

**myPerspectives**<sup>®</sup>  
E N G L I S H L A N G U A G E A R T S



**Teacher Activities for  
Secondary Literacy**

In celebration of America's 250th anniversary, Savvas invites you to guide your 6-12 literacy students in exploring our nation's history through activities and a "Hook & Inspire" feature from our award-winning *myPerspectives*<sup>®</sup> program. These resources are designed to help students make meaningful connections across diverse media sources and spark engaging classroom discussions.

**NOTE:**

All activities and links should be reviewed/previewed by teachers/educators first to ensure that the content is appropriate for students and meets district community guidelines.



## Hook & Inspire for [The Declaration of Independence](#)

Engage your students' imaginations and connect them **INTO, THROUGH,** and **BEYOND** the text of the Declaration of Independence with these suggested sources. Use any or all of them throughout the lesson.

### **INTO:**

Choose from among these ideas to launch students into the text.

#### [“Freedom,” Song by Pharrell Williams](#)

Get students thinking about freedom with this video of a live performance by Pharrell Williams.

#### [Pawn Stars: William J. Stone Copy of the Declaration of Independence](#)

Share this reality-show clip in which a customer hopes to sell a rare early copy of the Declaration. As an alternative or in addition to this video, share a clip from a more recent episode of Pawn Stars that features an original copy of the Declaration:

#### [Million-Dollar Deal for the Declaration of Independence.](#)

#### [National Archives Foundation: The Charters of Freedom](#)

Share this infographic celebrating the Declaration and other foundational documents of the United States. The site also offers a more detailed brochure and a PDF version of the infographic

#### [The Writing of the Declaration of Independence](#)

Build student interest with this short video that provides context for the Declaration and emphasizes the document's timeless importance. Scroll down to locate the embedded video below the second paragraph.

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## THROUGH:

Sustain student interest by using any or all of these ideas.

### [Frank and Ernest Cartoon: “We hold these truths ...”](#)

Share this comic with students after they have read paragraph 2 of the document.

### [How America Misunderstands the Declaration of Independence](#)

After students have read paragraph 3, play this video in which political theorist and Harvard professor Danielle Allen explains how a typo in the Declaration’s first printing has affected our understanding of the text.

### [King George’s First Parliamentary Address After the Declaration of Independence](#)

After students have read paragraph 33 and viewed the list of signatures, have them read this short article to learn how King George reacted to the colonists’ Declaration.

## BEYOND:

Go beyond the lesson by sharing these connections with students.

### [“The Declaration of Independence” Scene from Amistad](#)

Share this scene in which John Quincy Adams, son of John Adams, discusses the influence of the ideals expressed in the Declaration of Independence.

### [Origins of July 4th \(Listenwise\)](#)

(Time code 0:00–4:04 or to end) Play this radio discussion, which explains some of the facts and fictions surrounding the Declaration of Independence and the celebration of July 4th.

### [Declaration Descendants](#)

Share this advertisement in which descendants of the Declaration’s signers recreate the famous John Trumbull painting.

### [Mary Katharine Goddard, the Woman Who Signed the Declaration of Independence](#)

Share this article about a woman who played a significant role in the Declaration’s creation but whose name has been lost to history.

### [Declaration Resources Project: Printables](#)

Use the Declaration-related infographics and other resources on this Harvard University website.



# Teacher Activities for Secondary Literacy



Literature Connection using  
[Declaration](#) by Tracy K. Smith

### LITERARY ELEMENTS SPOTLIGHT

**Erasure Poetry** Introduce the idea of erasure poetry, a form of found poetry which makes use of existing text to convey another message. Explain that some erasure poetry is based on well-known documents. For example, Ronald Johnson's *Radi Os* is based on *Paradise Lost*. Travis Macdonald created *The O Mission Repo* from the *9/11 Commission Report*. Show students that even the titles represent the erasure of some parts of the original. Some

poets use contemporary newspapers to create new poems which present the ideas of the news from another perspective.

Explain to students that erasure poetry is also called blackout poetry. In some forms of erasure poetry, the black bands of redaction are part of the poem's presentation. Erasure poetry has been shared through social media.

This poem provides a contemporary connection to the Declaration of Independence. You may opt to teach and discuss this poem with the whole class or assign it to individual students. Also, you may want to do a spotlight on this type of poetry.

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