

Name : \_\_\_\_\_ Date : \_\_\_\_\_

# THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

The Declaration of Independence is one of the most important documents in American history. It was adopted on July 4, 1776, by the Second Continental Congress. The document announced that the thirteen American colonies were no longer under British rule and would become free and independent states.

Before independence, the colonies were controlled by Great Britain and King George III. Many colonists believed the British government treated them unfairly. They were upset about high taxes, unfair laws, and having no representation in the British Parliament. The colonists wanted more freedom and the right to govern themselves.

A committee of five men helped write the Declaration of Independence. Thomas Jefferson was the main writer. The document explains the colonists' reasons for separating from Great Britain. It also states that all people have natural rights, including "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

When the Declaration was signed, it marked the beginning of the United States of America as an independent nation. Today, Americans celebrate Independence Day every year on July 4th to remember this important event.

Answer the questions in complete sentences.

- 1.) Why did the colonists want independence from Britain?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2.) What is one natural right mentioned in the Declaration of Independence?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3.) Why is the Declaration of Independence important today?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4.) Who was the king of Great Britain during the time of the Declaration of Independence?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 5.) How do Americans celebrate Independence Day today?  
\_\_\_\_\_