

Graphic Organizer Title: *Examination of the Declaration of Independence and American Grievances Against British Rule*

Section 1: Overview of the Declaration of Independence

Section	Key Ideas	Explanation/Reflection
Purpose	All men are created equal, unalienable rights, government by consent, right to revolt.	The colonies justify breaking away from British rule by listing the reasons for their dissatisfaction and principles of good government.
Philosophical Influence	John Locke's natural rights (life, liberty, and property), social contract.	The Declaration emphasizes rights the government cannot take away and the responsibility of citizens to protect these rights.

Section 2: Grievances Against British Rule

Grievance	Summary of the Issue	Why It Was Important to the Colonists
Taxation Without Representation	Britain imposed taxes without colonial input.	Colonists believed they had the right to consent to taxes through elected representatives.
Quartering British Troops	Colonists were forced to house British soldiers without consent.	This violated colonists' rights to privacy and property.
Dissolving Colonial Legislatures	Britain dissolved local governments that opposed its policies.	Colonists felt their right to self-governance was taken away.
Restricting Trade	Britain cut off trade with other nations.	This hurt the economy and colonists' economic independence.
Denial of Jury Trials	Colonists were denied the right to fair trials by jury.	Colonists expected legal protections as British subjects, and this was a clear violation of their rights.

Section 3: Connection to Founding Principles

Grievance	How It Influenced the American Government
Taxation Without Representation	Led to emphasis on representation and consent in U.S. Congress.
Quartering British Troops	Inspired the Third Amendment in the Bill of Rights, preventing forced quartering of soldiers.
Dissolving Colonial Legislatures	Emphasized the importance of separation of powers and checks and balances in the U.S. government.
Restricting Trade	Contributed to the development of economic policies that protected free trade and encouraged commerce.
Denial of Jury Trials	Resulted in a strong focus on due process and the right to a fair trial, as reflected in the Sixth Amendment.

Student Reflection Prompts

1. How did the grievances reflect the colonists' desire for self-government?
2. In what ways do these grievances help explain the colonists' decision to declare independence?
3. How did the specific grievances shape the structure of the new American government?