

Thomas Jefferson Integrated Reading and CRITICAL THOUGHT Activities

For Grades 5-8

16 INTEGRATED ACTIVITIES
Perfect for Interactive Notebooks
Perfect for Morning Work or Assessments

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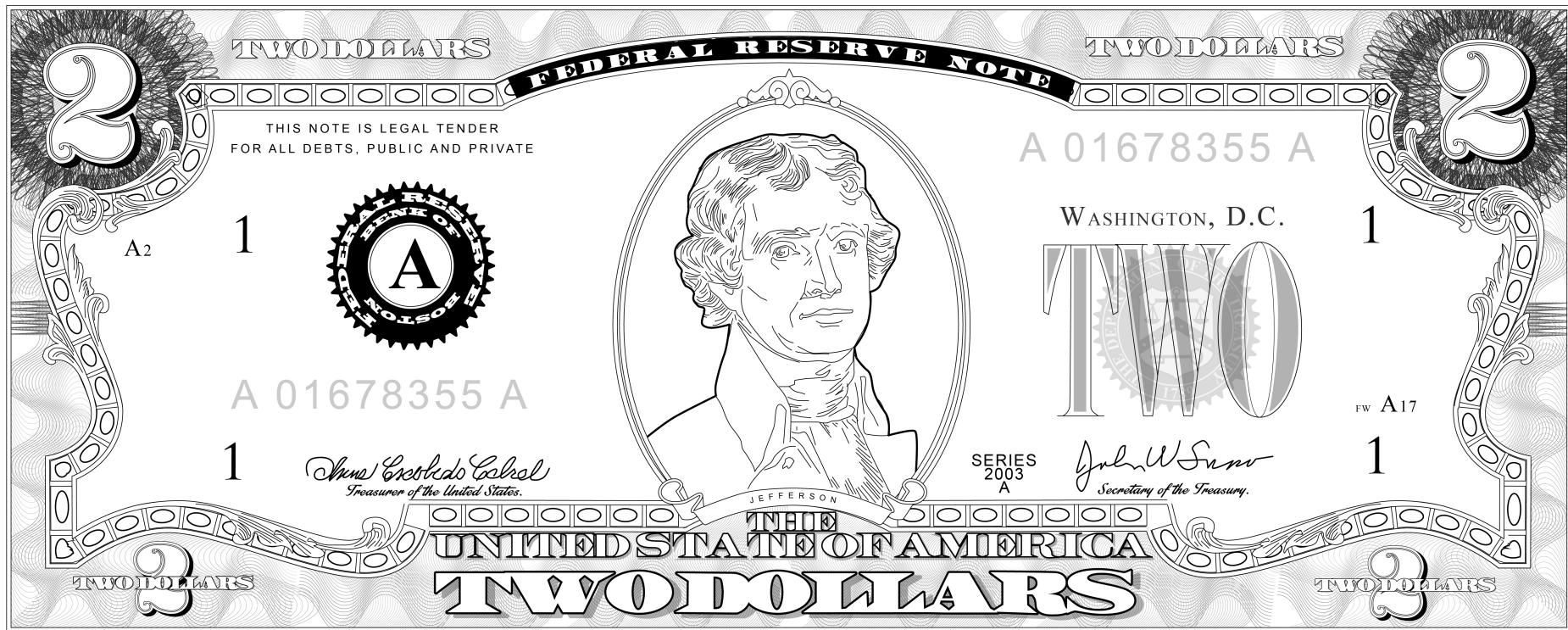
Thomas Jefferson	B, D, France, A, C, C, Louisiana, D, A, B
Thomas Jefferson and the Barbary Pirates	D, C, B, D
Thomas Jefferson and the University of Virginia	C, A, B, D, D, C, B
Declaration of Independence	D, B, C, C, A, C, A, B, B, A
Republicans vs Federalists	C, A, B, D, A, D, B
July 4, 1826 – the Deaths of Jefferson and Adams	B, C, B, D, B, D, C

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University of Virginia Printable Reading Comprehension

Name _____

The University of Virginia was founded in 1819 by Thomas Jefferson in Charlottesville, Virginia. It was built on land originally owned by America's fifth president, and trustee of the university, James Monroe. Jefferson envisioned the university as a center of knowledge separate from religious influence. Although Jefferson attended the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia, he became unhappy with the institution because of its emphasis on religion over science.

Jefferson's University of Virginia would prove an entirely different educational experience than of typical universities of the time. First, students could attend any of eight independent schools where they could focus on medicine, law, chemistry, ancient languages, modern languages, natural philosophy, and moral philosophy. The university would become the first to allow students to focus their educations on astronomy, architecture, botany, philosophy, and political science. In most other universities, student choices were limited to law, medicine, or divinity.

The University of Virginia was the first university to be centered around a library instead of a church. The university reflected Jefferson's strong position concerning a separation of church and state and lacked a school of divinity. Jefferson believed religion stifled education and that the University of Virginia would be a place "based on the illimitable freedom of the human mind." It held its first classes on March 7, 1825. Jefferson was intimately involved with the university and often hosted dinners for faculty and students at his nearby home, *Monticello*. Jefferson was so proud of his university, that he included "Father of the University of Virginia" on his gravestone.

- 1. Why was Thomas Jefferson unhappy with the College of William and Mary?**
 - He thought it emphasized science over religion
 - He thought it emphasized law over science
 - He thought it emphasized religion over science
 - He thought it failed to emphasize religion enough

2. What question is not answered in the passage?

- A. What classes did Jefferson teach?
- B. How was Jefferson involved with the university?
- C. Why did Thomas Jefferson decide to establish the university?
- D. What kinds of classes could students take?

3. What made the University of Virginia different from other universities?

- A. Religion was an important part of studies at the University of Virginia
- B. A library was at the center of the university
- C. It was built on land owned by Thomas Jefferson
- D. All of the above

4. To which of the following would Thomas Jefferson likely agree?

- A. It is a university's responsibility to teach religion to its students
- B. When done correctly, religion is a positive influence on education
- C. The focus of students should remain firmly fixed on medicine or law
- D. Students are best served by universities with the absence of religion

5. What does Jefferson mean by “illimitable” in the sentence below?

Jefferson believed religion stifled education and that the University of Virginia would be a place “based on the illimitable freedom of the human mind.”

- A. living
- B. mortal
- C. ending
- D. unlimited

6. For which of the following statements could the following be used as supporting evidence?

Jefferson was intimately involved with the university and often hosted dinners for faculty and students at his nearby home, *Monticello*.

- A. The university allowed students to pursue many paths of study
- B. Thomas Jefferson was very proud of the University of Virginia
- C. Thomas Jefferson enjoyed interacting with the people of his university
- D. Thomas Jefferson built the University of Virginia around a library instead of a church

7. Which is NOT true about the University of Virginia?

- A. It provided a different educational experience from other colleges and universities at the time
- B. Classes began in 1819
- C. James Monroe was one of the university's original trustees
- D. Students could pursue studies focused on astronomy, architecture, and many other topics



Name _____

Recess: An Unalienable Right?

In the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson speaks of unalienable (natural, or those that cannot be taken away) rights such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Surprisingly, he makes no mention of recess (ha ha!). As a student, do you think recess is an unalienable right, or, do you think it is a privilege that teachers should be able to take away for bad behavior, missing homework etc.? In your persuasive essay, make sure you use specific points in your argument to support your feelings on the matter. You can even make up a fictional statistic or expert quote to strengthen your argument



Revolutionary Figures and Social Media

Everybody today knows how important social media on the internet is. It's how many of us get our news, keep up with friends and relatives, and blow off steam with games and instant messaging. What if such sites existed during the Revolutionary War era? Design a social media page for your favorite revolutionary figure, complete with pictures, statuses, quote, favorites, and even the "wall." Alternatively, you could use this activity for any figure in history or character in literature.

Revbook		Information	Likes
Picture		Works as:	*
		Lives in:	*
		Born in:	*
		Studied at:	*
Pictures		Friends ()	
		Wall	

Famous Presidential Quotes Part 1 - Attribution Name _____

Match the quote with its correct president. Color the matching cells the same color.
How many can you correctly identify?

Theodore Roosevelt	"And so my fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country."
Franklin D. Roosevelt	"... With malice toward none, with charity for all..."
John F. Kennedy	"Speak softly and carry a big stick."
Thomas Jefferson	"Character is the only secure foundation of state."
Abraham Lincoln	"The only thing to fear is fear itself."
George Washington	"Few men have virtue to withstand the highest bidder"
Calvin Coolidge	"I have never advocated war except as a means for peace
Ulysses S. Grant	"One man with courage is a majority."

Read the presidential quotes. Which is your favorite? What do you think it means? One example has been done for you.

On January 20, 1861, John F. Kennedy uttered the famous words *"And so my fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country..."* at his inaugural address.

Kennedy is urging the public to do what is right for the greater good, rather than what is best for the individual.

On the next page, choose a quote and describe what you think it means.

Presidential Quote:

Meaning:

Answers:

Theodore Roosevelt	“And so my fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country.”
Franklin D. Roosevelt	“... With malice toward none, with charity for all...”
John F. Kennedy	“Speak softly and carry a big stick.”
Thomas Jefferson	“Character is the only secure foundation of state.”
Abraham Lincoln	“The only thing to fear is fear itself.”
George Washington	“Few men have virtue to withstand the highest bidder”
Calvin Coolidge	“I have never advocated war except as a means for peace
Ulysses S. Grant	“One man with courage is a majority.”

Mockingbird



If you live anywhere in the southern two-thirds of the United States, the mockingbird is likely a familiar sight. While the mockingbird is certainly a handsome bird, it's not its looks that make it remarkable, but rather, its incredible vocal repertoire. The mockingbird is one of the most prolific songsters in the avian world. It can "sing" for hours on end from conspicuous perches on rooftops, telephone wires, or exposed branches. A clue to what really makes it unique among birds, however, is embedded in its name! Not only can it imitate the songs of other birds such as blue jays, killdeer, cardinals, and robins, but it can make "expert" imitations of car alarms, whistles, dogs barking, cats meowing, or any other range of everyday sounds. Often times, the mockingbird mixes in everyday sounds with its own warbles and calls, producing a bizarre chain of auditory wonders.

The mockingbird has actually played a role in American history. America's third president, Thomas Jefferson kept a mockingbird he named "Dick" as a pet. "Dick" was thought to be the first pet to live in the White House. Jefferson was known to be extremely fond of his pet, which he considered to be a superior to other birds. In the quote below, Jefferson congratulates a friend who had identified a mockingbird in her yard.

I sincerely congratulate you on the arrival of the Mocking bird. Learn all the children to venerate it as a superior being in the form of a bird, or as a being which will haunt them if any harm is done to itself or its eggs. I shall hope that the multiplication of the cedar in the neighborhood, and of trees and shrubs round the house, will attract more of them: for they like to be in the neighborhood of our habitations, if they furnish cover."

In addition to Jefferson's admiration of the mockingbird, five southern states (Texas, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas and Florida) claim the mockingbird as state bird.

As for the mockingbird itself, it is mostly gray with a long tail. It has bold white wing patches that flash while it is in flight. Mockingbirds often live in suburban neighborhoods but usually avoid deep forests. They can be aggressive near their nests and will regularly dive-bomb cats, dogs, and even humans who approach to closely.

1. Which of the following would be an unusual observation?

- A. A mockingbird imitating a car horn
- B. A mockingbird singing within a thick forest
- C. A mockingbird singing for hours
- D. A mockingbird singing from an exposed branch

2. Which of the words in the following two sentences means “easily seen”?

The mockingbird is one of the most prolific songsters in the avian world. It can “sing” for hours on end from conspicuous perches on rooftops, telephone wires, or exposed branches.

- A. perches
- B. songsters
- C. prolific
- D. conspicuous

3. According to the author, what makes the mockingbird remarkable?

- A. Its appearance
- B. The fact that it can imitate a car alarm
- C. The incredible range of sounds it can make
- D. The fact that it is common in the southern two-thirds of the United States

4. What “warning” does Thomas Jefferson offer in his quote?

- A. Make sure your children learn about the mockingbird or else they might be haunted
- B. Do not plant cedar trees near a mockingbird’s nest
- C. Planting the wrong kinds of trees can hurt mockingbirds
- D. Harming a mockingbird or its eggs carries consequences

5. Which of the following supports the idea that the mockingbird is a popular bird?

- A. It is the state bird for five different states
- B. It lives in suburban neighborhoods
- C. It was the first pet to live in the White House
- D. Thomas Jefferson considered the mockingbird superior to other birds

6. Which is NOT true about mockingbirds?

- A. They have white wing patches
- B. Mockingbirds have long tails
- C. The mockingbird is the state bird of Arkansas
- D. Mockingbirds avoid places that humans live

7. According to Thomas Jefferson, what are the ways to attract mockingbirds to yards? Circle all that apply

- A. Plant trees and shrubs around the house
- B. Plant cedar trees in the neighborhood
- C. Provide cover
- D. Set up nesting boxes

The Louisiana Purchase has been described as the “greatest real estate deal in history.” In 1803, The United States government purchased the Louisiana Territory from Napoleon I of France for 60 million Francs, or, about \$15,000,000. \$11,250,000 was paid directly and the remainder was covered by French debt to U.S. citizens.

The Louisiana Purchase was consummated in order to secure free navigation of the Mississippi River. President Jefferson sent two negotiators – James Monroe and Robert Livingston to France to convince Napoleon I to sell the city of New Orleans. Time was of the essence because many viewed Napoleon’s acquisition of the Louisiana Territory as a means to invade the United States. Surprisingly, Napoleon offered not only New Orleans, but the entire Louisiana Territory for sale. Because a constitutional amendment authorizing the acquisition would take too long, and because Napoleon wanted the deal finalized quickly, Jefferson held the issue to a vote. Americans overwhelmingly voted in favor of purchasing the Louisiana Territory. Its 800,000 square mile area quickly doubled the size of the United States. Soon after the acquisition, Jefferson sent Meriwether Lewis and William Clark on an expedition through the new lands in which hundreds of new animals were discovered as well as Native American tribes and a route to the Pacific Ocean.

1. What was surprising about the Louisiana Purchase?

- A. Thomas Jefferson sent Lewis and Clark to explore it
- B. Napoleon offered New Orleans and the entire Louisiana Territory
- C. Americans overwhelmingly supported the purchase
- D. It was called the “greatest real estate deal in history”

2. Which of the following was not true?

- A. The Louisiana Territory doubled the size of America
- B. The Louisiana Purchase was made so that America could secure free navigation to the Pacific Ocean
- C. The United States government purchased the Louisiana Territory for \$15 million.
- D. Thomas Jefferson believed a constitutional amendment would take too long.

3. What are “negotiators” as used in the following sentence?

President Jefferson sent two negotiators – James Monroe and Robert Livingston to France to convince Napoleon I to sell the city of New Orleans.

- A. People who are sent to other countries
- B. People who bring gifts to the leaders of other countries
- C. People who serve in the military
- D. People who try to make the best deals possible

4. What was the effect of the Louisiana Purchase? Circle all that apply.

- A. Lewis and Clark documented the Native Americans and wildlife of the region
- B. The United States became a much larger country
- C. Napoleon Bonaparte wanted the deal to be finalized quickly
- D. A constitutional amendment was eventually made

5. Why was the timing of the Louisiana Purchase so important?

- A. Some believed that Napoleon would invade the United States through the Louisiana Territory
- B. It was important that Lewis and Clark begin their journey
- C. The United States needed to find a way to the Pacific Ocean as soon as possible
- D. The French debt to American citizens was growing

6. Why did the Americans originally want to purchase New Orleans?

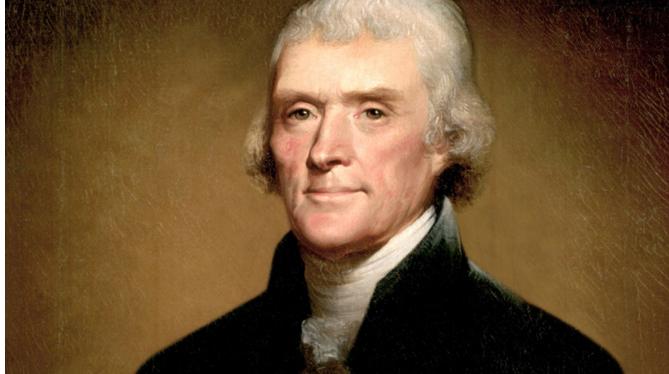
- A. To find a path to the Pacific Ocean
- B. They preferred not to negotiate with Napoleon
- C. To have full navigation of the Mississippi River
- D. So that Lewis and Clark could explore the Louisiana Territory

7. Why is the Louisiana Purchase sometimes called the “greatest real estate deal in history?”

- A. Because the United States acquired a lot of land for a big price
- B. Because the United States acquired a small amount of land for a big price
- C. Because the United States acquired a small amount of land for a little price
- D. Because the United States acquired a lot of land for a little price

Compare and Thomas Jefferson and James Madison

Name _____



Jefferson

Madison

Read the narratives at: <https://mrnussbaum.com/thomas-jefferson-biography>
and <https://mrnussbaum.com/james-madison-biography>

Then, organize the statements below into: Jefferson, Madison, or both.

Statements:

1. Worked on important documents in American history
2. Born in Virginia
3. Was part of George Washington's cabinet
4. Co-wrote the Federalist Papers
5. Was president of the United States
6. Led the country through a major war
7. Was part of the Democratic Party
8. Lived at Monticello
9. Was Secretary of State
10. Lived to be 80 years old or more

Jefferson	Both	Madison

Answers:

Jefferson	Both	Madison
3. 8.	1. 2. 5. 7. 9. 10.	4. 6.

Thomas Jefferson Reading Comprehension

Thomas Jefferson was born April 13, 1743, in Albemarle County, Virginia. When he was 14, he inherited his father's estate and slaves. Soon after, Jefferson attended the College of William and Mary.

In 1769, when he was just 26, Jefferson was elected to the Virginia House of Representatives. The following year, he married Martha Wayles Skelton. In 1772, Jefferson began building his home, Monticello.

As a member of the Second Continental Congress, Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence in 1776. In 1779, he was elected as governor of Virginia. Although he resigned in 1781, during his term as governor, Jefferson wrote his famous Statute for Religious Freedom. Jefferson's writings also formed the basis of the Ordinances of 1784, 1785, and 1787. From 1785–1789, Jefferson served as minister to France. In 1789, George Washington appointed him secretary of state.

Due to political differences concerning the role of the government with other cabinet members, Jefferson resigned as secretary of state in 1793. Jefferson next ran for president but was defeated in 1796 by John Adams. Nevertheless, he was appointed vice president. Although Jefferson and Aaron Burr received equal electoral votes for presidency, Jefferson was elected president by the House of Representatives in 1800. During Jefferson's presidency, both the Louisiana Purchase and the Lewis and Clark Expedition occurred. Jefferson served two presidential terms. He later established the University of Virginia. He died on July 4, 1826, the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Coincidentally, John Adams died on the same day.

1.) When was Thomas Jefferson born?

- a.) 1734
- b.) 1743
- c.) 1473
- d.) 1762

2.) Which of the following documents was Thomas Jefferson not involved with?

- a.) Declaration of Independence
- b.) Statute on Religious Freedom
- c.) Ordinance of 1784
- d.) Ordinance of 1786

3.) Thomas Jefferson served as minister to what country? _____

4.) Why did Thomas Jefferson resign as secretary of state?

- a.) Political differences between cabinet members.
- b.) He was about to be president.
- c.) He had to write the Declaration of Independence.
- d.) He was fired.

5.) Which of the following did Thomas Jefferson not serve as before he was president?

- a.) vice president
- b.) governor
- c.) senator
- d.) secretary of state

6.) When was Thomas Jefferson defeated in the presidential election?

- a.) Before he wrote the Declaration of Independence.
- b.) Before he was minister to France.
- c.) After he was minister to France.
- d.) 1792

7.) The _____ Purchase occurred during Jefferson's presidency.

8.) What happened last?

- a.) Jefferson was elected president.
- b.) Jefferson founded the University of Virginia.
- c.) The Lewis and Clark Expedition
- d.) John Adams died.

9.) When did Jefferson write the Statute for Religious Freedom?

- a.) While he was governor
- b.) When he was 26
- c.) While he was vice president
- d.) Before he wrote the Declaration of Independence

10.) What does "inherited" mean?

- a.) Given away in a will
- b.) Received from a will
- c.) Taken over
- d.) Destroyed

Virtual History Teacher
Thomas Jefferson Test

Name: _____

Instructions: You are playing the role of a history teacher who is grading the test below. See the questions and your “student’s” answers. Grade the quality of the answers on a scale of 1-4, “1” being a poor answer and “4” being a great answer. For each answer you grade, use your knowledge of Thomas Jefferson, or, reference the mrnussbaum.com online biography, to add the missing pieces.

Question 1: Describe how Thomas Jefferson was a “Founding Father” even before he became president?	Score:
Student Answer: He wrote the Declaration of Independence.	
Your Response:	

Question 2: What important events happened while Jefferson was president?	Score:
Student Answer: During Jefferson’s presidency, the United States purchased the Louisiana Territory from France.	
Your Response:	

Question 3: What did Thomas Jefferson accomplish after he was president?	Score:
Student Answer: Jefferson created an important university.	
Your Response:	

Possible Answers:

Question 1: Describe how Thomas Jefferson was a “Founding Father” even before he became president?	Score:
Student Answer: He wrote the Declaration of Independence. Your Response: Thomas Jefferson not only wrote the Declaration of Independence, but two separate religious statutes. Furthermore, he served as governor, secretary of state, and vice-president before he was elected as president.	

Question 2: What important events happened while Jefferson was president?	Score:
Student Answer: During Jefferson’s presidency, the United States purchased the Louisiana Territory from France. Your Response: Your answer is incomplete. Not only did Jefferson’s presidency include the Louisiana Purchase, but it also included the First Barbary War and the incredible Lewis and Clark expedition.	

Question 3: What did Thomas Jefferson accomplish after he was president?	Score:
Student Answer: Jefferson created an important university. Your Response: Again, your answer is incomplete and fails to elaborate. Jefferson did create an important university: The University of Virginia. It was important because it was the first university that emphasized academics over religion and thus was the first university to be centered around a library rather than a church.	

Federalists v Republicans

The Federalist Party was America's first political party, formed chiefly by Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton during his tenure in George Washington's cabinet. The Federalist Party believed in strong central Government, a national banking system and good relations and trade with England. The Federalist Party quickly gained strength throughout New England and in the urban areas of the middle states.

Those who opposed the Federalist Party would become known as Republicans or Jeffersonians. Led by Thomas Jefferson, Republicans favored an agricultural economic base rather than one based on banking and opposed the idea of strengthening ties with Great Britain. Republicans dominated the politics of the Southern states and much of America's farmlands.

The partisan politics that emerged in the 1700's threatened to tear the new country apart as Both Hamilton and Jefferson were key members of George Washington's cabinet. Washington tried unsuccessfully to mediate between the two, but was known to favor Hamilton's view on politics above anyone else. As a result, Jefferson would resign as Secretary of State in 1793, after he unsuccessfully introduced legislation in Congress that would have effectively dissolved Hamilton's position as Secretary of the Treasury. Republicans would win back the seat of power in 1801 with the election of Thomas Jefferson as President and the subsequent splitting of the Federalist Party. The Federalist Party would be virtually dissolved after expressing opposition to the War of 1812 and completely gone by 1825.

1. Which of the following was NOT supported by Federalists?

- A. America should have good relations with England
- B. America should have a strong central government
- C. America's economy should be based on agriculture
- D. America should have a national banking system

2. George Washington...

- A. was known to favor Hamilton's thoughts on politics.
- B. appointed Jefferson to Secretary of Treasury.
- C. appointed Hamilton to Secretary of State.
- D. usually agreed with Thomas Jefferson.

3. What was the effect of the election of Thomas Jefferson?

- A. The Republicans became weaker
- B. The Federalists split
- C. The War of 1812 started
- D. Jefferson resigned as Secretary of State

4. Which of the following is accurate?

- A. The Federalists were popular in the South and the Republicans were popular in New England and the urban areas
- B. The Federalists were dissolved when Thomas Jefferson was elected president
- C. Republicans were formed before the Federalists
- D. Republicans rejected strengthening ties with England

5. What does “mediate” mean in the sentence below?

Washington tried unsuccessfully to mediate between the two, but was known to favor Hamilton's view on politics above anyone else.

- A. bridge differences
- B. choose
- C. disagree
- D. judge

6. “Opposition to the War of 1812” is the answer to which question?

- A. Why did the Federalist Party split?
- B. Why was Thomas Jefferson elected president?
- C. Why did Thomas Jefferson resign from Washington's cabinet?
- D. What was the main reason the Federalists dissolved?

7. Why did Thomas Jefferson resign from Washington's cabinet?

- A. Washington was not a Republican
- B. Washington seemed to favor the politics of Alexander Hamilton
- C. He felt Washington was a bad president
- D. Because the Federalist Party would split



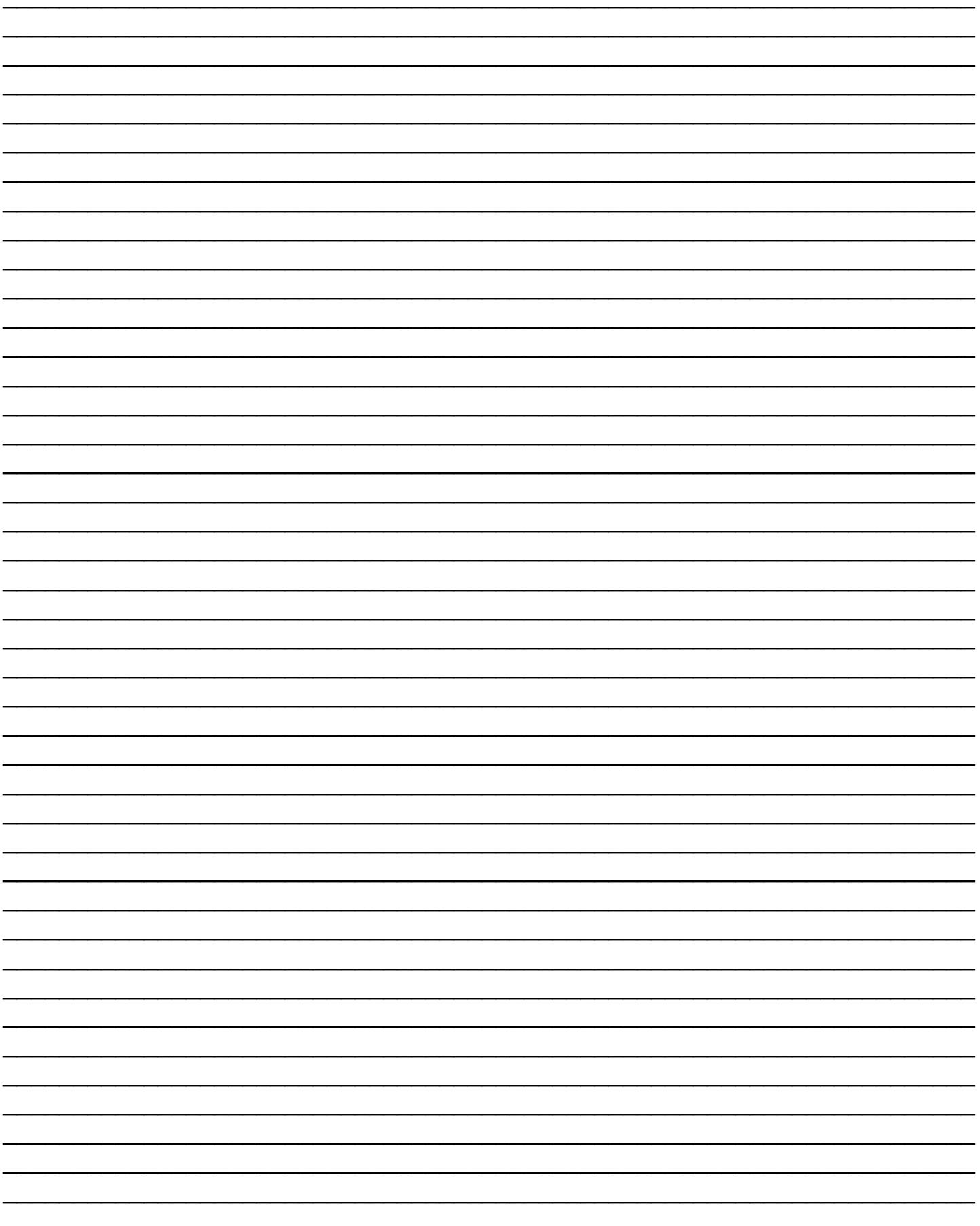
The \$4.00 Declaration of Independence

In 1989, a man in Philadelphia purchased an old painting at a flea market for \$4.00. He bought for the painting for its worn, yet ornate frame and decided to tear the painting away. Behind the canvas, however, he found an old, folded document and recognized it as the Declaration of Independence. Believing it was simply an old copy, he it aside for a few years before a friend urged him to contact a professional.

The man contacted Sotheby's, a famous auction house and authentication service. Sotheby's executive vice president David Redden traveled to Pennsylvania to take a look. Immediately, he realized the folded piece of paper was an original copy of the Declaration of Independence. Only 25 are known to exist. The owner of the document sold it at auction through Sotheby's for a whopping \$8.1 million dollars, making his original \$4.00 purchase one of the best buys in history!

Put yourself in his shoes! Finish the story below with a description of how you (luckily) found a coveted piece of history.

It looked as if the house had been vacant for hundreds of years. There were cobwebs everywhere and the wooden floorboards creaked loudly. In the clouds of dust, I saw what appeared to be an old staircase. gingerly, I pulled myself up the cracked steps, making sure not to put too much weight on any step, lest it should shatter. At the top of the steps, I noticed several rooms, only one of which had a door. Old candelabras, some of which still had remnants of wax candles adorned the walls in between the doors. A painting of an old man with a menacing expression was strewn on the floor. Its gold frame, although broken, still sparkled.



Thomas Jefferson and the Barbary Pirates Printable Reading Comprehension
Name _____

Most people know that Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence and was America's third president. Some people know that he was responsible for America doubling its size through the Louisiana Purchase. Very few people know, however, that Thomas Jefferson sent America into its first overseas war - against pirates!

In 1801, the United States joined with several European countries in a war against the Barbary Pirates. The Barbary Pirates operated in the Mediterranean Sea, from ports in the north African countries of Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, and Algeria. The pirates demanded a payment called a tribute from foreign governments in exchange for the safe passage of its ships in the Mediterranean Sea. If no tribute was paid, the pirates would attack and capture the crews of foreign ships and sell them for a ransom or force them into slavery.

When Thomas Jefferson became president, the pirates increased the cost of the tribute and Jefferson refused to pay it. Instead, he sent United States warships to the Mediterranean Sea, which eventually began bombarding the pirate bases. The pirates surrendered in 1805 in what came to be known as the First Barbary War. Although the pirates were finished for the time being, they'd start capturing American ships again in 1807. This led to the Second Barbary War where the pirates were defeated for a second time.

1. Which is not true about Thomas Jefferson?

- A. He wrote the Declaration of Independence
- B. He was the third president of the United States
- C. He sent America into a war against pirates
- D. Thomas Jefferson agreed to pay the increase tribute to the pirates

2. Why did Thomas Jefferson declare war on the Barbary Pirates?

- A. The pirates were threatening to attack in the United States
- B. The pirates increased the cost for the United States ships to sail safely in the Pacific Ocean
- C. The pirates increased the cost for the United States ships to sail safely in the Mediterranean Sea
- D. Because he knew there would be a second Barbary War.

3. The Barbary Pirates...

- A. were defeated forever in 1805.
- B. attacked the crews of foreign ships unless a tribute was paid
- C. operated from ports in Europe
- D. defeated America in the the Second Barbary War.

4. Which of the following is not answered in the passage?

- A. How many Barbary Wars were there?
- B. Did Thomas Jefferson agree to pay the increased tribute?
- C. What countries did the Barbary Pirates operate from?
- D. Who was president during the Second Barbary War?

Declaration of Independence Reading Comprehension

The main purpose of America's Declaration of Independence was to explain to foreign nations why the colonies had chosen to separate themselves from Great Britain. The Revolutionary War had already begun, and several major battles had already taken place. The American colonies had already cut most major ties to England and had established their own congress, currency, army, and post office. On June 7, 1776, at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, Richard Henry Lee voiced a resolution that the United States should be completely free of England's influence, and that all political ties between the two countries should be dissolved. Congress agreed and began plans to publish a formal declaration of independence and appointed a committee of five members to draft the declaration.

Thomas Jefferson was chosen to draft the letter, which he did in a single day. Four other members—Roger Sherman, Robert Livingston, Benjamin Franklin, and John Adams—were part of the committee to help Jefferson. In the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson explained that a body of people has a right to change governments if that government becomes oppressive (unfair and controlling). He further explained that governments fail when they no longer have the consent of the governed. Since Parliament clearly lacked the consent of the American colonists to govern them, it was no longer legitimate.

The Declaration was presented to the Continental Congress in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on July 2, 1776. It was approved with a few minor changes. Of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence, John Hancock, of Massachusetts, was the first.

1.) Why was the Declaration of Independence written?

- a.) For the colonists
- b.) For the British
- c.) For the kings
- d.) For other nations

2.) Which of the following HAD NOT taken place before the Declaration of Independence was written?

- a.) Battles
- b.) America had named a president.
- c.) The Revolutionary War
- d.) American had cut most ties with England.

3.) In the following sentence, what does the word “influence” mean:

Richard Henry Lee voiced a resolution that the United States ought to be completely free of England's influence.

- a.) battle
- b.) royal family
- c.) under the effect of
- d.) money

4.) Which of the following is an accurate description of what Thomas Jefferson described in the Declaration?

- a.) That the King of England owes the colonists money.
- b.) That America will win the war against England.
- c.) People have the right to fair government.
- d.) The colonists have no rights.

5.) According to Jefferson, when do governments fail?

- a.) When they no longer have the consent of the people.
- b.) When they fight wars.
- c.) When they issue taxes.
- d.) When they owe money.

6.) Which of the following is NOT a reason the Declaration of Independence was written?

- a.) Parliament lacked consent of the American people.
- b.) Parliament was unfair.
- c.) Parliament taxed the Americans.
- d.) Parliament had failed the American people.

7.) The Continental Congress...

- a.) agreed to the Declaration with a few changes.
- b.) totally and completely agreed with the Declaration.
- c.) disagreed with the Declaration.
- d.) agreed with the Declaration but made major changes.

8.) Which of the following describes an illegitimate government according to the Declaration?

- a.) A government that taxes its people.
- b.) A government that oppresses its people.
- c.) A government that has the consent of its people.
- d.) A government run by the people.

9.) The British were...

- a.) likely to agree to the Declaration.
- b.) likely to disagree to the Declaration.
- c.) likely to agree to the Declaration with a few minor changes.
- d.) likely to agree to the Declaration with a few major changes.

10.) Which of the following is FALSE?

- a.) Congress established a taxing system before the Declaration of Independence.
- b.) Congress established a post office before the Declaration of Independence.
- c.) Congress established an army before the Declaration of Independence.
- d.) Richard Henry Lee voiced the resolution that American should dissolve its ties to England.



Name _____

The Committee of Five has a bad day!

Have you ever had a bad day? The answer is probably yes, but what if Thomas Jefferson and the Committee of Five had a bad day when they edited the Declaration of Independence? The Committee of Five was the group of five people (including Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and Benjamin Franklin) who were assigned to draft and edit the Declaration of Independence. Pretend there was a Committee of Six, and you were the only one of the six who felt well enough to accurately edit the most famous words of the Declaration. Your job is paramount because other countries would never take America's quest for independence seriously if the Declaration was full of bad grammar and spelling mistakes. Review the "rough draft" below and re-write with correct spelling and grammar.

There are 14 errors: **Usage: 6** (grammar wrong word form, wrong tense) **Spelling: 8**

WE holding this Truths to be self-evident, that all Man are craeted equal, that they is endowed by there Creator with certan unalienable Writs, that amung these are Life, Libirty and the Persuit of Happyness--

Fix the passage here:

Great Ironies of American History: July 4, 1826

July 4, 1826, was a day full of celebrations, parades, and enthusiastic speeches. After all, it was America's 50th birthday! Fifty years before, on July 4, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was published and read. Thomas Jefferson was the document's primary author and John Adams was part of the famed Committee of Five, which advised Jefferson.

Adams and Jefferson played prominently in American history. Adams was America's second president and Jefferson was its third. The two had a complicated relationship. While they both helped shape the new nation, their political beliefs diverged. Adams believed that the United States would thrive with a strong central government and Jefferson believed that power belonged with the states. Jefferson believed in the French Revolution and Adams did not. Over time, the relationship between the two founding fathers soured further, resulting in both parties engaging in attempts to smear the other in public before the election of 1800. When Jefferson won the election, Adams returned to Massachusetts to live in virtual seclusion with Abigail, his wife. Following Jefferson's presidency, he retired to his estate named Monticello in Charlottesville, Virginia.

In 1809, the famous doctor Benjamin Rush urged both Jefferson and Adams to rekindle their friendship. Adams made the first overture and wrote Jefferson a letter on January 1, 1812. Over the next 14 years, the pair wrote 158 letters to each other. The letters discussed their different political views, theories on government, history, the state of the nation, and even the growing threat of slavery to the future of the new nation.

On July 3, 1826, just a day before the 50th birthday of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson fell into a coma after suffering from a long, intestinal illness. He died on July 4th. Meanwhile John Adams, who was nearing his 91st birthday, collapsed in his reading chair on July 4th. He lapsed in and out of consciousness for the next few hours before succumbing. His last words were said to be "Jefferson lives." Little did he know that he had outlived Jefferson by several hours. Both John Adams and Thomas Jefferson died on the same exact day – July 4, 1826. It just so happened that the day marked America's 50th birthday.

1. Which of the following best describes why the event was so ironic?

- A. Because John Adams was the 2nd president and Thomas Jefferson was the 3rd
- B. Because both John Adams and Thomas Jefferson died on the same day – which happened to be the 50th anniversary of a document they both helped write
- C. Because Thomas Jefferson were friends, then became enemies, then became friends again at the end of their lives
- D. Because John Adams thought that Thomas Jefferson outlived him, when in fact, he outlived Jefferson

2. How did the political views of Jefferson and Adams diverge?

- A. Because Adams believed in a strong central government and that the French Revolution was a positive event
- B. Because Jefferson believed in a strong central government and that the French Revolution was a positive event
- C. Because Adams believed in a strong central government and Jefferson believed power should remain with the the states
- D. Because Adams believed in the French Revolution and Jefferson did not believe in the French Revolution

3. What does “seclusion” mean as used in the following sentence?

When Jefferson won the election, Adams returned to Massachusetts to live in virtual seclusion with Abigail, his wife.

- A. With relatives
- B. Alone
- C. Silence
- D. Hiding

4. Which of the following is NOT true?

- A. Thomas Jefferson lived in Virginia
- B. John Adams lived in Massachusetts
- C. Thomas Jefferson was the primary author of the Declaration of Independence
- D. The relationship between Jefferson and Adams soured after Adams won the presidency in 1800

5. What is revealed in the third paragraph?

- A. Adams's attitudes on slavery
- B. Discussion topics within the letters between the former presidents
- C. The date in which the last letter was sent
- D. Jefferson's attitudes on the current state of government

6. What happened first?

- A. Jefferson lapsed into a coma
- B. Adams uttered “Jefferson Lives”
- C. America celebrated its 50th birthday
- D. The first day of July, 1826

7. Which of the following sentences best explains why the relationship between Jefferson and Adams likely became estranged?

- A. When Jefferson won the election, Adams returned to Massachusetts to live in virtual seclusion with Abigail, his wife.
- B. Adams made the first overture and wrote Jefferson a letter on January 1, 1812.
- C. Over time, the relationship between the two founding fathers soured further, resulting in both parties engaging in attempts to smear the other in public before the election of 1800.
- D. Following Jefferson’s presidency, he retired to his estate called Monticello in Charlottesville, Virginia.