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## Declaring Independence

**Summary:** Students will learn about the different taxes and acts that caused the American Revolutionary War.

**Enduring Understanding:** Students will understand the events leading up to the Declaration of Independence.

**Essential Questions:**

-What factors lead the Colonists to declare independence from Britain?

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- What factors lead the Colonists to declare independence from Britain?
- What role did taxation play in the early colonies?

**Curriculum:**

Social Studies -5<sup>th</sup> Grade

Standard 2 Objective 1

**Materials:**

**Background for teachers:** Teacher must have a clear understanding of the events leading up to the Revolution. They also need to be familiar with at least George Washington and Thomas Jefferson's biographies.

**Students Prior Knowledge:** The students have to have an understanding of what the terms taxation and representation mean.

**Intended Learning Outcomes:** The students will learn about what lead the colonists to declare their independence, which will help as an introductory lesson to The Making of the U.S. Constitution.

## **Lesson:**

### **Day 1- Life as a Colonist-**

-Show the students pictures of Williamsburg, Virginia while narrating facts about the blacksmith, shoemaker, restaurant owners and leather smiths ect. Discuss the Church of England and the strong hold that they had in Williamsburg. Talk about Lord Dunmore and what his job was in Williamsburg. Show pictures of the governor's mansion and the magazine building while explaining the purpose of both. Show the House of Burgesses and explain that it provided a place for the first legislative assembly of elected representatives in North America. The representative's jobs were to help make decisions that would improve the lives of the colonists in Virginia. (You can get all the pictures from the email that we received from the vacation photographer.)

### **Day 2- Getting to know Thomas Jefferson-**

-Read Jefferson's Biography with the class, from the attachment below.

-Show pictures of Thomas Jefferson's mansion and explore what kind of person he was. Focus on his education and his need to educate others. Show George Wythe's house and discuss the private tutoring that he'd received. Also talk about his motivation to make improvements on everything that surrounded him. Look at a timeline of his house and show the pictures of his pew that he had reserved for him in the Williamsburg, Church of England.

-Show the students Jefferson's Ten Rules document and discuss why he would have made those rules for himself. How do they relate to his life?

### **Day 3 and 4- Britain and Taxes-**

-Pile a large stack of candy, piled high on a desk and relate it to the privilege of living as an Englishmen in one of the thirteen colonies. Offer it to the kids but don't hand it out.

-Show them the Breaking Away from England slide show of all the taxes that had been put on the colonists in order to finance the French and Indian war and ongoing disputes between the French and the English. As you discuss each burden the colonists had to endure, take some from the pile until there isn't any left. Discuss how this activity made them feel and connect it to the historical colonial events.

### **Day 5- Declaring our Independence Letter-**

-Have each child write a letter to the teacher "king", telling you how they feel and why they deserve that candy and then if you're feeling generous, let them have it.

**Assessments:**

-Read the Declaration of Independence to the students while interpreting and clarifying where necessary.

-Give out the matching quiz connected to the end of this lesson plan. Have them cut the terms and definitions up and flip them on their desks. Team them up with partner and have them quiz each other by matching the terms with its definition.

**Extension:**

-Have them draw a comic with comic bubbles that show that they comprehended the information. You could even have them show another fifth grade class what they have created and why.

**Attachments:**

**Jefferson's Biography:** <http://www.shmoop.com/thomas-jefferson/childhood.html>

**Jefferson's Ten Rules:**

[https://www.google.com/search?q=jefferson%27s+ten+rules&espv=2&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ei=Qy7YU7i-ApCLyASZ2YLABg&ved=0CAcQAUoAg&biw=1024&bih=499&safe=active&ssui=on#facrc=&imgdii=&imgrc=1ZnWBzmkPpsFoM%253A%3B0W\\_msWopz1iTrM%3Bhttps%253A%252F%252Fpbs.twimg.com%252Fmedia%252FBH1Zl1CCYAAwyBx.jpg%3Bhttps%253A%252F%252Ftwitter.com%252FMTheresePsalm23%252Fstatus%252F323512756441604096%3B599%3B417](https://www.google.com/search?q=jefferson%27s+ten+rules&espv=2&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ei=Qy7YU7i-ApCLyASZ2YLABg&ved=0CAcQAUoAg&biw=1024&bih=499&safe=active&ssui=on#facrc=&imgdii=&imgrc=1ZnWBzmkPpsFoM%253A%3B0W_msWopz1iTrM%3Bhttps%253A%252F%252Fpbs.twimg.com%252Fmedia%252FBH1Zl1CCYAAwyBx.jpg%3Bhttps%253A%252F%252Ftwitter.com%252FMTheresePsalm23%252Fstatus%252F323512756441604096%3B599%3B417)

**Breaking Away From England Power Point:**

<http://mrmccann2014.weebly.com/history.html>

## Matching Quiz

Proclamation of 1763-

Colonists were expected to pay for anything soldiers needed

Sugar and Currency act-  
coffee, and fabrics

Colonists were expected to pay taxes on sugar,

Stamp Act-

King George made the colonists pay taxes for stamps on every legal document.

Quartering Act-  
that needed it.

Expected to provide food and shelter for any soldier

More taxes-

Paint, Grass and Tea were taxed

Boston Tea Party-

The colonists through 342 chests of tea into the ocean to send a message to King George III.

Intolerable Acts and-

British soldiers took rule over Massachusetts and its harbors.

The First Continental Congress-

The colonists sent a list of complaints to King George III