

Guided Reading Level: R

Genre: Informational

Text Features: table of contents, glossary, primary sources, photographs, labels, timeline, index, illustrations

Lesson Objective: Social Studies

Students will explain how groups of people make rules to create responsibilities and protect freedom.

Essential Question

What are the origins of democracy?

Lesson Objective: ELA

Students will learn about how to use commas in dialogue.

Background Knowledge

Invite students to share what they know about the American Revolution, including the year it began, why it began, and what the Declaration of Independence is. Also, discuss what students know about Ancient Greece. Tier Two and Three vocabulary from the book is listed below. Consider previewing selected vocabulary based upon the needs of your students before they read the text.

Vocabulary

aristocrat (p. 11)	negative (p. 12)
citizens (p. 22)	oligarchy (p. 7)
committing (p. 17)	patriots (p. 14)
created (p. 4)	presence (p. 8)
democracy (p. 4)	tyrant (p. 18)
discuss (p. 24)	unjust (p. 16)
flees (p. 19)	wronged (p. 16)



Who Really Created Democracy?

by: Amie Jane Leavitt

Why This Text?

The government of the United States is a democracy. This text explains how the United States came to have a democratic government and where the idea of democracy originated.

Preparing to Read

Explain that this is an informational text written to teach readers about the history of democracy. Ask a volunteer to read the title of the book. Ask how many students have heard of democracy. Encourage them to share what they know. Don't confirm or deny what they share. Then have students turn to page 3 and refer to the table of contents. Remind students that the table of contents lists the chapters in a book, and explain that readers can learn a great deal about a book by reading the chapter titles. Read the chapter titles together to provide an overview of what readers will learn about democracy.

Reading Informational Text

Have the students read the text independently. Once students have finished reading, have them refer to the illustration on page 10. Point out that the illustration shows Solon, an early ruler in Athens, explaining laws. Remind students that it's important to refer to the photos, captions, and other graphics in informational text, as these features explain or extend the information provided in the text.

Use the picture on page 16 to show students a picture of early American political leaders drafting the Declaration of Independence. Discuss with the class the fact that the book goes back and forth between ancient Greece and the beginning days of the United States.

Connect and Respond

1. *Who had a good life under the oligarchy of early Athens?* (Only the wealthy had good lives under the oligarchy of early Athens.)
2. *Why were many colonists angry in 1773?* (Many colonists were angry because they did not have government representation.)
3. *What was the Assembly under the rule of Cleisthenes?* (The Assembly was the citizens' lawmaking body in which every citizen got to vote.)

Punctuation

Call students' attention to this sentence on page 21: *Some leaders wonder, "Did the ancient Greeks have this much trouble?"* Write the sentence where everyone can see it. Underline the comma and quotation marks in the sentence. Explain that the quotation marks show the spoken words (or, in this case, thoughts). Point out that a comma goes between the opening phrase of the sentence and the opening quotation marks.

Language Arts Activity

Have students use the following sentence frames to write informative sentences about the text. Provide time for sharing.

American colonists showed their anger toward the British by _____.

Solon changed his country's government by _____.

Democracy means _____.

Primary Source Activity

Explain that primary sources are original sources—actual artifacts, documents, diaries, manuscripts, autobiographies, recordings, or any other source of information that was created at the time under study.

Show students a photograph of the Declaration of Independence. (See Primary Source.) Invite students to read some of the text from the first paragraph and the beginning of the second paragraph (See Research Connection). Work with students to paraphrase the text.

Social Studies Activity

Direct students to the illustration of wealthy Athenians on page 6. Ask students how they think citizens of Athens felt about their government. Ask if they think wealthy citizens and poor citizens felt differently. Then provide time for sharing.

Now discuss how people felt in the 13 colonies. Ask students why they think some colonists were angry with Britain and some felt loyal to the British king.

Place students in groups. Ask each group to come up with a set of rules for a class government. Then provide time for sharing.

Materials/Resources Needed

paper
pens

Support English Learning

Offer realia, gestures, or photos to support the introduction of the new vocabulary.

- Explain that democracy is a form of government in which the citizens make the laws.
- Explain that the idea of democracy began in ancient Greece.
- Point out that in both Greece and America, it took a while for people to figure out how their government should work.

Research Connection

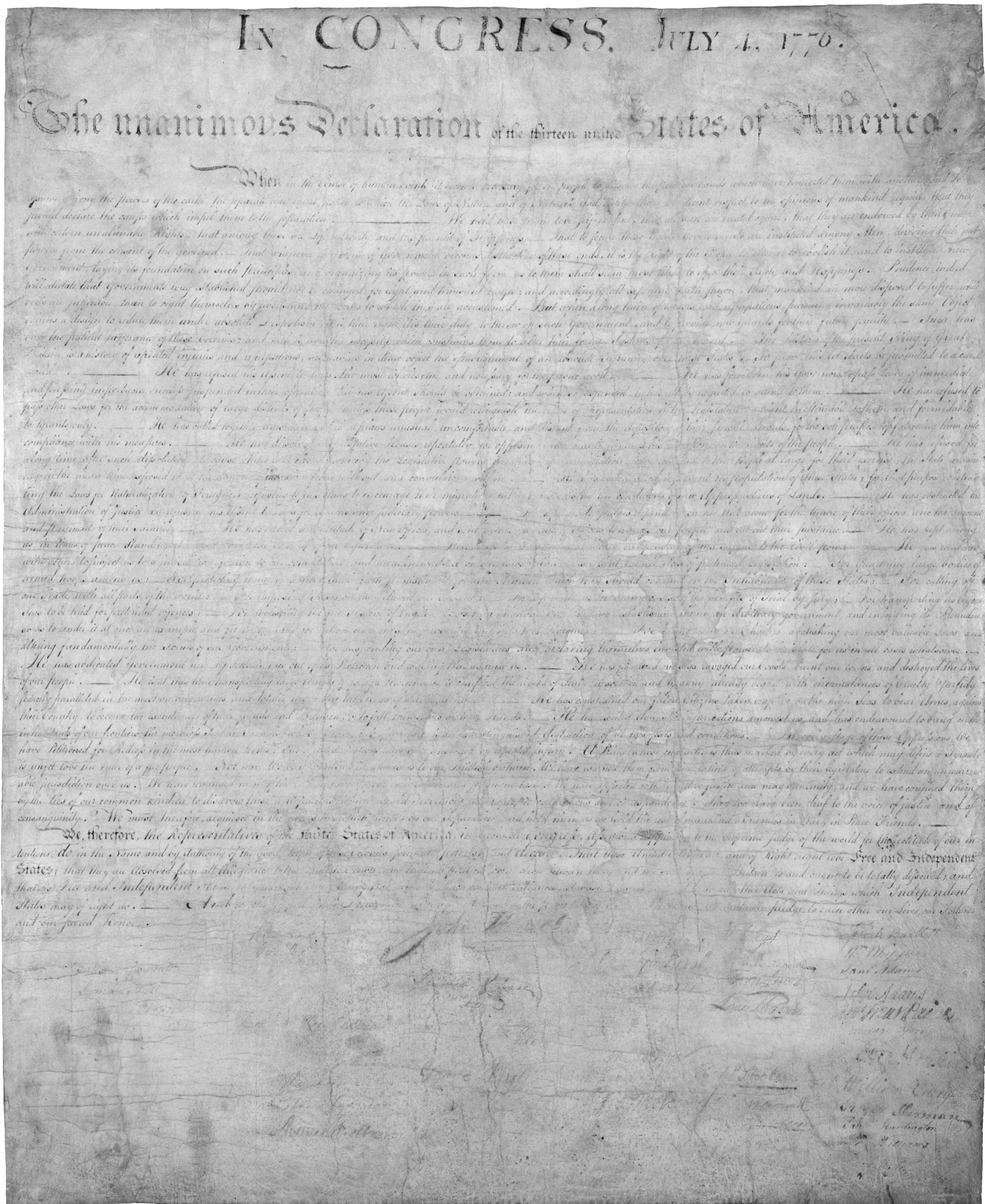
Information on the Declaration of Independence:

<https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration/what-does-it-say>

Information on the U.S. Constitution:

<https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution>

Primary Source



The Declaration of Independence (front)
Source: National Archives and Records Administration

National Archives [1419123]