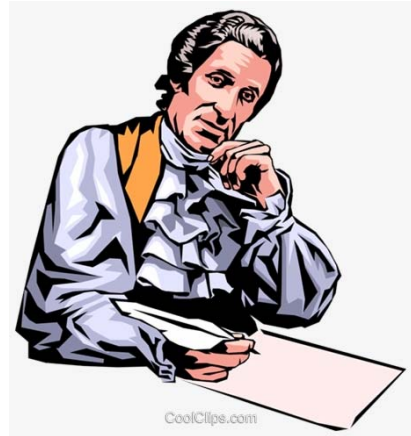


Name \_\_\_\_\_

## The Fundamental Principles of the Declaration of Independence



The Declaration of Independence, a cornerstone of American history, is not merely a declaration of separation from Great Britain; it is a statement of profound ideals and principles that continue to shape the United States to this day.

### Natural Rights

The Declaration of Independence asserts that all individuals are endowed with certain unalienable rights, including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. These rights are considered inherent and cannot be taken away by any government or authority. The concept of natural

rights was foundational in justifying the American colonies' quest for independence, as it emphasized the importance of protecting these rights from government infringement.

### Government by Consent

Another key principle highlighted in the declaration is the idea that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. In other words, legitimate governments are established with the approval and agreement of the people they govern. This principle laid the groundwork for democratic governance, where citizens have the right to choose their leaders through elections.

### The Right to Revolution

The Declaration of Independence boldly proclaims that when a government becomes destructive of the people's rights and no longer serves their interests, the people have the right to alter or abolish it and institute a new government. This principle underscores the importance of safeguarding individual liberties and the right to resist oppressive rule.

### Equality

While the ideal of equality is not explicitly mentioned in the declaration, it is implicit in the document's emphasis on natural rights and the idea that all individuals are created equal. The declaration contributed to the ongoing struggle for equality and justice, including movements for civil rights and gender equality.

### Self-Determination

The declaration represents a commitment to the principle of self-determination, the idea that people have the right to determine their own political status and make decisions about their own future. The American colonists sought to determine their own destiny and establish a government that reflected their values and interests.

### The Declaration's Enduring Legacy

These fundamental principles outlined in the Declaration of Independence have left an indelible mark on the United States and its system of government. They continue to guide and inspire the nation, serving as a reminder of the ideals upon which it was founded. The declaration's influence extends beyond the borders of the United States, inspiring movements for freedom and democracy around the world.

