INTRODUCTION INFORMATION: This primary source activity was created to coincide with the unit on the American Revolution. It was created and used for 8th grade and it took two 40 minute lessons to complete.

CONTENT STANDARDS/INDICATORS: History Revolution 3&4, Government 1, People in Societies 2, Social Studies Skills and Methods 1. These are all grade 8 standards.

PRIMARY SOURCE USED:
Declaration of Independence (reproduction parchment documents and the transcribed version in student texts)

http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration_transcript.html

SUMMARY OF THE LESSON:

1. Hook/Induction Set: As students enter the room, have the original song and video for Breaking Up is Hard to Do by Neil Sedaka.
2. Ask students if they can make a connection to why they are listening to the song. They will make a connection to the agenda board and say that it must have to do with the Declaration of Independence. Explain that today is the day we will break up with Great Britain and embark on the road to revolution.
3. As middle school students, they know about break up letters. Brainstorm the components found in a break up letter. Explain that the Declaration of Independence follows similar patterns (see below)
   - Preamble- Dear ____, we need to talk. I feel we are going in different directions.…
   - Statement of Beliefs- A relationship should be give and take—you just seem to take
   - Prior attempts at redress- I have tried to make this work and have given you time to change your ways…
   - List of Complaints- I don’t like the following things about you and this relationship
   - Declaration of Independence- After thinking about everything I have explained, it is time to split up.
   - Signatures – I hope we can still be friends- Sincerely, ________
4. After we discuss the parts, students are put into groups (5 groups—one per section except for signatures) to translate the document into words for 2009-2010. Dictionaries are provided to assist with new and unfamiliar words. While students work, I play some classic break up songs such as Love Stinks-J. Giels Band, Baby Come Back- Player, Don’t You Want Me Baby?- Human League, I’ll Be There For You-Bon Jovi, You Give Love a Bad Name- Bon Jovi, Irreplaceable-Beyonce.
5. Circulate and assist and provide guidance when needed.
6. Groups will share their sections and we discuss the overall meaning and significance of the document.
POST ASSESSMENT AND SCORING GUIDELINES

As a post assessment, my goal is for students to understand that the document did not end the war, it actually marks the beginning. In the pre assessment, many think this document ended the war. The following day as a bellwork question, I ask them to describe the purpose and significance of the document and we do a group discussion and review. I collect the papers and it allows me to see if we need to spend more time.

MATERIALS NEEDED:
- Access to youtube for the various songs used or itunes
- Reproduction copies of the Declaration of Independence for the groups
- Student textbooks or transcription of the entire declaration
- Dictionaries and thesaurus for use in rewriting the document in their own words

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