

3-2 – Declaring Independence- Pages 83-85

Essential Question: *What factors made the colonies formally declare their independence from Great Britain?*

Main Idea 1:

Thomas Paine’s Common Sense led many colonists to support independence.

- *Common Sense*: 47-page pamphlet written by **Thomas Paine**, published in January 1776
- Urged **separation** from **Great Britain**
- Argued that **citizens**, not **monarchs**, should make **laws**
- ★ He felt **people** had a **natural** right to **govern** themselves.
- Argued for **economic** freedom and the right to **military** self-defense
- Cried out against **tyranny**, the **abuse** of government **power**
- Reached a wide **audience**, selling some **500,000** copies
- *Common Sense* inspired colonial **leaders** to **challenge** British **authority**.
- ★ Thomas Paine’s **ideas** were considered **bold** at the **time**.
- Most of the **world** was still **ruled** by **monarchs**.



Declaration of Independence

- Many **colonial** leaders **agreed** with Thomas Paine’s ideas.
- ★ It **inspired** them to **challenge** British **authority**.
- Ideas that **developed** during the **Enlightenment** and the **Great Awakening** influenced the colonists’ **view** of **government**.
- ★ Colonists began to **desire** political **equality**.
- The phrase, “**Taxation** without **representation**” was **important** to the **revolutionary** cause.
- ★ Colonists did not wish to **support** a **government** in which they had **no** voice.
- Second **Continental Congress** created a **committee** in June 1776 to write a **document** declaring **independence**
- **Thomas Jefferson** was main author
- Jefferson felt the **colonists** had the **right** to **break** away from **Great Britain**.
- ★ Great Britain did not **protect** the **rights** of the **colonists**.
- **Declaration of Independence** formally **announced** break with **Great Britain**
- **Approved** on July 7, 1776

Main Idea 2:

Colonists had differing reactions to the Declaration of Independence.

Patriots

- **Patriots** chose to fight for **independence**.
- About **40** to **45** percent of Americans were **Patriots**

Loyalists

- ★ Loyalists, sometimes called Tories, remained loyal to Britain.
- Felt the colonies did not need independence.
- About 20 to 30 percent of Americans were Loyalists.

Neutral

- About 25 percent of Americans remained neutral.

Other Reactions to Declaration

- Declaration ignored many colonists
- Did not address the rights of women
- Did not recognize the rights of enslaved African Americans
- ★ The Declaration of Independence raised questions about because its message was not consistent with the practice of



slavery
slavery.

