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Grade level: 5

Primary Source Citation: *Draft of the Declaration of Independence*, 1776, Thomas Jefferson. Library of Congress Manuscript Division:
<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/jefferson/images/vc49.jpg>.

Allow students, in groups or individually, to examine the document while answering the questions below in order. The questions are designed to guide students into a deeper analysis of the source and sharpen associated cognitive skills.

Level I: Description

1. What details do you notice about the writing?
2. Who is the author?
3. What is the name of this document?

Level II: Interpretation

1. Who is the intended audience?
2. What purpose does this document serve?
3. What event is about to take place?

Level III: Analysis

1. What revisions would you make to this document?
2. How much of a role do you think colonists had in the creation of this document?
3. How will the lives of the colonists be affected or changes by the creation of this document?

A Declaration by the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in General Congress assembled.

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for ^{one} people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the ^{separate and equal} station to which the laws of nature & of nature's god entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to ~~take~~ ^{the} separation.

We hold these truths to be ^{self-evident}, that all men are created equal & independent that ^{they are endowed by their creator with} certain inalienable rights, that among ^{these} are ~~life, liberty, & the pursuit of happiness~~ ^{life, liberty, & the pursuit of happiness}; that to secure these ^{rights}, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government ~~shall~~ becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, & to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles & organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety & happiness. prudence indeed will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light & transient causes: and accordingly all experience hath shewn that mankind are more disposed to suffer while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. but when a long train of abuses & usurpations [beginning at a distinguished period] & pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them to ^{under absolute Despotism} ~~absolute Despotism~~, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, & to provide new guards for their future security. such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; & such is now the necessity which constrains them to ~~expunge~~ ^{change} their former systems of government. the history of ^{the} present ^{King of Great Britain} ~~is~~ ^{is} a history of ~~transmitting~~ ^{repeated} injuries and usurpations, [among which, ^{appears no solitary fact} ~~appears no solitary fact~~] to contradict the uniform tenor of the rest, [all of which] have in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. to prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world, [for the truth of which we pledge a faith not equalled by falsehood]