



Name _____

Got Grievances?

Join, or Die. Directions: This image is a copy of Benjamin Franklin's woodcut, "Join, or Die," printed in newspapers during the French and Indian War in 1754. In that war, Great Britain fought against France over control of land in North America.



1. What do you see?
2. What do you think the letters represent?
3. How do you think the slogan "Join, or Die" relates to the image?
4. What message was Franklin trying to convey through the image?



Got Grievances?

Ah, Freedom...

Imagine having the freedom to make your own decisions all the time. Grownups don't ask you anything, not what you're doing, or even where you're going. There is a lot to love about that! After a time, you really get used to the lack of supervision. Now, suppose this all comes to an abrupt end. For some reason, they've decided that you have to get permission to go anywhere or do anything. You might try to explain that you're mature enough to handle the freedom— after all, you were doing so well. And, if after all your explaining, they don't ease up? You'd probably be pretty angry about having to go back to such strict rules.

The British colonists living in America found themselves in a similar situation leading up to 1776. Britain had followed an “unofficial” policy called **salutary neglect** when it came to managing the colonies in the past. This meant that Parliament, the British legislature, didn't worry all that much about making or enforcing colonial laws. Instead, they let the colonies govern themselves. Britain was so far away that unless the colonies were really getting into trouble, it was just easier to leave them alone. The economic cycle in the colonies worked like this—the colonists would grow things to export to Britain and would buy things from Britain that they couldn't make themselves. This back and forth made British merchants rich and they put that money right back into building the country's wealth. As far as Britain was concerned, there really was no reason to mess with a good thing.

Mercantilism

Even though Britain largely neglected colonial affairs, products manufactured in the colonies, like rice and tobacco, provided a way for Britain to build wealth. Early regulations like the Navigation Acts gave Britain the power to regulate colonial trade. This economic system was called mercantilism.



War Debts

But Not for Long

For nine years, from 1754–1763, Britain spent a large amount of money fighting the **French and Indian War**, a war with France that began over control of the land in the Ohio River valley and soon spread over much of the globe. From the British perspective, this was for the colonists' benefit and would make the colonists safer. After the war, salutary neglect stopped making economic sense. The colonies had become an expensive drain on the British government and the war added even more territory to oversee at a great cost. There were also war debts to be paid. So, whether the colonists liked it or not, things were about to change.

Just Who's in Charge?

After the French and Indian War, the colonies and Britain found themselves in a power struggle. Like Parliament, colonial legislatures made the laws needed to keep things orderly and running smoothly. But, unlike Parliament, the colonies had established systems of government where the elected officials *directly* represented the needs of the people who elected them.

In Britain, members of Parliament *virtually* represented all British citizens, not just the ones who lived nearby. The idea was that Parliament's members had the wisdom to know how to make laws that took everyone's interests into account. But in reality, the system was less than perfect. The problem was that, up until now, Parliament hadn't really been “virtually” representing the colonists. They were simply benefiting from their existence. The colonists had been successfully governing themselves. So, which of these governments had the true authority and right to tax?



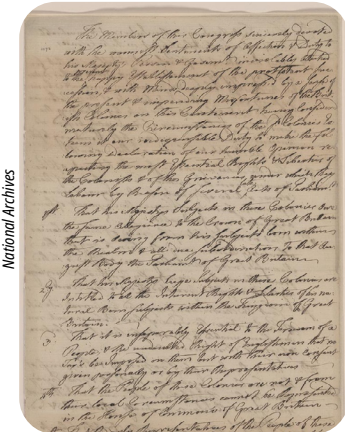


Got Grievances?

No Stamps, No Tax!

In 1765, Parliament introduced the Stamp Act, which created a new tax that required a stamp for all printed items including newspapers, legal documents, and even playing cards. Colonists were angry that the tax was being imposed without the consent, or approval, of their colonial legislatures. They feared this would set a precedent of “taxation without representation”. Parliament was confused. The French and Indian War was fought to protect the colonies. There was a need for money to pay that debt. To raise money, they had no choice but to levy, or charge, taxes on all British subjects—including those in the colonies

This explanation did little to convince the colonists who had been in charge of setting their own taxes for so long. British governing documents, like the Magna Carta, had established the rights of British citizens. They couldn’t just be taxed without having some say. Protests by ordinary people took place in most of Britain’s colonies, from New Hampshire all the way down to the islands of the Caribbean.

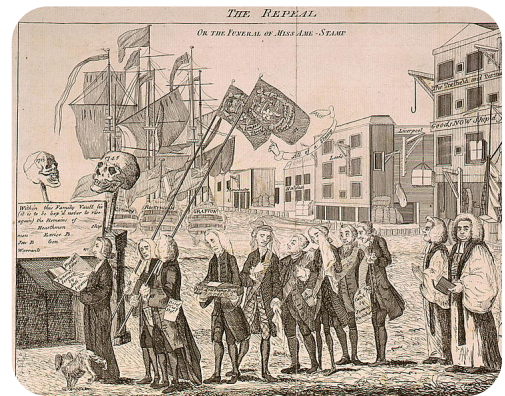


The Stamp Act Congress approved this Declaration of Rights and Grievances. It said taxes could only be imposed by colonial legislatures.

By October 1765, nine colonies decided to organize and sent representatives to a meeting in New York City that became known as the Stamp Act Congress. They met to discuss the colonists’ rights as British subjects, declaring that only their colonial legislatures had the power to tax them. They elected no representative to Parliament, and therefore had not given their consent to any taxes imposed by the British government.

We Said, “NO STAMPS, NO TAX!”

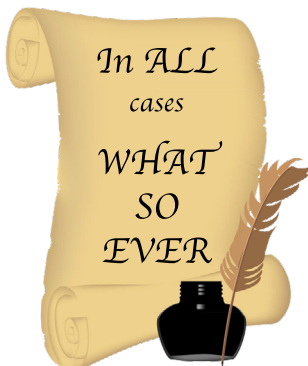
While the Stamp Act Congress decided on a political response, people took matters into their own hands. They wrote letters and newspaper articles urging colonists to refuse to pay the tax. In Boston, a new political group known as the Sons of Liberty formed and attacked the office and home of the stamp commissioner. Women also organized into the Daughters of Liberty. An effigy, or stuffed figure, of the man was burned as a warning. The commissioner quickly resigned. By November 1, 1765, when the Stamp Act was to go into effect, there were no longer any stamp commissioners left in the colonies to collect the tax.



The repeal of the Stamp Act is shown as a funeral procession on a London dock in this 1766 print.

Now Who’s in Charge?

Under all the pressure from the colonies, and powerful London merchants and politicians who depended on their trade, Britain quickly decided to repeal, or cancel, the Stamp Act in 1766. But that very same year, Parliament passed the Declaratory Act that stated that Parliament had the power to make laws to control the colonists “in all cases whatsoever.” It also said that any laws the colonies made that denied or called into question the right of Britain to control the colonies would be null and void. Now, in addition to being taxed without representation, Britain was going to legislate without representation, too. Was this how a government was supposed to treat its people?





Got Grievances?



ArchivePhotos/Getty Images

Despite the risk of being captured and re-enslaved, Crispus Attucks was a leader of the patriots in the Boston Massacre, and was the first casualty of the American Revolution.

Time to Stand Up for Our Rights

In 1767, the Townshend Acts were enacted, taxing British imports to the colonies such as glass, tea, lead, paint, and paper. These were things the colonists couldn't get or easily make for themselves. They were also things that helped colonists make their homes and tables refined--that helped them feel like true Britains. When John Hancock, a prominent Boston citizen, refused to pay the tax on the wine he had aboard his ship *Liberty*, customs officials seized the whole ship. Not just the wine. The move set off a riot. The British officials responded by sending troops to occupy the city, requiring the Massachusetts Council to quarter (house) them in public spaces in the city according to the Quartering Act of 1765.

The Council refused. Colonists saw the Quartering Act as another means of British control. Once again, a law had been passed without their consent. And the French and Indian War was over. Why would the British officials want soldiers stationed in the colonies now, if not to keep the colonists in line? Plus, housing soldiers in colonial barracks and inns required money, which would only be raised through more colonial taxes. By March 5, 1770, British soldiers were guarding the Boston customs house, where taxes were collected. An angry mob gathered outside protesting and taunting them. The British soldiers fired on the crowd, killing five protestors. These were the first deaths of the American Revolution and the incident became known as the Boston Massacre. Tensions were growing in the colonies.

Coming Together Over Tea

To ease the mounting pressure, Britain repealed most of the Townshend Acts in 1770. But the tax on tea remained. Tea was typically consumed at home, and so tensions around it and other goods brought politics into household spaces and women's worlds. To avoid paying the tax, many colonists bought smuggled tea or made their own from herbs. The Daughters of Liberty responded by leading a boycott of a variety of taxed British goods. They chose to go without or to use locally made goods rather than buy imported items. This had a large economic impact and created a new and direct political role for colonial women. Britain was losing money.



To support the struggling British East India Company, Parliament passed the Tea Act in 1773. It allowed only the British East India Company to sell tea in the colonies. The Tea Act wasn't like the other acts Parliament had passed. Since there was already an existing tax on tea still in place from the Townshend Acts, the Tea Act wasn't really raising any money from the colonists. In fact, it lowered the price of tea because the act allowed the East India Company to ship its product to the colonies directly! But colonists saw through the trick. If they purchased the tea, then it would be like saying they accepted Britain's right to levy taxes.

We've Had Enough!

Coercive:

Using force or the threat of force.

Intolerable:

So bad or difficult that you cannot stand it; completely unacceptable.

On December 16, 1773, the Sons of Liberty dressed as members of the Mohawk or Narragansett tribe. The disguise was mostly symbolic. The act of wearing "Indian dress" was to express to the world that the American colonists identified themselves as "Americans" and no longer considered themselves British subjects. They boarded British ships in Boston, and dumped the cargo of tea into the harbor. This event became known as the Boston Tea Party. In 1774, an outraged Parliament punished the Boston patriots by passing the Coercive Acts which ruled that Boston Harbor would be closed until the destroyed tea was paid for. These quickly became

known in the colonies as the Intolerable Acts. This placed a financial strain on merchants and others in Boston who relied on trade conducted in the harbor. The King appointed a British governor and limited the power of the Massachusetts legislature. He also gave judicial authority in the colony over to British judges.



Got Grievances?

Where was Georgia??

Compared to America's other British colonies, Georgia was fairly new. And they still needed Britain's help. During the First Continental Congress, the colony was engaged in violent land disputes with Native American tribes and relied on supplies from the British.



Just the Beginning

Britain thought the punishment would caution other colonies against acting as Massachusetts had, but the Coercive Acts did the opposite. Many colonists united in the belief that their rights were being violated by the King, so they met to discuss it. Each colony, except for Georgia, sent delegates to meet in Philadelphia in 1774 for the First Continental Congress. Faint whispers of independence were in the air. But most colonists still saw themselves as British subjects. They were loyal to the Crown and only wanted to be treated with the rights of their British citizenship. They drafted a petition to the King, naming their grievances with the Intolerable Acts, and asking the King

to repeal them. The petition was ignored so they planned to meet again in May 1775 in Philadelphia. This meeting would be called the Second Continental Congress.

Before the delegates could get to Philadelphia, the fighting started in Massachusetts. In April of 1775, the British army was sent on a mission to capture American patriot leaders and seize their weapons and ammunition. Local colonial soldiers had advance warning and quickly gathered to fight back. Although the battles at Lexington and later at Concord were fairly short, it was a colonial victory because it showed the determination of the American colonists to defend themselves against the advancing British army.

Pamphlets!

Much like a viral post, paper pamphlets were the social media of the time. They spread ideas and information to everyday citizens. *Common Sense* is credited with uniting colonists around the idea of American independence.

It's Common Sense!

Even after fighting began between British soldiers and colonial forces in Massachusetts, there were many still loyal to the King. And war had yet to be officially declared. Many colonists had strong trade or cultural relationships with Great Britain. For some, it didn't make financial sense to become independent. Others had not made a decision one way or the other. They were afraid that breaking away would leave them vulnerable to being colonized by another country. It took some convincing to get some of the undecided to support the cause.

In 1776, Thomas Paine (a recent immigrant from Britain) wrote a famous pamphlet that helped sway public opinion. In *Common Sense*, Paine claimed that Great Britain was a "small island" and had no right to rule an "entire continent" forever. He said that the colonies had a natural right to their own government since men are born equal and one man cannot claim to have a God-given right to rule any of the others. His pamphlet went viral. He convinced many people that it was time for the colonies to claim their freedom.



The Declaration of Independence says "all men are created equal," but what did that really mean in 1776? What would it come to mean later? In 1791, Benjamin Banneker wrote to Thomas Jefferson challenging him and other founders to live up to this ideal.

Let Facts be Submitted... He Has Wronged Us

The Second Continental Congress functioned as the colonial government since it began meeting in 1775. On July 2, 1776, they had formally adopted the Declaration of Independence. This document officially stated that the 13 colonies were cutting ties with Great Britain and the King. The Declaration is broken into three parts. The first part describes the rights of people and how the government should work to protect those rights. Then they wrote a list of every grievance (complaint) they had with British rule. They said that the King was interfering with their law-making ability, taxing them without their consent, and had forced them to make room for British soldiers in their colonies. The final paragraph states that the colonies were officially breaking ties with Great Britain and the delegates courageously signed their names—knowing that doing so was an act of treason (the crime of betraying one's country)!



Name _____

Got Grievances?

A. Fed Up Yet? Independence wasn't declared in a day. Use the events from the reading to make a timeline for independence in the box. Remember to label and add dates in the correct places.

| | | |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| Second Continental Congress | Boston Tea Party | Boston Massacre |
| Stamp Act Congress | Stamp Act passed | Townshend Acts repealed |
| French and Indian War ends | Declaration of Independence signed | Tea Act Passed |
| Coercive Acts passed | Stamp Act repealed | Townshend Acts passed |
| First Continental Congress | Declaratory Act passed | Revolutionary War begins (1775) |

B. What's your Theory? The first tax in this lesson was passed in 1765 and colonists were already at war before all 13 colonies officially agreed to split from Great Britain in 1776. What were the colonists thinking? Does this seem like a long wait or a fast change? Check off the reasons you think apply. Then use your choices to propose a theory to explain why independence couldn't be declared in a day.

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I'm a British subject. Loyalty above everything else! | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sending delegates to meet in one central location takes an awful lot of travel time. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Liberty or... If we fight and fail, we could be executed as traitors. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Look, I'm sure we can work this out and find a peaceful resolution. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Are we really all united? I don't want to risk having to fight other colonies. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Can we really win this thing? Honestly, I'd just rather pay the taxes. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Britain has the largest military in the world. War? No thank you! | <input type="checkbox"/> | If we're really doing this, we need time to organize and build our armies. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Who cares what's happening in Massachusetts? I live in Georgia. | <input type="checkbox"/> | If we keep boycotting, Britain will eventually lift the taxes. Trust the process. |

Theory:



Got Grievances?

C. Respect Our Rights! The colonists believed their rights came from two sources. First, they had natural rights that all people are born with. Second, they had rights as Englishmen, which were protected by law and shared by all British people. Read through the sources of these rights and the grievances. Decide if each grievance is an abuse of a natural right or English right, then explain why it might make you angry.

Natural Rights of Man (John Locke)

Life
Liberty
Property

Rights of Englishmen (Magna Carta, Petition of Rights & English Bill of Rights)

- No freeman shall be taken or imprisoned without fair administration of justice
- The King's subjects should not be taxed but by consent in Parliament
- A standing army within the kingdom in time of peace without the consent of Parliament is against the law
- Excessive bail, fines, or unusual punishment are not to be imposed or inflicted

| Grievances | Abuse of... | I would be angry because... | I'd not be angry because... |
|--|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us. | Natural Right <input type="checkbox"/> English Right <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world. | Natural Right <input type="checkbox"/> English Right <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| For imposing taxes on us without our consent. | Natural Right <input type="checkbox"/> English Right <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury. | Natural Right <input type="checkbox"/> English Right <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| For transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offences. | Natural Right <input type="checkbox"/> English Right <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| For... declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever. | Natural Right <input type="checkbox"/> English Right <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

Think: The colonists believed that by committing these offenses, King George had become a tyrant (an unreasonably controlling and cruel leader). How does a tyrannical government threaten a person's natural rights?



Got Grievances?

D. Tea Time. Colonists boycotted British tea when they were forced to pay a tax for it without their consent. Use the table to examine the effectiveness of their boycott.

Tea Imported from England by America Colonies: 1768- 1775*

(In pounds. For years ending December 24)

| Year | Total | New England | New York | Pennsylvania | Virginia & Maryland | Carolina | Georgia |
|------|---------|-------------|----------|--------------|---------------------|----------|---------|
| 1775 | 22,198 | 8,005 | | | 8,825 | | |
| 1774 | 77,274 | 30,161 | 1,304 | | 31,273 | 4,332 | 3,661 |
| 1773 | 739,221 | 206,312 | 208,385 | 208,191 | 26,491 | 83,959 | 5,070 |
| 1772 | 264,882 | 151,184 | 530 | 128 | 78,117 | 22,916 | 10,265 |
| 1771 | 362,257 | 282,857 | 1,035 | 495 | 32,961 | 36,385 | 5,420 |
| 1770 | 110,386 | 85,935 | 269 | | 18,270 | 1,175 | 2,980 |
| 1769 | 229,439 | 86,004 | 4,282 | 81,729 | 37,355 | 12,982 | 4,426 |
| 1768 | 873,744 | 291,899 | 320,214 | 174,883 | 41,944 | 94,639 | 5,212 |
| 1767 | 480,376 | 152,435 | 177,111 | 87,741 | 36,088 | 24,261 | 2,325 |

*Adapted from U.S. Census, Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial and Pre-Federal Statistics

1. In what years did American colonies import the most tea? How might you explain these increases?

2. The Boston Tea Party occurred on December 16, 1773. Based on data from the chart, how do you infer the colonies reacted? Explain.

3. In what years did American colonies import the least amount of tea? How might you explain why this occurred?

4. Given the numbers in the chart, do you think the colonial boycott on imported British tea was an effective form of protest? Explain your answer.



Name _____

Got Grievances?

E. Have You Heard? Imagine that you are a resident of Boston, Massachusetts in 1774. Your father has just left for Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he will meet up with representatives from other colonies at the Continental Congress. Write a letter to your cousin in Virginia to discuss this important meeting.

In your letter, include how you feel about what's been happening in the colonies, some of the grievances and events the representatives may discuss, and, most importantly, what you are hoping the representatives will do and why.

My Dearest Cousin,



Got Grievances?

In Their Own Words. Read a few of the grievances straight from the Declaration of Independence. Then translate them into modern day English by matching the real text to the correct meaning.



| | |
|---|--|
| <p>He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.</p> | <p>He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat [complete] the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation.</p> |
| <p>He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.</p> | <p>He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.</p> |
| <p>He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.</p> | <p>He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.</p> |
| <p>He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power.</p> | <p>He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.</p> |
| <p>He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.</p> | <p>He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.</p> |
| <p>The King restricted immigration to the colonies and raised property taxes.</p> | <p>The King has made soldiers to be above the law and system of justice.</p> |
| <p>The King has allowed the British Navy to be like pirates; forcing colonists captured at sea to kill family and friends to have their own lives spared.</p> | <p>The King has kept an army in the colonies when we are not at war without the consent of the colonial legislatures.</p> |
| <p>The King has hired and paid a foreign army to fight and kill colonists.</p> | <p>The King has put an end to the colonial legislatures.</p> |
| <p>The King wouldn't pass laws unless colonists gave up their right to representation.</p> | <p>The King has authorized the destruction of colonial property.</p> |
| <p>Instead of protecting the colonies, the King is waging war against us.</p> | <p>The King hired, paid, and fired judges so no trials are fair.</p> |



Got Grievances?

Wait...What Does That Say? Read one of the most famous parts of the Declaration of Independence. It outlines many of the ideas that helped form the government we have today. Meanings have been added in [brackets] following some of the words and ideas that may be unfamiliar. meaning.

We hold these truths to be **self-evident** [easy for anyone to see], that all men are created equal, that they are **endowed** [given] by their Creator with certain **unalienable rights** [basic rights that cannot be taken away], that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. —That to secure these rights, Governments are **instituted** [established] among Men, **deriving** [getting] their just powers from the **consent of the governed** [agreement of the people being ruled]. — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the People to alter or to **abolish** [to change or end] 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... it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.

Part II. Now read this 1777 excerpt from a slave petition for freedom presented to the Massachusetts Legislature. Compare the ideas in this document to those in the Declaration. Some spellings have been corrected in [brackets] and meanings of unfamiliar words are in (parenthesis).

To The Honorable Counsel & House of [Representa]tives for the State of Massachusitte [Massachusetts] Bay in General Court assembled, Jan. 13, 1777.

The petition of A Great Number of Blackes detained in a State of slavery in the Bowels of a free & Christian Country Humbly shuwith [showeth] that your Petitioners **apprehend** (understand) that thay [they] have in Common with all other men a Natural and Unaliable [unalienable] Right to that freedom which the **Grat Parent of the Unavers** (God) hath Bestowed equalley on all menkind and which they have Never **forfuted** [forfeited] (lost) by any Compact or agreement whatever—but thay wher Unjustly Dragged by the hand of cruel Power from their Derest friends and sum [some] of them Even torn from the Embraces of their tender Parents—from A popolous Pleasant and plentiful contry and in violation of Laws of Nature and off [of] Nations and in defiance of all the tender feelings of humanity Brough [brought] hear [here] Either to Be sold Like Beast of Burthen & Like them **Condemnd** (sentenced) to Slavery for Life [...]

[In Imitat]ion of the Lawdable Example of the Good People of these States your petitiononers have Long and Patiently waited the Evnt of petition after petition By them presented to the Legislative Body of this state and cannot but with Grief Reflect that their Success hath ben but too similar they Cannot but express their **Astonishment** (amazement) that It has Never Bin Considered that Every Principle form [from] which Amarica [America] has Acted in the Cours [course] of their unhappy Dificultes with Great Briton [Britain] Pleads Stronger than A thousand arguments in favowrs [favor] of your petioners they therfor humble **Beseech** (ask) your honours to give this petion [petition] its due weight & consideration & cause an act of the Legislatur to be past [passed] Wherby they may be **Restored** (returned) to the Enjoyments of that which is the Naturel Right of all men—and their Children who wher Born in this Land of Liberty may not be heald [held] as Slaves after they arrive at the age of twenty one years so may the Inhabitance of this Stats No longer **chargeable** (connected) with the inconsistancy [inconsistency] of acting themselves the part which they **condem** [condemn] (disapprove of) and oppose in others **Be prospered** (grow) in their present Glorious struggle for Liberty and have those Blessing to them, &c.



Got Grievances?

Wait...What Does That Say? Now use the excerpts to answer the questions for each document. Refer back to the documents as needed. It may help to read each document more than once.

Excerpt One: The Declaration of Independence

1. What unalienable rights do all people have?

2. Where did they get these rights?

3. Why do we need government?

4. Where do governments get their power?

5. What right do people have if government becomes destructive?

Excerpt Two: Petition for Freedom to the Massachusetts Legislature

1. What grievance do the petitioners have?

2. What do they say that they understand?

3. How did their capture from their own country violate laws of nature?

4. What have they been waiting for? And why are they amazed?

5. Why do you think they feel that America's principles plead stronger than a thousand of their own arguments for freedom?

