

| Area/Skill - Interdisciplinary  | Cognitive Skill Level - Analysis/Synthesis | Correlation to Framework - 01.07/02.07/02.08/03.04/04.01 | Lesson #2  |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p><b>Activity Title - Declaration of Independence</b></p> <p><b>Goal/Objective</b></p> <p>To provide students with a general understanding of the Declaration of Independence, how to store important documents, and graph the results of the storage methods.</p> <p><b>Lesson Outline</b><br/><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>Quote a famous speech, such as the Gettysburg Address or I Have a Dream, that references the Declaration of Independence. Discuss the significance of the document and the necessity of proper storage of important historic documents.</p> <p><b>Activity</b></p> <p>Divide the class into three groups. Each group will be responsible for a summary of either the introduction, body, or conclusion of the Declaration of Independence. The summary will be presented to the class. Each group will also be responsible for part of a science project to determine the best method to store an important historic document, such as the Declaration of Independence. For the science project, provide each group with the Declaration of Independence written on a page of parchment. Group I will expose their document to the direct sunlight. Group II will place their document in a closed container. Group III will roll up their document and keep it in a damp area. Have the groups observe the papers weekly for four weeks. Have them compare the rate of fading quality of the paper compared to a fresh copy (control) prepared each week by the teacher. Have the students plot their results on a graph on the bulletin board with each group using a different color.</p> <p><b>Debriefing/Evaluation Activity</b></p> <p>Debrief the activity by: discussing how the Declaration of Independence has changed in its meaning over the years and the results of that change; understand the relevance of the document in how we express ourselves today; and the importance of the preservation of historic documents for future generations.</p> |  |  | <p><b>Materials/Texts/Realia/Handouts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of Declaration of Independence</li> <li>• Parchment Paper</li> <li>• Ink pen</li> <li>• Copy of speech such as Gettysburg Address or I Have a Dream</li> <li>• Direct light source (window)</li> <li>• Box or closed container</li> <li>• Damp area</li> <li>• Bulletin Board</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Real-Life Connection</b></p> <p>Discuss the importance of the preservation of documents that are part of each individual's life, such as tax forms, marriage certificates, birth records, social security cards, etc.</p>   |  |  | <p><b>Extension Activity</b></p> <p>Have students compare the Declaration of Independence to other documents such as the Constitution. Have students locate references to the Declaration of Independence in famous speeches. Have students write an essay on what the "pursuit of happiness" means to them.</p> <p><b>ESE/ESOL Accommodations</b></p> <p>Have students work together in small groups.</p> <p>Provide students with a graph outline on which to chart their scientific findings.</p> <p>Read the Declaration of Independence aloud to the class, providing a hand-out of the important concepts in the document.</p> |

## GED 2002 Teachers' Handbook of Lesson Plans

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| <b>Activity Title - Declaration of Independence</b>  |  |  |           |
| <b>Introduction</b>  |  |  |           |
| <p>Begin the class by quoting a famous speech that uses concepts from the Declaration of Independence. Examples include the Gettysburg Address or King's I Have a Dream. <i>Ask:</i> How did the writer of this speech use references to the Declaration of Independence? Why is the Declaration of Independence such an important document in our history.</p>  |  |  |           |
| <b>Main Activity</b>   |  |  |           |
| <p><i>Say:</i> Today, we are going to talk about the significance of historic documents in our history. <i>Ask:</i> What are some of the documents that are well known or significant to the America's history? Write the student's answers on the board. Answers may include such things as the Constitution, speeches by Presidents, such as Kennedy's Ask Not What Your Country Can Do for You, peace treaties, etc.</p>  |  |  |           |
| <p><i>Say:</i> Historic documents and items such as the American flag or the Liberty Bell are important parts of our heritage. However, many items have been lost or ruined over the years?</p>  |  |  |           |
| <p><i>Ask:</i> If these items are to be kept in good shape, how can we better preserve them? Discuss the need for preservation of many different items and some of the methods that are used.</p>  |  |  |           |
| <p><i>Say:</i> Today we are going to do our own experiment on preservation of a historic document.</p>   |  |  |           |
| <p>Divide the class into three groups. Provide each group with a copy of the Declaration of Independence written in ink on a piece of parchment paper.</p>   |  |  |           |
| <p><i>Say:</i> Each of your groups will preserve this important paper for four weeks. Group I, you will expose your document to direct sunlight. Group II, you will place your document in a closed container. Group III, you will roll your document up and place it in a damp area. At the end of each week, I want each of group to assess the quality of the document. Record the rate of fading of your document compared to a fresh copy of the Declaration that I will provide you. In an experimental situation, my copy is called the control. At the end of the four weeks, we will identify the best method to store an important document.</p> |  |  |           |
| <p>Have the students plot their results on a weekly basis on a graph located on the wall or on a bulletin board. You may wish to have each group use a different color.</p>  |  |  |           |
| <b>Debriefing/Evaluation Activity</b>  |  |  |           |
| <p><i>Ask:</i> How does the Declaration of Independence have relevance in your daily life. Write the students' answers on the board. <i>Say:</i> The Declaration of Independence is one of many historic documents that is preserved. <i>Ask:</i> From the results of our experiment, what was the best way to preserve a written document? Why?</p>   |  |  |           |
| <p>End the lesson with a discussion of the preservation of personal documents that are also important, such as marriage and birth records, social security cards, tax forms, etc.</p>  |  |  |           |