

# The Writing of the Declaration of Independence

Hi Alex! This reading worksheet was made just for you.

**Directions:** Read the passage carefully. Then answer each question using details from the passage, and write your answer on the line or circle the best choice.

## How the Declaration Was Written

In 1776, many American colonists wanted independence from Britain. Independence means freedom from being ruled by another country. To explain this important choice, leaders decided to write a declaration. A declaration is an official statement that announces an important decision or belief.

A committee was chosen to do this special job. A committee is a small group picked to work on something important. The committee asked Thomas Jefferson to write most of the draft. A draft is the first version of a piece of writing before it is finished.

After Jefferson wrote the draft, other leaders read it carefully. They wanted to revise it by changing some parts to make the writing stronger and clearer. They talked about details, or important facts, that supported the main idea. When the leaders were satisfied, they voted to approve the document. To approve something means to officially accept it after reviewing it. On July 4, the Declaration of Independence was approved.



## How the Declaration Was Written — Questions

Answer each question using details from the passage on page 1.

### Example

**According to the passage, what does independence mean?**

Look back at the first paragraph. The passage says, "Independence means freedom" from being ruled by another country."

Write the answer as a complete idea:

**Independence means freedom from being ruled by another country.**



1. Who wrote most of the first draft of the Declaration of Independence?

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2. What is a committee?

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3. Why did the leaders revise the draft?

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4. Which word means the first version of writing before it is finished?

- ☐ declaration
- ☐ draft
- ☐ detail

5. Yes or No: The Declaration of Independence was approved before Thomas Jefferson wrote a draft.

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6. What does the word *approve* mean in the passage?

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7. Which detail best shows that the leaders worked together on the document?

- ☐ Many colonists wanted independence from Britain.
- ☐ Other leaders read the draft, suggested changes, and then voted to approve it.
- ☐ The document was approved on July 4.



## **The Writing of the Declaration of Independence — Answer Key**

Passage: How the Declaration Was Written

Example: According to the passage, what does independence mean? Look back at the first paragraph. The passage says, "Independence means freedom from being ruled by another country." Write the answer as a complete idea: Independence means freedom from being ruled by another country.

1. Who wrote most of the first draft of the Declaration of Independence? → Thomas Jefferson
2. What is a committee? → A small group chosen to do a special job.
3. Why did the leaders revise the draft? → They revised it to make the writing stronger and clearer.
4. Which word means the first version of writing before it is finished? → draft
5. Yes or No: The Declaration of Independence was approved before Thomas Jefferson wrote a draft. → No
6. What does the word approve mean in the passage? → To officially accept something after reviewing it carefully.
7. Which detail best shows that the leaders worked together on the document? → Other leaders read the draft, suggested changes, and then voted to approve it.