

## Matrix of Excerpts from *Common Sense*

**Student Handout 4.1A**

**Directions:** Use the matrix below to record your interpretation of the excerpt your pair has been assigned. Create an act-it-out of the excerpt. Then use this matrix to take notes during class presentations about the other excerpts.

Letter	Excerpt from <i>Common Sense</i>	What the excerpt means in our own words
<b>A</b>	"I have heard it asserted by some, that as America hath flourished under her former connection with Great Britain, the same connection is necessary towards her future happiness, and will always have the same effect. Nothing can be more fallacious than this kind of argument."	
<b>B</b>	"We have boasted the protection of Great Britain without considering that her motive was interest, not attachment; and that she did not protect us from our enemies on our account, but from her enemies on her own account. . . ."	
<b>C</b>	"But Britain is the parent country, say some. Then the more shame upon her conduct. Even brutes do not devour their young, nor savages make war upon their families. . . ."	
<b>D</b>	"I challenge the warmest advocate for reconciliation, to show a single advantage that this continent can reap, by being connected with Great Britain. I repeat the challenge; not a single advantage is derived."	
<b>E</b>	"Small islands, not capable of protecting themselves, are the proper objects for kingdoms to take under their care; but there is something absurd, in supposing a continent to be perpetually governed by an island. In no instance hath nature made the satellite larger than its primary planet."	
<b>F</b>	"Nothing but independence . . . can keep the peace of the continent. . . . A government of our own is our natural right; and when a man seriously reflects on the precariousness of human affairs, he will become convinced, that it is infinitely wiser and safer, to form a constitution of our own in a cool deliberate manner, while we have it in our power. . . ."	

Name \_\_\_\_\_

<u>Excerpt from the Declaration of Independence</u>	<u>What the Excerpt Means</u>
<p>1. "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>2. "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>3. "To secure these [basic] rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."</p>	
<p>4. "That whenever any form of government becomes destructive 'in protecting rights and responding to the people], it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new government."</p>	
<p>5. "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>6. "To prove [that England has interfered with colonial rights], let the facts be submitted to a candid world: He has refused to assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good."</p>	
<p>7. "In every state 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 of a free people."</p>	
<p>8. "We, therefore...solemnly publish and declare, that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states..."</p>	