART. Even the distance at which the Almighty hath placed England and America, is a strong and natural proof, that the authority of the one, over the other, was never the design of Heaven. — Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, January 1776*

Paine’s other line — “The sun never shined on a cause of greater worth” — is the worth claim. The weeping-voice paragraph is the urgency claim. File 3.2: about 120,000 copies in three months. Protocol: open the pamphlet, mark both sentences, then mark what Jefferson does not do. He does not write tavern English. He writes a brief.

Adams-to-Pickering (1822) is late memory: Virginia should lead; Jefferson writes better. Use it as politics, not as tape. Sherman signs four state papers and still vanishes from popular portraits. Livingston drafts and does not sign because New York had not authorized. Dickinson will not sign because he thinks the coalition unready. File 5.3: the founders were not a choir. File 5.4: Jefferson did not write alone. File 1.4: eight men present on 4 July never put their names on the parchment. Authorship is a coalition technology. Treat it as one.

Congress cannot tax. It requests. It appoints Washington. It hunts a French alliance. Weakness is theory, not incompetence: suspicion of centers after a war against a distant sovereign. That suspicion later wrecks the Articles and forces Philadelphia 1787 — which is a different booklet.

File 5.2, 5.3, 5.4 as a myth protocol, not a trivia night. Everyone signed on 4 July — false; most names 2 August; last maybe McKean later. Liberty Bell as a Fourth soloist — no evidence; it rang for the public reading on the 8th as bells rang for many events. Fireworks in the chamber while exhausted men danced — false. Jefferson as lone author — 86 changes and a committee say no. Founders united — Dickinson, New York’s delay, and the slavery cut say no. “Scotch brethren” remaining in the text — Congress cut the ethnic blast. Protocol: six myths, six one-line kills, Maier as the book. If you need more than one line, you are writing a sermon about cartoons.

Scholarly debate, kept to working size: Was July 4 “the” independence day? Maier says the culture chose a text-date. Adams said the vote-date. A third camp says public reading on the 8th is when the people heard it, and hearing is the democratic act. You will not settle this. You will stop saying “everyone knows.” Button Gwinnett died in a duel, not as a cartoon martyr of the Fourth. John Hart was driven from a wrecked farm. Francis Lewis lost property. Richard Stockton was imprisoned. Those costs are real and still not the whole

story: most signers later held office. History that only martyrs them is as false as history that only picnics them. File 1.4 is the signer file. Use it.

After the paper: New York lost, Philadelphia lost, Valley Forge, Saratoga, France, Yorktown, Paris 1783. The first life of the Declaration as a diplomatic instrument ends when Britain recognizes the states. The second life starts whenever someone uses the sentences as a standard. Do not let the fireworks hide the winter.

File 3.3, slower, because the Committee of Five is a coalition, not a marble man. Jefferson, 33, rented from Jacob Graff at Market and Seventh and wrote for about two weeks. Adams later told Timothy Pickering that Virginia should lead and that Jefferson wrote ten times better — 1822 memory, politics not tape. Franklin, 70, marked. Sherman, self-made Connecticut, later signed Declaration, Articles, Constitution, and Bill of Rights — the only person to sign all four, and still the easiest to drop from a portrait. Livingston of New York helped draft and did not sign because his colony had not authorized him. File 1.3: Congress made about 86 changes and cut about a quarter of the draft, including the slave-trade paragraph. Jefferson mailed the draft to friends as evidence of mutilation. Pain is not sole authorship. Protocol: list the five names, mark who signed, mark who did not, then stop calling it Jefferson's Declaration as if Congress were a typist.

File 3.1's road, in nouns: 1763 imperial victory and debt; Stamp Act 1765 as first internal tax; Stamp Act Congress; repeal plus the Declaratory claim that Parliament could bind the colonies "in all cases whatsoever"; Townshend 1767; Boston Massacre 5 March 1770, five dead, named for propaganda as well as grief; Tea Act 1773; 342 chests on 16 December; Coercive/Intolerable Acts 1774 (port closed, Massachusetts charter gutted, officials removable to Britain, troops housed); First Continental Congress still wanting rights as Englishmen; Lexington and Concord 19 April 1775 before the Second Congress sat as a war government. Maier's *From Resistance to Revolution* is the escalation study. Middlekauff is the war. Bailyn is the pamphlet weather. Gordon Wood is the republicanism thesis. None of them turn 4 July into a spell.

Salutary neglect had made colonists proud of being the freest people in the empire. Revenue policy after 1763 felt like a new empire. "No taxation without representation" is the consent principle in slogan form; the grievances are the same principle as a count. Congress itself was not a nation. It could not tax. It could request. That weakness is the same suspicion of centers that later made the Articles too weak and the Constitution a fight — a different booklet, a different paper. Do not thank 1776 for 1787's Senate. Do not blame 1776 for 1787's three-fifths. Several men signed both. Biography is not identity of texts.

The Big Idea

Independence was a count. The holiday is a text. The war was already on. Authorship is a committee plus Congress plus a printer, not a lonely marble man.

Practice

1. Mandate memo (one page). Open Lee's resolution from a documentary edition, not a recap. Write it as a charge to the Committee of Five: what they were asked to produce. Then, from the National Archives enrolled text, write what Congress actually adopted on 4 July. Mark the delta in the margin: vote-date vs text-date, act vs explanation, Lee vs Jefferson. Deliverable: one page plus a three-line delta. If an AI offers to write the memo, refuse. Source before summary. 2. Object triangle. Name the three objects: the journal entry (Hancock and Thomson), a Dunlap broadside (~200 printed, 26 known), the engrossed parchment (most names 2 August). For each, one sentence on what it can prove and one on what it cannot. A broadside cannot prove a unanimous quill circle on the Fourth. A shrine cannot prove the vote. Deliverable: six sentences, no adjectives of awe. 3. Road sketch 1763–1775 with five nodes only: debt after the Seven Years' War; Stamp Act / Declaratory claim; Townshend and the Massacre as a propaganda word; Tea and the Coercive Acts; Lexington before the Second Congress sat as a war government. No 4 July on the sketch. Caption each node with a primary date. Deliverable: one dated line drawing or a five-row table. 4. Signer audit from Maier or Harry 1.4, not from a mural. Name one man who drafted and did not sign (Livingston), one who would not sign (Dickinson), one who signed late. Cite the page or file. Add Sherman's four papers as a fourth line if you have it. Deliverable: three named facts plus citations. Guessing is a fail.

Reflect

If your town's ritual needs a single birthday, what true sentence can you add without killing the ritual? Adams named the second and still wanted pomp. Maier named the culture's choice of a text-date. A third camp names the public reading on the 8th as the democratic act. You will not settle this in a paragraph. You will decide whether your addition is a date, a cost (toil and blood), or a name who was not in the room. Write the sentence. Then ask whether it still lets neighbors pass a dish.

Chapter 2: Axioms, Creators, and an Audience Called Mankind



Illustration for Chapter 2

Franklin's edit is not trivia. Sacred locates authority in holiness. Self-evident locates it in recognition. Euclidean axioms are the period's school metaphor. Reid's common-sense

philosophy is the Scottish candidate. Locke's demonstrative natural law is the English candidate. Wills overweights Scotland; Bailyn overweights the pamphlet environment; Allen reads the syntax as public reason. You need friction among them.

The paper is theistic without being a creed. Four references: Nature's God, Creator, Supreme Judge, Divine Providence. Zero Christs, zero verses. Jefferson's private Bible cuts miracles. Adams is Unitarian. Washington's communion habits are a historiographical fight. Witherspoon is a minister who signs. Hall and Gaustad will not share a conclusion. Your job is to read the four phrases before you enlist.

"Decent respect to the opinions of mankind" is the audience clause. The Declaration files a brief with the world because foreign alliance (France) and domestic legitimacy both need an explanation that is not a palace coup. File 2.6. If you skip it, you will think the famous sentence is the whole instrument.

Opening sentence, again, because structure is argument: necessity; one people; separate and equal station; Laws of Nature and of Nature's God; decent respect; causes. That is a lawyer's frame. The grievances are exhibits. The last paragraph is the prayer for relief. Allen's close reading is the method: do not paraphrase until you can name the verbs.

Scholarly debate (Harry 7.3), written as prose rather than a scoreboard. Maximalists (Hall among them) point to a Christian-majority culture, a natural-law genealogy that runs through Aquinas and Hooker as well as Cicero, and orthodox signers: Witherspoon the Presbyterian minister, Samuel Adams the serious Calvinist, Sherman the devout Congregationalist. They are not inventing pews. Minimalists (Gaustad is the cleaner guide here) point to what the paper actually says: four God-references, zero Christs, zero verses, Franklin's swap of sacred for self-evident, Jefferson's private Bible with the miracles cut, Adams's Unitarianism, Washington's habit of leaving before communion, and a Constitution eleven years later that does not name God at all. They are not inventing absences.

The honest middle is not a tie. It is a design: broad theism that can travel. Nature's God is natural-theology language. Creator is a source-clause for rights, not a test. Supreme Judge is a courtroom metaphor for men about to commit treason. Divine Providence is an eighteenth-century reliance word. The paper is compatible with Christianity, Deism, and any theism that will let reason recognize a moral order. It does not prove a Christian nation. It does not prove a secular nation. Protocol: copy the four phrases from the Archives text before you enlist. If you cannot place them, you are arguing a poster.

May 15, 1776, Congress tells colonies to suppress royal authority and erect governments under the people. That stair makes Jefferson's draft possible. Paine is the crowd. May 15 is the institutional step. June 11 is the pen.

File 6.4, Scottish Enlightenment, without turning Jefferson into a Glaswegian. Hutcheson treated the pursuit of happiness as a natural drive. Reid treated some truths as immediately known — common-sense philosophy as a cousin of "self-evident." Wills pushed this hard in *Inventing America*. The push is useful even when it overreaches: it stops you from saying Jefferson invented rights in a rented room. File 2.5: self-evident is a claim about recognition, not a mood. File 2.6: decent respect is why the paper is a public act. Protocol: copy the opening sentence from Archives, then mark Nature's God and decent respect before you mark equality. If you start at equality, you have skipped the frame.

Opening sentence, on the page as a source, not as a recap:

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

Necessity, not whim. One people, not a clique. Higher law than Parliament. Audience: mankind. That is the brief's caption. The famous sentence is the law. The grievances are the facts. The last paragraph is the prayer.

The four enrolled God-phrases, copied as sources, not as a team:

Nature's God, in the opening frame.

Creator, in the rights sentence.

Supreme Judge, in the closing act.

Divine Providence, in the pledge:

And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

Protocol: four copied phrases from Archives before you enlist. If you cannot place them, you are arguing a poster. Hall 2019 still has a Christian-majority culture and orthodox signers. Gaustad 1987 still has the absences. The Constitution's silence about God is a

different paper, not a repeal. Meacham's *American Gospel* is a public book for the middle: travel language, not a test. Jefferson's 1825 letter to Henry Lee names the library — Aristotle, Cicero, Locke, Sidney — as harmonizing sentiments, not as a church. Concealment is the plagiarism test; he named the shelf. The high booklet's job is to keep the four phrases, the hinge, and the library in one brief. If your essay has only a team, it is a comfort paper.

The Big Idea

Self-evident is how the paper claims universality. The Creator is how it claims rights are not Parliament's to issue. Audience is mankind, not a caucus.

Practice

1. Two-column, sacred vs self-evident. Copy Jefferson's "sacred and undeniable" from Maier or from a draft facsimile. Copy Franklin's "self-evident" from the enrolled text. Three implications each for who can hear the document: pew, classroom, foreign court. Deliverable: six implications, each tied to a word. No cable-news labels in the cells. 2. God-phrase map. Open the Archives transcription. Copy the four references exactly: Nature's God, Creator, Supreme Judge, Divine Providence. Annotate each as natural theology, source of rights, judgment, or governance of events. Then write one sentence on what is missing (Christ, verse, church). Deliverable: four copied phrases plus four annotations plus the absence sentence. Copying from a meme is a fail. 3. Frame parse. Diagram the opening sentence into six clauses: necessity; one people; separate and equal station; Laws of Nature and of Nature's God; decent respect; causes. No extra commentary in the diagram. Allen's method: name the verbs after the diagram, not instead of it. Deliverable: a six-clause parse you could hand to a teacher who has the Archives tab open. 4. Source fight card. Wills (*Inventing America*) vs Bailyn (*Ideological Origins*) in six lines. Name what each would tell you to read next (Hutcheson/Reid vs the pamphlet environment). Add Allen as a third line if you have six more words. Deliverable: a card, not an essay. If you cannot name a next book, you have not read a title page.

Reflect

If a truth is self-evident, why write 1,337 words? Self-evident is a claim about recognition, not a claim that recognition has already happened in Parliament, in a tavern, or in France. The opening sentence files a brief with mankind because alliance and the hangman both require an explanation that is not a palace coup. Decent respect is work. If your answer is "they didn't need the words," you have not read the audience clause. If your answer is "words make it true," you have not read the war.

Chapter 3: The Sentence as Lever



Illustration for Chapter 3

“All men are created equal” in 1776 is a strike at natural aristocracy. It is not a census of the country. Women, enslaved people, Indigenous nations (slurred in a grievance), and often the unpropertied are outside the operating meaning. At least 41 of 56 signers hold people in

slavery. Jefferson's lifetime count is over 600. Abigail's "remember the ladies" is a letter, not a statute.

The lever theory: once written without a racial or sexual adjective, the sentence can be picked up by people the authors did not intend. Douglass picks it up without flattering the picnic. Lincoln makes it a standard maxim constantly approximated. Stanton copies the form and inserts "and women." King calls both founding papers a promissory note. Garrison burns a Constitution and praises a Declaration — know the tactic; this booklet does not assign arson.

Two readings of the slavery contradiction, from Harry 7.2, unpacked rather than labeled. The hypocrisy column is Gordon-Reed's household and Finkelman's founders: Jefferson enslaved more than six hundred people; at least forty-one of fifty-six signers held people in bondage; the draft blamed a king for a market the colonies used; Congress cut the paragraph to keep South Carolina and Georgia. "All men are created equal" in that room did not mean the people in the fields. Douglass in 1852 used the column without letting it be the whole speech: the Fourth is not yours if you are enslaved; the principles are still saving. A paper that is only a hymn cannot explain the cut.

The aspiration column is Lincoln's maxim and Davis's age-of-revolution problem: the words have no racial adjective; later readers refused to let the operating meaning stay the authors'. A paper that is only a lie cannot explain why Douglass tells the room to stand by the instrument. Both columns are required. Protocol: steelman hypocrisy in one paragraph, steelman aspiration in one paragraph, then write a third that will not let either column eat the other. If your essay has only one column, it is a comfort paper.

Seneca Falls is remix as politics, not a sequel Jefferson voted. The form-sentence, so you do not meet it as a caption:

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. — Declaration of Sentiments, Seneca Falls, 19–20 July 1848

What it could steal: the frame, the list, the "He has." What it could not steal: a franchise, an army, a Congress that would amend for seventy-two more years. 19th Amendment, 1920. 144 years is a measurement, not a morale poster.

Scholarly debate: Did the founders "mean" equality as Lincoln said? Jaffa's school says yes, as a philosophic core. Some original-public-meaning lawyers say Lincoln invented a usable

past. Allen says equality is structurally central in 1776, not a later overlay. You will write a better essay if you can steelman all three.

Seneca Falls is remix as politics. 19th Amendment is 144 years. Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act are statutes that King's speech treats as cashing. Obergefell's dignity talk is a later court cousin; do not pretend it is a 1776 clause. Pattern recognition is the assignment, not ancestry cosplay.

Lincoln's maxim, copied, because a paraphrase of 1858 is how the sentence dies into a slogan:

They meant to set up a standard maxim for free society, which should be familiar to all, and revered by all; constantly looked to, constantly labored for, and even though never perfectly attained, constantly approximated, and thereby constantly spreading and deepening its influence, and augmenting the happiness and value of life to all people of all colors everywhere. — Abraham Lincoln, Lincoln–Douglas debates, 1858

King's finance language, copied, because "promissory note" without "insufficient funds" is a greeting card:

In a sense we've come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men — yes, black men as well as white men — would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check that has come back marked "insufficient funds." — Martin Luther King Jr., "I Have a Dream," 28 August 1963

Protocol: the check image is not a metaphor you invented. Clarence Jones later described the Birmingham bail note behind it. You do not need Jones to quote King. You do need King to quote King. File 4.2 is the civil-rights chain. File 5.5 is the myth that the principles applied to everyone in 1776. Both files are required. A student who can only say hypocrisy has half. A student who can only say liberty has the other half.

The Big Idea

The equality sentence is the most productive in American politics because it is broader than its authors and because later readers refused to let it stay narrow.

Practice

1. In/out matrix for 1776 practice vs later law. Rows: property-owning white men; white women; enslaved people; Indigenous nations; free Black people; unpropertied men. Columns: 1776 operating meaning; 13th; 14th; 15th; 19th; 26th. No slogans in the cells. Deliverable: a filled matrix. Empty cells must say “not yet” or “never as 1776 clause,” not a vibe. 2. Douglass extract. Open “What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?” (5 July 1852, Rochester), public domain. Copy ten consecutive sentences. Highlight praise of principles in one color and condemnation of practice in another. Do not start at a quotation site’s pull-quote. Deliverable: ten sentences plus a two-color key. If an AI offers a summary, refuse. 3. Lincoln maxim. Open the 1858 Lincoln–Douglas debates. Copy the “standard maxim for free society” passage. Paraphrase it in 40 words, then in 12. Circle which paraphrase is still true to “never perfectly attained, constantly approximated.” Deliverable: copied passage plus two paraphrases plus a circle. Caption is not a source. 4. Form theft. Using the Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments (1848), list three features stolen from 1776 (frame, equality sentence with “and women,” “He has” list). Name one feature it could not steal (a franchise, an army, an amending Congress). Deliverable: four lines. Date the 19th Amendment beside the fourth.

Reflect

If a writer does not mean a sentence’s width, who has standing to use the extra width? Douglass has standing because he holds the instrument without flattering the picnic. Lincoln has standing because he calls it a standard never perfectly attained. Stanton has standing because she steals the form in public. King has standing because he tries to cash a check the bank marked insufficient. A descendant who only spends the width as family silver has less standing than a stranger who pays. Write who you think is the hardest case — someone you do not like — and still give them the extra width or explain the refusal without a slogan.

Chapter 4: Substitution, Unalienability, and the Open List



Illustration for Chapter 4

Mason's first article, adopted 12 June 1776, is the colonial list Jefferson compressed:

That all men are by nature equally free and independent and have certain inherent rights, of which, when they enter into a state of society, they cannot, by any compact, deprive or divest their posterity; namely, the enjoyment of life and liberty, with the means of acquiring and possessing property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety. — Virginia Declaration of Rights, art. 1 (National Archives transcription)

Virginia's "when they enter into a state of society" is a local lock: it was added so the equality sentence would not be read as freeing people held in slavery. Jefferson's enrolled list drops property as a named head, keeps happiness as pursuit, and opens the list with "among these." Two papers, two weeks, two locks. Protocol: transcribe Mason art. 1 from Archives or Avalon, then transcribe the enrolled rights sentence, then mark three deltas: lock, list, openness.

Locke, *Second Treatise* ch. 9, on why anyone leaves the state of nature:

*The great and chief end, therefore, of men's uniting into commonwealths, and putting themselves under government, is the preservation of their property. — *Second Treatise*, ch. 9, §124*

Property in Locke includes life and liberty, not only land. Ch. 19 is the dissolution engine:

*...whenever the legislators endeavor to take away and destroy the property of the people, or to reduce them to slavery under arbitrary power, they put themselves into a state of war with the people, who are thereupon absolved from any farther obedience... — *Second Treatise*, ch. 19, §222*

That is the ancestor of alter-or-abolish. Jefferson's list still swapped the named head. The swap is the American accent, not a personality type called "Lockean."

Harry 7.1, written as 180 words rather than a verdict stamp. The plagiarism charge has evidence: life/liberty/property beside life/liberty/happiness; consent of the governed in both; dissolve-the-trust beside alter-or-abolish; government as security of rights in both. If a student turned the Declaration in as a philosophy paper, a teacher might flag proximity. The charge fails on four changes, not on a vibe. Genre: Locke wrote a treatise to justify 1688; Congress declared a break and listed facts. List: property became pursuit of happiness. Authority: demonstration became self-evident; Franklin's word does work Locke's proofs did. Function: a fiduciary theory became a public act with a pledge of lives, fortunes, and honor. Jefferson did not conceal the debt. In 1825 he told Henry Lee he was not aiming at originality of principle or sentiment, nor copying any particular writing; he meant an expression of the American mind, resting on "the harmonizing sentiments of the day" — Aristotle, Cicero, Locke, Sidney, and the rest. Concealment is the core of plagiarism.

He named the library. Synthesis plus a political act is the honest name. Protocol: quote Lee 1825, quote Locke §222, quote the enrolled rights sentence, then write the four changes in four sentences. If you cannot, you are still in the outline.

Unalienable is stronger than “natural” if it means you cannot transfer the right even by consent. That is why selling yourself into slavery cannot be a valid contract in this philosophy — and why a slaveholding congress writing the word is a scandal, not a trivia item. The scandal does not erase the philosophy. It shows the cost of not living it.

Happiness as flourishing (Scottish moralists; Hutcheson) versus happiness as appetite. The paper does not define content. That openness is how later liberty claims keep knocking. It is also how critics call the phrase mush. Your job is to keep it from mush without turning it back into acreage only.

“Among these” is the ancestor of Ninth Amendment logic: enumeration does not exhaust. Courts still decide cases on the Constitution. File 4.1: the Declaration is not a statute. Citation as rhetoric is not holding as law. Mixing them is how posters happen.

Scholarly debate: property vs happiness. Economic historians mourn the drop as a loss of the labor theory’s teeth — if happiness is a mood, the paper cannot police enclosure, debt, or wage. Civic humanists cheer the rise as flourishing: Hutcheson’s moral sense, a good life not assigned by the state. A third view: Locke’s “property” already included life and liberty, so Jefferson’s swap is stylistic compression of Mason’s longer colonial list, not a rejection of estate. Read Mason art. 1 beside Locke §124 beside the enrolled sentence before you pick. The pick is a paper, not a team. Protocol: three sentences, three sources, no adjectives of belonging.

File 6.3’s honest remainder: Locke justified 1688; the Declaration applies the trust to 1776. The Glorious Revolution is the English cousin. The colonists saw themselves as reenacting rights of Englishmen until Parliament denied the rights, at which point Locke’s right of revolution became a world brief. Bailyn is the pamphlet weather for that turn. Laslett’s introduction to the *Two Treatises* is the textual weather for Locke. Neither book is a substitute for chapters 9 and 19.

Life and liberty have later legal careers (due process, speech, movement, privacy fights). You are not a court. You are a student who can tell a manifesto from a holding.

The enrolled rights sentence, as a block, because “unalienable / among these” is the assignment, not a caption:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

File 4.1, American law: courts bow to the Constitution. The Declaration is cited as rhetoric and principle. It is not a holding. Mixing them is how posters are born. File 6.2: manifesto versus machine is the civic distinction this whole booklet exists to keep. The Ninth Amendment's "other rights retained by the people" is a cousin of "among these," not a twin. Protocol: copy "among these," copy the Ninth's clause, write one sentence on the difference (political manifesto vs ratified text). If you cannot, you are still in the outline this chapter was written to kill.

The Big Idea

The rights sentence is a system — source, unalienability, government as security, open list — not a mood. Happiness replaced property and widened what later people could claim.

Practice

1. Three-line translation. Open Locke *Second Treatise* (a public-domain edition), Mason art. 1 (Archives), and the enrolled rights sentence (Archives). Write one line each: Locke's list, Mason's list, Jefferson/Congress's list. No adjectives. Deliverable: three lines plus three citations. If you write "Lockean" as a personality type, start over. 2. Unalienable stress test. Apply the word to a bike, a vote, and a body. For each: can it be sold, given, or taken by "consent"? Where does the analogy break? Then write one sentence on a slaveholding congress using the word. Deliverable: three applications plus the break plus the scandal sentence. Mood language is a fail. 3. Ninth Amendment cousin. Copy "among these" from the enrolled text. Write one paragraph on what an open list does that a closed list cannot, without claiming the phrase is the Ninth. File 4.1: courts still want the Constitution. Deliverable: copied two words plus one paragraph plus a one-line limit. Poster logic is a fail. 4. "American mind" sentence. Open Jefferson to Henry Lee, 8 May 1825 (Founders Online). Copy the "expression of the American mind" sentence and the "harmonizing sentiments" list (Aristotle, Cicero, Locke, Sidney). Then list three sources in that mind besides Locke. Deliverable: copied sentence plus three names. Concealment is the plagiarism test; he named the library.

Reflect

Can a right be unalienable and still unprotected for a century? What work is the word doing in that century? Accusing is one job: the word names a betrayal. Lever is another: later readers pick it up. Neither job is a court order. File 4.1 will not let you walk into a hearing with a manifesto and call it a holding. If the word does only accusing, it is a sermon. If it

does only lever, it can become mush. Write the third job, if any, without using the word “sacred.”

Chapter 5: The Last Door and the Brief's Exhibits



Alter or abolish is the dangerous clause. The paper hedges in the same breath. Protocol: quote the lock before you quote the door.

Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed.

Destructive of ends. The People, not a faction. Long train of abuses toward absolute Despotism. Institute new government, not a bonfire. File 7.5: this is not a warrant for a lost election.

Exhibits: twenty-seven grievances, mostly “He has,” King George as defendant. Clusters: political interference, judicial control, military/economic coercion, charter-stripping, then the last grievance that slurs Native nations. File 1.2: shame is not optional. File 5.6: the list is evidence, not the whole paper. Protocol: sort ten enrolled “He has” lines into clusters from the Archives text, not from a textbook paraphrase. If you cannot place the slur, you have cleaned a poster.

Chain: Magna Carta 61 (baronial distress), Dutch Abjuration 1581, English 1689, Locke ch. 19. American difference is universal vocabulary plus a colonial war, not the invention of forfeiture.

Hobbes vs Locke vs Rousseau in one page, then throw Rousseau out of the engine room. Consent vs unalienable rights is the remaining tension: can a majority consent to enslave? The philosophy says no. The practice said yes. Later constitutional traps (Bill of Rights, Equal Protection) are 1789–1868 answers, not 1776 answers.

Harry 7.5, written as prose. Residual-last-resort says the right of revolution sleeps while elections, courts, and amendment work, and wakes only when those channels are destroyed — a long train, not a tantrum. Extinct-because-elections says a working franchise is the institutionalization of consent, so revolution talk against it is a category error. The Declaration’s own prudence sentence is the best primary evidence for last-resort. Shays (1786–87) invoked revolutionary feeling against debt and tax; the new state crushed it. The Whiskey Rebellion (1794) met Washington and 13,000 men. Neither case is 1776. The Confederacy claimed 1776 to keep a property in persons. That is a rejection of the manifesto’s equality, not an application of its last door. Lincoln’s first inaugural is the text:

Plainly, the central idea of secession is the essence of anarchy. A majority held in restraint by constitutional checks and limitations, and always changing easily with

deliberate changes of popular opinions and sentiments, is the only true sovereign of a free people. Whoever rejects it does, of necessity, fly to anarchy or to despotism. — Abraham Lincoln, First Inaugural Address, 4 March 1861

He can still love 1776 because 1776 named equality and consent, not a right to destroy other people's rights. Arendt *On Revolution* and Buchanan *Secession* are the comparative and the analytic. This booklet will not coach extra-legal force against a working franchise. Do not flatten prudence into "never" or into "whenever I lose."

File 2.3, consent of the governed, as a source not a slogan. The enrolled sequence is purpose then origin then last door: governments instituted to secure rights; just powers from consent; alter or abolish when destructive of those ends. Consent in 1776 was narrow — property-owning white men in most places. The 15th, 19th, and 26th widened who may say yes. Widening the roll is not the same as unlocking the last door. A larger franchise makes revolution against a certified count harder to justify under the paper's own prudence, not easier.

The closing act, so Chapter 1's object triangle has a fourth text to place beside journal, Dunlap, and parchment:

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States...

That is the prayer for relief. Principles without this paragraph are a sermon. This paragraph without principles is a secession note. The brief is both.

The door, as a block, so the lock has something to lock:

That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

The pattern clause, so a lost election cannot masquerade as a train:

But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their

duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.

The pledge, so the cost is not abstract:

And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

Protocol: quote prudence, then the door, then the train, then the pledge, then institute-new-government. Five fragments. If you start at abolish, you have a poster. Shays and Whiskey remain what a new government does with tax anger; neither is 1776. The Confederacy remains a rejection of equality, not an application of the last door. Lincoln's inaugural remains the adult text because it loves 1776 without handing secession the manifesto. This booklet will not coach extra-legal force against a working franchise. Do not flatten prudence into "never" or into "whenever I lose."

The Big Idea

The Declaration is a legal brief: standard, facts, prayer. The last door has a lock. A working vote is not a long train of abuses.

Practice

1. Condition checklist. From the enrolled text, copy five locks on revolution: destructive of ends; the People; prudence against light and transient causes; long train of abuses; institute new government. Each lock gets a quote fragment, not a paraphrase. Deliverable: five fragments plus five one-line glosses. If you cannot find prudence, you are quoting a poster.

2. Grievance cluster. Open the Archives transcription. Sort ten "He has" (or "For") lines into political, judicial, military, economic, charter, and last/shame. One leftover? Say why. Include the Indigenous slur as a named shame, not as a chant. Deliverable: a sort plus a leftover note. Textbook paraphrase is a fail.

3. Hobbes/Locke/Declaration table. Three rows: who may withdraw consent, when, and what must be instituted after. Hobbes: once, then obey. Locke: when the trustee destroys property or reduces to slavery. Declaration: when government is destructive of rights-ends, with prudence. Deliverable: a nine-cell table. Rousseau does not get a row.

4. Lincoln inaugural. Open the 4 March 1861 address. Copy the passage that calls secession the essence of anarchy and names a majority held in restraint by constitutional checks as the true sovereign. Then one paragraph on why he can still love 1776 (equality and consent, not a right to destroy others' rights). Deliverable: copied passage plus one paragraph. No social post.

Reflect

If the last door rusts shut, does the philosophy die — or do elections become the door? Residual-last-resort says the door sleeps. Extinct-because-elections says the franchise is the door. Prudence is the paper's own evidence for last-resort. A working vote is not a long train. Write which reading you can steelman that you do not hold. If you cannot steelman the other, you are not done with File 7.5. This booklet will not assign you a current crowd. It will assign you the locks.

Chapter 6: Silence, Sheet Anchor, Machine



Illustration for Chapter 6

Congress cut the slave-trade paragraph to keep South Carolina and Georgia. Jefferson mailed his draft around as evidence of mutilation. The cut did not moralize slavery; it postponed the fight. Davis, Finkelman, Gordon-Reed: knowing is not paying. Washington's

will, Adams's refusal to enslave, Franklin's late abolition presidency — biography is not a national solution.

The Research Prompt below sends you to the Library of Congress. The enrolled silence is not a rumor. The draft's moral force and the draft's stretch (blaming the king for a trade the colonies used) are both on the page. Protocol: transcribe before you moralize.

Lincoln's synthesis: Declaration as sheet anchor; Constitution as imperfect machine; 13th–15th as repair. Gettysburg's first sentence is the arithmetic:

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. — Abraham Lincoln, Gettysburg Address, 19 November 1863 (Avalon)

1863 – 87 = 1776, not 1787. A cemetery speech is not an amendment. It is a re-aim.

Harry 7.4, kept as a Constitution fight that drags 1776 as atmosphere. Original public meaning of 1787 may treat 1776 as politics, not as a clause. Living constitutionalism borrows 1776's width for new applications. Declarationists (Jaffa's school; Zuckert's natural-rights republic) want the manifesto in the interpretive air as Lincoln's standard maxim. The booklet will not become a courtroom. Steelman all three in a page. Then go back to the enrolled text and the cut draft. Atmosphere that never meets a fact is perfume.

Douglass 1852 is required, not extra credit. King 1963 is required. Seneca Falls is required. Armitage is the global map: copies, cousins, Haitian hearing, French sibling, UDHR 1948. File 6.5: Terror is what happens when rights language meets a different machine. Do not use France as a cheap scare or a cheap brag.

Douglass, on the page, so the Research Prompt's third task is not a rumor:

The principles contained in that instrument are saving principles. Stand by those principles, be true to them on all occasions, in all places, against all foes, and at whatever cost. — Frederick Douglass, "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?", 5 July 1852

Harry 1.3's fuller cut, so silence has a text to be silent about. Jefferson's draft:

He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating & carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare, the opprobrium of infidel powers, is the warfare of the Christian king of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where MEN should be bought & sold, he has prostituted his negative for

suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce. — Jefferson's original Rough draught, Library of Congress

Stretch: the colonies used the market. Moral force: slavery named as a war against the same rights the preamble proclaims. Coalition price: South Carolina and Georgia. Invoice: a civil war. File 6.2 again: the 13th, 14th, and 15th write equality into the machine the manifesto never was. File 6.6: Armitage's global copies do not wash the local silence. File 5.1: the Declaration did not create democracy. Protocol: transcribe the draft from LOC, place it beside enrolled silence, then write the three invoices — coalition, weapon later readers lost, war-sized bill. Keep the speculative counterfactual labeled speculative. That is the Research Prompt. Do not outsource it.

File 5.1: the Declaration did not create democracy. File 5.2: July 4 as independence day is a cultural choice. File 5.4: Jefferson did not write alone. Those myths are not harmless. They make the second life harder to see.

File 6.1, Magna Carta, as a chain not a clone. Clause 61 gave twenty-five barons a right to distrain a king who broke the charter — a medieval resistance device, not a democratic revolution, and not a universal rights list. The Declaration's difference is vocabulary plus a colonial war, not the invention of forfeiture. File 6.5: the French Declaration of the Rights of Man (1789) is a sibling that then meets Terror. Rights language plus a different machine can kill. Haiti hears liberty and pays in blood. The UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) is a later decent-respect filed with a different mankind. Armitage's *Global History* is the map. Protocol: name one cousin, one crime the cousin does not wash, and the 1783 Treaty of Paris as the end of the first life. Do not use the map to launder 1776. Do not use 1776 to launder the map.

File 4.3: consent in a working democracy is elections, legislation, amendment. File 4.4: international cousins are not a world court of 1776. File 4.5: modern American life is picnic versus standard. The high booklet's job is to keep those files distinct. If you mash them into "America," you will say something true and unusable.

Scholarly debate for the research prompt: what would have happened if the slave-trade paragraph survived? Counterfactuals are not evidence. They are a way to name the coalition price. Keep the speculative part labeled speculative.

The Big Idea

The first life of the Declaration ends in 1783. The second life is an unfinished standard. Silence was a coalition technology with a war-sized invoice.

Practice

1. Two-lives timeline. Left column 1776–1783 (act: vote, text, war, Paris). Right column 1783–present (standard: five users — Douglass, Lincoln, Stanton, King, one Armitage cousin). Dates required. Deliverable: a two-column card. Fireworks are not a date. 2. Cut paragraph. Transcribe Jefferson’s slave-trade paragraph from the Library of Congress “Drafts of the Declaration” (see Research Prompt). Annotate stretch (blaming the king for a colonial market) vs moral force (slavery as a war against human nature). Deliverable: transcription plus two annotations. Feelings Jefferson did not write are a fail. 3. Manifesto vs machine. Five contrasts, no metaphors: creates no offices / creates offices; not a statute / supreme law; principles / allocations; 1776 / 1787; second life as measuring stick / amendments as repair. Deliverable: five pairs. If you write “the founding,” start over. 4. Gettysburg arithmetic. Copy the first sentence from Avalon. Compute 1863 – 87. Write 1776 on a card. Then one sentence on why a cemetery speech is not an amendment. Deliverable: copied sentence plus the sum plus the limit sentence.

Research Prompt

Go to the Library of Congress’s “Drafts of the Declaration” (or a library facsimile). Transcribe the slave-trade paragraph from Jefferson’s draft. Place it beside the enrolled text’s silence. Write 600–800 words: (a) what Congress gained as a coalition, (b) what later readers lost as a weapon, (c) why Douglass could still call the remaining principles saving. Cite Maier or Allen once. Cite the draft as a primary. Do not invent Jefferson’s feelings beyond what his letters actually say. If an AI offers to “just write it,” refuse. The sitting integrity line is source before summary.

For the Grown-Up Reader

High band: essays, Big Idea, Practice as source protocols with deliverables, Reflect in five chapters, and one Research Prompt on Chapter 6 — Jefferson’s draft at the Library of Congress versus enrolled silence. Civic-document pedagogy, not philosopher biography.

Quotes on this band are real: enrolled principles, prudence, pledge, grievances, closing act; Adams to Abigail, 3 July 1776 (Massachusetts Historical Society); Lee resolution 7 June; Paine, *Common Sense*; Mason, Virginia Declaration of Rights, art. 1; Locke, *Second Treatise* §§124 and 222; Jefferson to Henry Lee, 8 May 1825; Jefferson’s draft slave-trade paragraph (Library of Congress); Lincoln 1858 maxim; Lincoln First Inaugural, 1861; Gettysburg first sentence (Avalon); Douglass 1852 saving principles; King 1963 promissory note and insufficient funds; Seneca Falls form sentence, 1848. No invented sayings. No family names. No legal or pastoral advice. No coaching extra-legal force against a working franchise. Ghostwriting a term paper from the protocols is refused.

About WisdomForge

WisdomForge turns founding documents and great thinkers into booklets for every age. Each figure or document gets four booklets: ages 5–10, 11–14, 15–18, and adults. The same text, told at the right depth. Because the Declaration is not a costume of liberty. It is a counted vote, a printed sheet, and a long second life. Read the 1,337 words before you read a summary. The National Archives keeps a public text. Use it.