

**Exploring the Declaration of Independence -
Create a Modern Translation**

The Declaration of Independence is one of our nation’s founding documents. However, because it was written so long ago (1776), it can be difficult to understand. In order to understand what happens throughout US history, we must take this document apart and grapple with its ideas.

Your assignment is to translate this document into language and a presentation that makes more sense in modern times. In your group, re-create the Declaration in a creative format, making its content, purpose, themes, etc. easily understandable in today’s world.

Step 1: Go through the document and, using each other’s brains, your textbook, dictionaries, and any other resources in the room (other than the teacher), make sure you understand what it says and why it is setting forth such ideas. Take notes.

Step 2: Think about what information, concepts, themes, etc. from the Declaration of Independence are most important to retell in your translation. Based on this, begin to brainstorm what format you would like your modern translation to take. What form will best convey your message? Options include...

- a song or rap
- a short, dramatic play/skit, perhaps in a particular style (i.e., soap opera, TV crime drama, musical theatre, etc.)
- a poem
- a commercial
- a cartoon
- a breakup letter
- Think outside the box!

Step 3: Start drafting your modern translation. Check to see that your work fits the rubric below.

Step 4: Edit, practice, and put the finishing touches on your work. You will be presenting these translations to the class.

Habits of Work	Habits of Mind	Communication Skills	Knowledge
<i>Your translation shows that you...</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use in-class time effectively • persist in task, even when it’s difficult • treat team members with respect • demonstrate high standards of craftsmanship 	<i>Your translation shows that you...</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate awareness of contrasting points of view • look for connections over time • consider what is important information 	<i>Your translation shows that you ...</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand through reading • comprehend difficult material • convey information clearly • speak clearly • use appropriate language 	<i>Your translation shows that you...</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand the essential ideas from the D of I (beginning, middle, and end) • provide an in-depth modern comparison

Exceeds Standards – 5
Work - 1

Meets Standards – 4

Advancing Towards Standard – 3

Needs Additional

GROUP MEMBERS: _____ SCORE: _____ /20