

Activity 2: Revising the Declaration of Independence

Like any important piece of writing, the Declaration of Independence was revised and edited during the writing process. In this activity, you'll have the chance to see how Jefferson originally drafted the text and what changes Congress made to the document.

Visit the following website and use the print command in your browser to print out pages 4-11 of the document (starting with "A Declaration by the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled"). The printout includes a blank white margin that you can use to take notes as you read.

Text with a strikethrough line indicates parts that Jefferson originally wrote but Congress deleted. Text in italics enclosed in brackets show parts that Congress later added. Choose 3-5 sections that contain some of the biggest revisions and suggest 2-3 edits that you would have made (such as adding deleted text back in or removing text that Congress added). You can use highlighters or colored pencils to mark your preferences or take notes in the white margin. Then complete the "Editing the Declaration of Independence" activity page.

NOTE: As you work, it may be helpful to refer to the final version of the document in *The Declaration of Independence and Other Great Documents of American History, 1775-1865*.

Rough Draft of the Declaration of Independence

www.movingbeyondthepage.com/link/2964/

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PARENT SECTION

Activity 2: Revising the Declaration of Independence

In this activity, your child will use an online resource to view editorial changes made to the Declaration of Independence. He will print out the document and choose 3-5 sections that were significantly revised from Jefferson's original draft and suggest 2-3 edits that he would have made (such as adding deleted text back in or removing text that Congress added). He will then complete an activity page describing the reasons for some of the changes he made to the text and his thoughts on the importance of the editing process for this document. Answers will vary.