

Name _____

Holding History: The Original Declaration of Independence

Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. Independence Hall in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is significant because it was the location where the Second Continental Congress met and debated the Declaration of Independence. It was in this historic building that the declaration was adopted, signifying the colonies' resolve to declare independence from British rule. The iconic Liberty Bell, associated with the declaration, also once hung in the tower of Independence Hall, further cementing its historical importance.
2. The National Archives takes extensive measures to preserve and protect the original Declaration of Independence. The document is stored in an airtight case filled with argon gas to prevent oxidation and deterioration. It is shielded from harmful UV rays and kept under controlled temperature and humidity conditions to maintain its integrity. Safeguarding the document is essential to ensure it remains accessible to future generations and continues to serve as a symbol of American freedom.
3. The National Archives is committed to providing public access to important historical documents, including the Declaration of Independence. This commitment is rooted in the belief that these documents belong to the American people and should be accessible for educational and research purposes. Public access allows individuals to connect with their history, gain a deeper understanding of the nation's founding principles, and appreciate the significance of these documents in shaping the United States.
4. Displaying the original Declaration of Independence alongside the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights in the Rotunda for the Charters of Freedom sends a powerful message about the foundational documents of the United States. It symbolizes the core principles on which the nation was built, including liberty, democracy, and individual rights. Together, these documents represent the enduring values and ideals that continue to guide the United States and its democratic system of government.

