

## Analyzing Excerpts from the Declaration of Independence

**Part 1** You will receive a card with excerpts from the Declaration of Independence written in modern language. Work with your partner to match those modern excerpts with the actual excerpts from the Declaration in the chart.

Have your teacher check your answers. If your answers are correct, copy the modern versions into the chart. Then get a new card and repeat the process.

Excerpts from the Declaration of Independence	Excerpts in Modern Language
<p><b>Excerpt 1:</b> When in the Course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another . . . a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.</p>	<p>Principle of government: ____</p>
<p><b>Excerpt 2:</b> We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.</p>	<p>Principle of government: ____</p>
<p><b>Excerpt 3:</b> That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.</p>	<p>Principle of government: ____</p>
<p><b>Excerpt 4:</b> That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government.</p>	<p>Principle of government: ____</p>
<p><b>Excerpt 5:</b> The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States.</p>	<p>Principle of government: ____</p>
<p><b>Excerpt 6:</b> In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler.</p>	<p>Principle of government: ____</p>
<p><b>Excerpt 7:</b> These United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved.</p>	<p>Principle of government: ____</p>

**Part 2**

1. The following four principles of government are used in the Declaration of Independence to make the argument for independence. Fill in the missing words.

**Principle 1** All \_\_\_\_\_ are created equal.

**Principle 2** All people have basic \_\_\_\_\_ that cannot be taken away.

**Principle 3** The government gets its power to make decisions and protect rights from the \_\_\_\_\_ .

**Principle 4** When the government does not protect the \_\_\_\_\_ of the people, the \_\_\_\_\_ have the right to \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ the government.

2. Identify which principle of government is expressed in each of the seven excerpts from the Declaration of Independence. Excerpts may express more than one principle.

Write the numbers of the principles in the chart. Also underline the portions of the excerpts that support your choices.

## Excerpts in Modern Language

**A** We now consider ourselves to be an independent country. We have no more loyalty to Great Britain and they no longer have the power to rule over us.

**B** When a government takes away the rights of citizens, the citizens have the right to change the government or create a new one.

**C** All people have some basic rights that cannot be taken away. Liberty is one of those rights.

**D** The current ruler of Great Britain has repeatedly interfered with colonists' rights, sometimes even taking them away. He has ruled unfairly over the American colonies.

**E** Governments are formed to make sure people's rights are protected. The power to govern comes from the people.

**F** Every time we colonists felt we were being treated unfairly, we wrote the king. He answered by treating us more unfairly. A ruler who abuses his power should not rule us.

**G** When people break away from a country to form a new nation, they should explain why they are doing it.