

GRADE 7, Second Quarter

Settlement, Colonies, Independence

I like to see it lap the miles, And lick the valleys up,
And stop to feed itself at tanks; And then, prodigious,
To fit its sides, and crawl between,
Complaining all the while In horrid,
hooting stanza; Then chase itself
down hill... Emily Dickinson, "XLIII"

Word Windows into History

Poems, Songs and Documents

Selected for the Themes and Eras Illuminated through American Art

*Prepared by the DePaul University Center for Urban Education
for the Terra Teacher Lab
Terra Foundation for American Art*

These are examples of songs, poems and documents that illustrate times in US history. You can use them to help students understand that a poem or song is a word picture and can be interpreted just as a painting can be—and that in context it makes more sense as well as providing a window into that context.

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Documents

Declaration of Independence (original and transcribed text)

Benedict Arnold's Letter to the Inhabitants of America (original and transcribed text)

Adams Family Papers

The Adams Family papers are not reprinted in this binder, but a digital library containing hundreds of images and transcriptions can be viewed and printed at the Massachusetts Historical Society's Electronic Archive:

<http://www.masshist.org/digitaladams/aea/index.html>

Poems and Songs

"American or The Muse's Refuge. A Prophecy"

"Bury Me in a Free Land"

"Paul Revere's Ride"

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.

THE UNANIMOUS

DECLARATION OF THE THIRTEEN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

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 and 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 the Separation.

We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed, by their **CREATOR**, with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and 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 becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its Foundation on such Principles, and organizing its Powers in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate, that Governments long established, should not be changed for light and 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 and Usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a Design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their Right, it is their Duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future Security. Such has been the patient Sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the Necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The History of the present King of Great-Britain is a History of repeated Injuries and Usurpations, all having in direct Object the Establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid World.

HE has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public Good.

HE has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing Importance, unless suspended in their Operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

HE has refused to pass other Laws for the Accommodation of large Districts of People, unless those People would relinquish the Right of Representation in the Legislature, a Right inestimable to them, and formidable to Tyranny only.

HE has called together Legislative Bodies at Places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the Depository of their public Records, for the sole Purpose of fatiguing them into Compliance with his Measures.

HE has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly Firmness his Invasions on the Rights of the People.

HE has refused for a long Time, after such Dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative Powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining, in the mean Time, exposed to all the Dangers of Invasion from without, and Convulsions within.

HE has endeavoured to prevent the Population of these States; for that Purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their Migrations hither, and raising the Conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

HE has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary Powers.

HE has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the Tenure of their Offices, and the Amount and Payment of their Salaries.

HE has erected a Multitude of new Offices, and sent hither Swarms of Officers to harrass our People, and eat out their Substance.

HE has kept among us, in Times of Peace, Standing Armies, without the Consent of our Legislatures.

HE has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil Power.
HE has combined with others to subject us to a Jurisdiction foreign to our Constitution, and unacknowledged by our Laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:
FOR quartering large Bodies of Armed Troops among us:
FOR protecting them, by a mock Trial, from Punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:
FOR cutting off our Trade with all Parts of the World:
FOR imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:
FOR depriving us, in many Cases, of the Benefits of Trial by Jury:
FOR transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended Offences:
FOR abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an arbitrary Government, and enlarging its Boundaries, so as to render it at once an Example and fit Instrument for introducing the same absolute Rule into these Colonies:
FOR taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:
FOR suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with Power to legislate for us in all Cases whatsoever.
HE has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection, and waging War against us.
HE has plundered our Seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our Towns, and destroyed the Lives of our People.
HE is, at this Time, transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to complete the Works of Death, Desolation, and Tyranny, already begun with Circumstances of Cruelty and Perfidy, scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous Ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized Nation.
HE has constrained our Fellow-Citizens, taken Captive on the high Seas, to bear Arms against their Country, to become the Executioners of their Friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.
HE has excited domestic Insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the Inhabitants of our Frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known Rule of Warfare, is an undistinguished Destruction, of all Ages, Sexes, and Conditions.
IN every Stage of these Oppressions we have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble Terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated Injury. A Prince, whose Character is thus marked by every Act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the Ruler of a free People.
NOR have we been wanting in Attentions to our British Brethren. We have warned them, from Time to Time, of Attempts by their Legislature to extend an unwarrantable Jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the Circumstances of our Emigration and Settlement here. We have appealed to their native Justice and Magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the Ties of our common Kindred to disavow these Usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our Connexions and Correspondence. They too have been deaf to the Voice of Justice and of Consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the Necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the Rest of Mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.
WE, therefore, the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in GENERAL CONGRESS Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the World for the Rectitude of our Intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly Publish and Declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political Connexion between them and the State of Great-Britain, is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that as FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which INDEPENDENT STATES may of Right do. And for the Support of this Declaration, with a firm Reliance on the Protection of DIVINE PROVIDENCE, we mutually pledge to each other our *Lives*, our *Fortunes*, and our *sacred Honour*.

John Hancock.

GEORGIA, *Button Gwinnett, Lyman Hall, Geo. Walton.*

NORTH-CAROLINA, *Wm. Hooper, Joseph Hewes, John Penn.*

SOUTH-CAROLINA, *Edward Rutledge, Thos Heyward, junr. Thomas Lynch, junr. Arthur Middleton.*
MARYLAND, *Samuel Chase, Wm. Paca, Thos. Stone, Charles Carroll, of Carrollton.*
VIRGINIA, *George Wythe, Richard Henry Lee, Ths. Jefferson, Benja. Harrison, Thos. Nelson, jr. Francis Lightfoot Lee, Carter Braxton.*
PENNSYLVANIA, *Robt. Morris, Benjamin Rush, Benja. Franklin, John Morton, Geo. Clymer, Jas. Smith, Geo. Taylor, James Wilson, Geo. Ross.*
DELAWARE, *Caesar Rodney, Geo. Read.*
NEW-YORK, *Wm. Floyd, Phil. Livingston, Frank Lewis, Lewis Morris.*
NEW-JERSEY, *Richd. Stockton, Jno. Witherspoon, Fras. Hopkinson, John Hart, Abra. Clark.*
NEW-HAMPSHIRE, *Josiah Bartlett, Wm. Whipple, Matthew Thornton.*
MASSACHUSETTS-BAY, *Saml. Adams, John Adams, Robt. Treat Paine, Elbridge Gerry.*
RHODE-ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE, *&c. Step. Hopkins, William Ellery.*
CONNECTICUT, *Roger Sherman, Saml. Huntington, Wm. Williams, Oliver Wolcott.*

From SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11, to TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1780.

Postscript.

As the famous Gen. ARNOLD has abandoned the REBEL Service, and joined our Army at NEW YORK, we present our Readers with his Address to the Inhabitants of AMERICA, taken from RIVINGTON'S ROYAL NEW YORK GAZETTE, of Oct. 21, 1780.

To the INHABITANTS of AMERICA.

I SHOULD forfeit, even in my own opinion, the place I have so long held in yours, if I could be indifferent to your approbation, and silent on the motives which have induced me to join the King's arms.

A very few words, however, shall suffice upon a subject so personal; for to the thousands who suffer under the tyranny of the usurpers in the revolted provinces, as well as to the great multitude who have long wished for its subversion, this instance of my conduct can want no vindication; and as to the class of men who are criminally protracting the war from sinister views at the expence of the public interest, I prefer their enmity to their applause. I am, therefore, only concerned in this address, to explain myself to such of my countrymen, as want abilities, or opportunities, to detect the artifices by which they are duped.

Having fought by your side when the love of our country animated our arms, I shall expect, from your justice and candour, what your deceivers, with more art and less honesty, will find it inconsistent with their own views to admit.

When I quitted domestic happiness for the perils of the field, I conceived the rights of my country in danger, and that duty and honour called me to her defence. A redress of grievances was my only object and aim; however, I acquiesced in a step which I thought precipitate, the declaration of independence: to justify this measure, many plausible reasons were urged, which could no longer exist, when Great Britain, with the open arms of a parent, offered to embrace us as children, and grant the wished-for redress.

And now that her worst enemies are in her own bosom, I should change my principles, if I conspired with their designs; yourselves being judges, was the war the less just, because fellow subjects were considered as our foe? You have felt the torture in which we raised our arms against a brother. God incline the guilty protectors of these unnatural dissensions to resign their ambition, and cease from their delusions, in compassion to kindred blood!

I anticipate your question, Was not the war a defensive one, until the French joined in the combination? I answer, that I thought so. You will add, Was it not afterwards necessary, till the separation of the British empire was complete? By no means; in contending for the welfare of my country, I am free to declare my opinion, that this end attained, all strife should have ceased.

I lamented, therefore, the impolicy, tyranny, and injustice, which, with a sovereign contempt of the people of America, studiously neglected to take their collective sentiments of the British proposals of peace, and to negotiate, under a suspension of arms, for an adjustment of differences; I lamented it as a dangerous sacrifice of the great interests of this country to the partial views of a proud, ancient, and crafty foe. I had my suspicions of some imperfections in our councils, on proposals prior to the Parliamentary Commission of 1778; but having then less to do in the Cabinet than the field (I will not pronounce peremptorily, as some may, and perhaps justly, that Congress have veiled them from the public eye), I continued to be guided in the negligent confidence of a Soldier. But the whole world saw, and all America confessed, that the overtures of the second Com-

mission exceeded our wishes and expectations; and if there was any suspicion of the national liberality, it arose from its excess.

Do any believe we were at that time really entangled by an alliance with France? Unfortunate deception! they have been duped, by a virtuous credulity, in the incautious moments of intemperate passion, to give up their felicity to serve a nation wanting both the will and the power to protect us, and aiming at the destruction both of the mother country and the provinces. In the plainness of common sense, for I pretend to no casuistry, did the pretended treaty with the Court of Versailles, amount to more than an overture to America? Certainly not, because no authority had been given by the people to conclude it, nor to this very hour have they authorised its ratification. The articles of confederation remain still unsigned.

In the firm persuasion, therefore, that the private judgement of an individual citizen of this country is as free from all conventional restraints, since as before the insidious offers of France, I preferred those from Great Britain; thinking it infinitely wiser and safer to cast my confidence upon her justice and generosity, than to trust a monarchy too feeble to establish your independence, so perilous to her distant dominions; the enemy of the Protestant faith; and fraudulently avowing an affection for the liberties of mankind, while she holds her native sons in vassalage and chains.

I affect no disguise, and therefore frankly declare, that in these principles I had determined to retain my arms and command for an opportunity to surrender them to Great Britain; and in concerting the measures for a purpose, in my opinion, as grateful as it would have been beneficial to my country, I was only solicitous to accomplish an event of decisive importance, and to prevent as much as possible, in the execution of it, the effusion of blood.

With the highest satisfaction I bear testimony to my old fellow soldiers and citizens, that I find solid ground to rely upon the clemency of our Sovereign, and abundant conviction that it is the generous intention of Great Britain not only to leave the rights and privileges of the colonies unimpaired, together with their perpetual exemption from taxation, but to superadd such further benefits as may consist with the common prosperity of the empire. In short, I fought for much less than the parent country is as willing to grant to her colonies as they can be to receive or enjoy.

Some may think I continued in the struggle of these unhappy days too long, and others that I quitted it too soon.—To the first I reply, that I did not see with their eyes, nor perhaps had so favourable a situation to look from, and that to our common master I am willing to stand or fall. In behalf of the candid among the latter, some of whom I believe serve blindly but honestly—in the hands I have test, I pray God to give them all the lights requisite to their own safety before it is too late; and with respect to that herd of censurers, whose enmity to me originates in their hatred to the principles by which I am now led to devote my life to the re-union of the British empire, as the best and only means to dry up the streams of misery that have deluged this country, they may be assured, that, conscious of the rectitude of my intentions, I shall treat their malice and calumnies with contempt and neglect.

New York, October 7, 1780. B. ARNOLD.

America or The Muse's Refuge

A Prophecy

by George Berkeley

The Muse, disgusted at an Age and Clime,
Barren of every glorious Theme,
In distant Lands now waits a better Time,
Producing subjects worthy Fame:

In happy Climes, where from the genial Sun
And virgin Earth such Scenes ensue,
The Force of Art by Nature seems outdone,
And fancied Beauties by the true:

There shall be sung another golden Age,
The rise of Empire and of Arts,
The Good and Great inspiring epic Rage,
The wisest Heads and noblest Hearts.

Not such as Europe breeds in her decay;
Such as she bred when fresh and young,
When heav'nly Flame did animate her Clay,
By future Poets shall be sung.

Westward the Course of Empire takes its Way;
The four first Acts already past,
A fifth shall close the Drama with the Day;
Time's noblest Offspring is the last.

Bury Me in a Free Land

by Frances E. W. Harper

MAKE me a grave where'er you will,
In a lowly plain, or a lofty hill;
Make it among earth's humblest graves,
But not in a land where men are slaves.
I could not rest if around my grave
I heard the steps of a trembling slave;
His shadow above my silent tomb
Would make it a place of fearful gloom.
I could not rest if I heard the tread
Of a coffle gang to the shambles led,
And the mother's shriek of wild despair
Rise like a curse on the trembling air.
I could not sleep if I saw the lash
Drinking her blood at each fearful gash,
And I saw her babes torn from her breast,
Like trembling doves from their parent nest.
I'd shudder and start if I heard the bay
Of bloodhounds seizing their human prey,
And I heard the captive plead in vain
As they bound afresh his galling chain.
If I saw young girls from their mother's arms
Bartered and sold for their youthful charms,
My eye would flash with a mournful flame,
My death-paled cheek grow red with shame.
I would sleep, dear friends, where bloated might
Can rob no man of his dearest right;
My rest shall be calm in any grave
Where none can call his brother a slave.
I ask no monument, proud and high,
To arrest the gaze of the passers-by;
All that my yearning spirit craves,
Is bury me not in a land of slaves.

Paul Revere's Ride

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

LISTEN, my children, and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-Five;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.

He said to his friend, "If the British march
By land or sea from the town to-night,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch
Of the North Church tower, as a signal light, --
One, if by land, and two, if by sea;
And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm,
For the country-folk to be up and to arm."

Then he said "Good-night!" and with muffled oar
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,
Just as the moon rose over the bay,
Where swinging wide at her moorings lay
The Somerset, British man-of-war;
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar
Across the moon like a prison-bar,
And a huge black hulk, that was magnified
By its own reflection in the tide.

Meanwhile, his friend, through alley and street
Wanders and watches with eager ears,
Till in the silence around him he hears
The muster of men at the barrack door,
The sound of arms, and the tramp of feet,
And the measured tread of the grenadiers,
Marching down to their boats on the shore.

Then he climbed the tower of the Old North Church,
By the wooden stairs, with stealthy tread,
To the belfry-chamber overhead,
And startled the pigeons from their perch
On the somber rafters, that round him made
Masses and moving shapes of shade, --
By the trembling ladder, steep and tall,
To the highest window in the wall,
Where he paused to listen and look down
A moment on the roofs of the town,
And the moonlight flowing over all.

Beneath, in the churchyard, lay the dead,
In their night-encampment on the hill,
Wrapped in silence so deep and still
That he could hear, like a sentinel's tread,
The watchful night-wind, as it went
Creeping along from tent to tent,
And seeming to whisper, "All is well!"
A moment only he feels the spell
Of the place and the hour, the secret dread
Of the lonely belfry and the dead;
For suddenly all his thoughts are bent
On a shadowy something far away,
Where the river widens to meet the bay, --
A line of black, that bends and floats
On the rising tide, like a bridge of boats.

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride
On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.
Now he patted his horse's side,
Now gazed on the landscape far and near,
Then, impetuous, stamped the earth,
And turned and tightened his saddle-girth;
But mostly he watched with eager search
The belfry-tower of the Old North Church,
As it rose above the graves on the hill,
Lonely and spectral and somber and still.
And lo! as he looks, on the belfry's height
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!
He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight
A second lamp in the belfry burns!

A hurry of hoofs in a village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a spark
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet:
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and the light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night;
And the spark struck out by that steed, in his flight,
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.

He has left the village and mounted the steep,
And beneath him, tranquil and broad and deep,
Is the Mystic, meeting the ocean tides;
And under the alders that skirt its edge,
Now soft on the sand, now loud on the ledge,
Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides.

It was twelve by the village clock,
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town.
He heard the crowing of the cock,
And the barking of the farmer's dog,
And felt the damp of the river fog,
That rises after the sun goes down.

It was one by the village clock,
When he galloped into Lexington.
He saw the gilded weathercock
Swim in the moonlight as he passed,
And the meeting-house windows, blank and bare,
Gaze at him with a spectral glare,
As if they already stood aghast
At the bloody work they would look upon.

It was two by the village clock,
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.
He heard the bleating of the flock,
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze
Blowing over the meadows brown.
And one was safe and asleep in his bed
Who at the bridge would be first to fall,
Who that day would be lying dead,
Pierced by a British musket-ball.

You know the rest. In the books you have read,
How the British regulars fired and fled, --
How the farmers gave them ball for ball,
From behind each fence and farm-yard wall,
Chasing the red-coats down the lane,
Then crossing the fields to emerge again
Under the trees at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.

So through the night rode Paul Revere;
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex village and farm, --
A cry of defiance and not of fear,
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo forevermore!
For, borne on the night-wind of the Past,
Through all our history, to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beat of that steed,
And the midnight-message of Paul Revere.

<http://www.paulreverehouse.org/ride/poem.shtml>