

★ A Famous Signature ★

Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to help students demonstrate that each person must take responsibility for his/her actions, words, and deeds. The signers of the Declaration demonstrated responsibility for their actions.

Objective

The student will learn about John Hancock and his importance to the Declaration, recognizing his signature explaining its importance.

Theme - Responsibility

John Hancock was a chairman of the committee writing the Declaration of Independence. When the Declaration was written, Hancock gave a speech to the delegates stressing the importance of the document they were about to sign. Hancock and all the other signers took responsibility for the proclamation to be free from the rule of the King by signing the Declaration. A person's signature is a declaration of agreement with the things he or she signs.

Core Knowledge

Grade 1 - Amer Hist & Geog. Sec II: Early Exploration & Settlement. C. English Settlers. What did John Hancock and other signers of the Declaration of

Independence do to make a living in the colonies? Sec III: From Colonies to Independence. American Revolution. Tell the story of how the colonies became an independent nation.

Grade 4 - Amer Hist & Geog. Sec I: American Revolution, Declaration of Independence. Why did one person sign with a large signature? Who were the patriots and why were they called patriots? Sec II: Making a Constitutional Government. A. Main ideas behind the Declaration of Independence. B. Making a New Government. Who are the Founding Fathers?

Time

45 minutes

Materials

- ★ Declaration facsimile
- ★ John Hancock signature sheet
- ★ Tracing art supplies (e.g. cotton swabs, paint, crayons, hard candy, glitter, glue)
- ★ Website - www.americanheritage.org

Preparation

- ★ Prepare handouts or transparency of the Declaration of Independence.
- ★ Copy John Hancock signature sheets
- ★ Gather art supplies.

Focus

Students learn from the actions of the Founders of the nation that people must take responsibility for their actions. Show the students the facsimile of the Declaration of Independence. Have them look at it carefully for one minute without talking. Then, ask them what they see. Point out the parts of the document including the title, the main body of text, and the signatures including Hancock's.

Explain to students that this is the Declaration of Independence. It was written in 1776 when the American people decided that they wanted to be free from their king. The men who wrote it knew that the king would be very angry and would send soldiers with guns to make the people obey him. If the Americans lost the war that followed, the men who signed the Declaration would be the first to be punished.

John Hancock was the leader of the Declaration signers. (He was President of the Continental Congress that approved the Declaration of Independence.) He understood the danger but signed the Declaration anyway. He was the first and only man to sign the Declaration on July 4, 1776. The other men signed it later. Hancock signed his name in big letters so that everyone, especially the king, could see it clearly. His big signature is so famous that even today when someone tells another person to sign his name, someone might say, "Put your John Hancock there."

(See Links page on www.americanheritage.org for additional resources on the signers of the Declaration.)

Activity

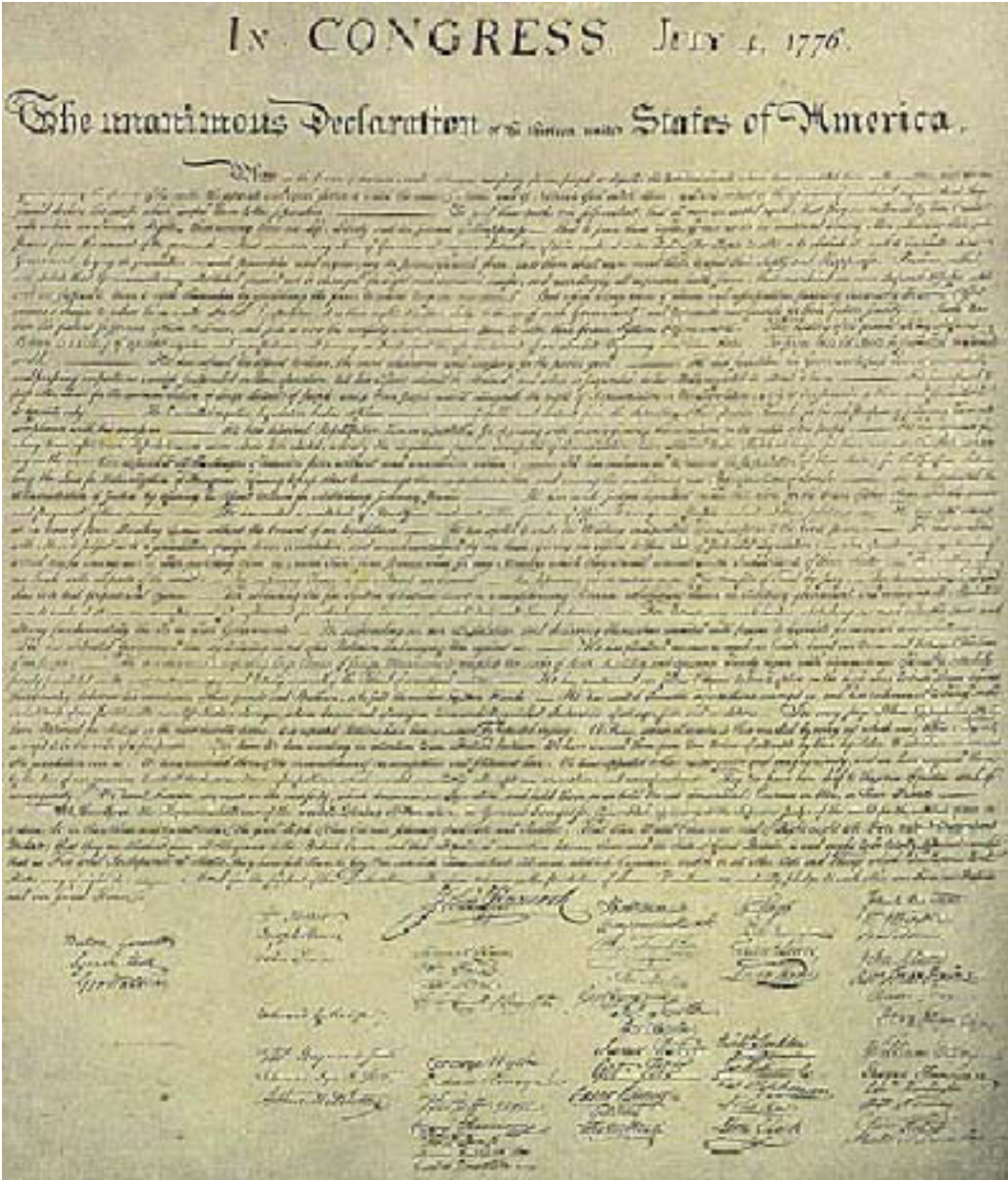
1. Students may research a signer and write a brief biography or report about him. The students may present these reports and/or their findings in class. Discuss/review as a class what the signers and their lives were like during the colonial period. Who were the signers? What were their personalities, histories, occupations, families, and lifestyles like? What were their beliefs, values, and motivations? The teacher will review information on the signers and answer any questions.
2. Also referring to the "Declaration of Independence" unit, discuss/review with students why these brave individuals signed the Declaration of Independence and what it meant for their lives. Was it dangerous to sign the declaration at that time? Talk about the bravery of these signers. Also discuss the peaceful co-existence today of the U. S. and England and how relations have changed.
3. Getting familiar with some of the signers, students may color the portraits of one or more of the signers and include them with their research and/or report. They may also try to find other portraits of other signers in artwork or drawings to cite and present.
4. A. Give each student a copy of the John Hancock signature. Ask them if they recognize any of the letters. Explain that this is a special way to write letters called "engrossing" (beautiful script) which is like cursive writing.

B. Have students trace over the letters with their fingers several times to get the feel of the writing. They may also trace the letters with a cotton swap or pencil eraser. Then have students trace the signature using paint or crayons. Students could also glue things on the tracing like hard candy, glitter, beans, marshmallows, cotton, glow-in-the-dark paint, bits of tissue paper, etc. Older students may enjoy the challenge of trying to copy the signature free hand without tracing it. They may also like to try a real quill pen and ink, if available. Allow students to have an opportunity to pleasantly and visually focus on the signature and identify it.

5. Have students examine a facsimile, poster, or representation of the original Declaration document and see if they can identify and decipher the signatures of these brave men.

Closure

Ask students what it means when someone says, “Put your John Hancock there.” Remind students that we are free today because of the bravery of John Hancock and the other men who signed the Declaration of Independence.

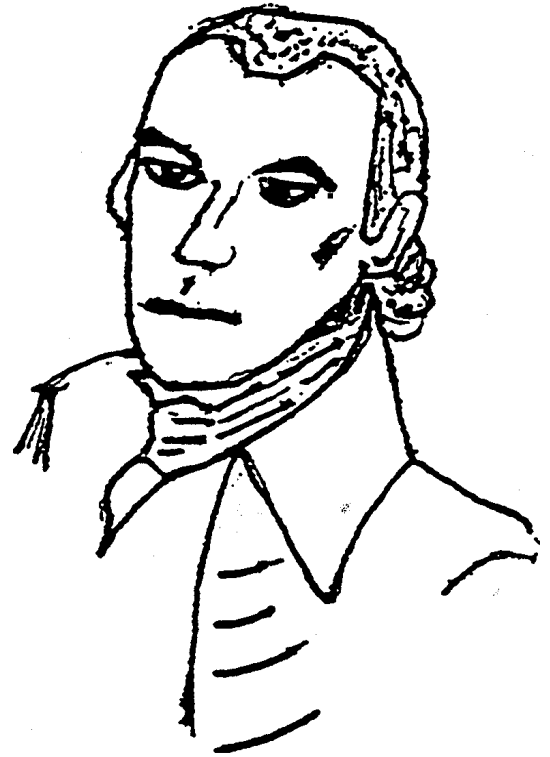


A large, elegant cursive signature of John Hancock. The signature is written in a classic, flowing script with prominent loops and flourishes. The name "John Hancock" is written in a single, continuous stroke, with the "H" being particularly large and ornate. The signature ends with a large, decorative flourish that loops back to the right.



Carter Braxton

Carter Braxton



William Floyd



John Hancock



*Benjamin
Harrison*

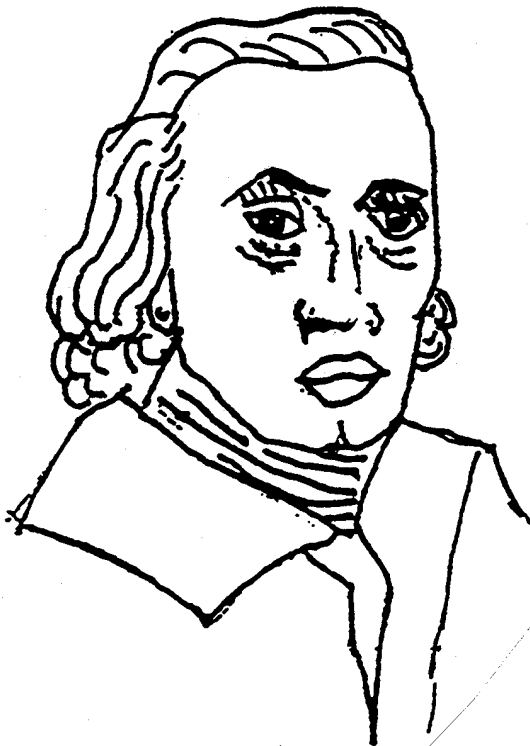


John Hart

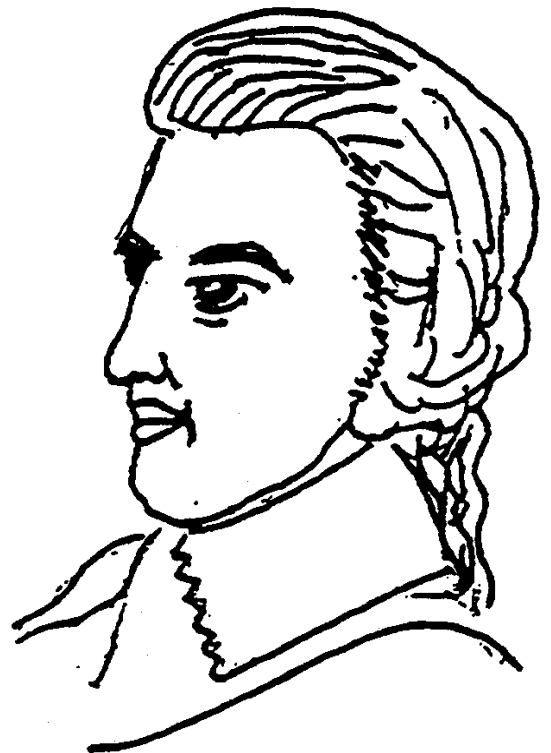
John Hart



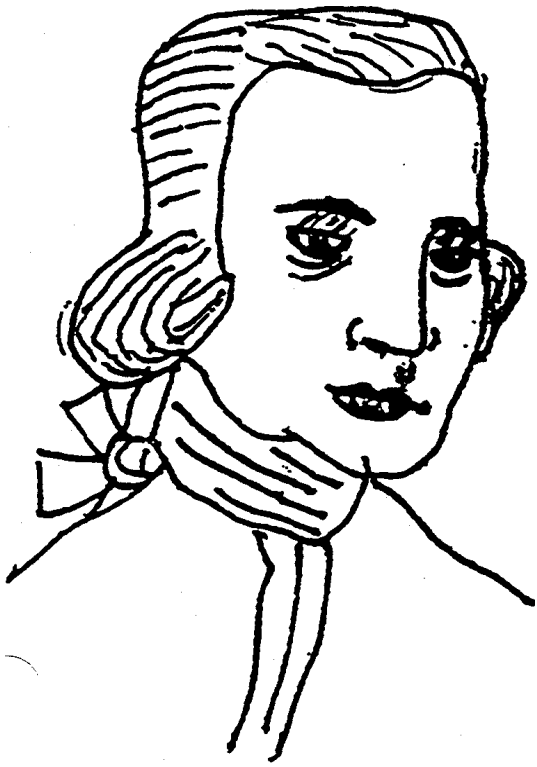
*Francis
Hopkinson*



Francis Lewis



*Arthur
Middleton*



Thomas Nelson Jr.



Richard Stockton

Una Firma Famosa

El Propósito

El propósito de esta lección es para demostrar que cada persona debe tomar la responsabilidad por sus acciones, palabras y hechos. Los que firmaron La Declaración de la Independencia demostraron responsabilidad por sus acciones.

El Objetivo

El estudiante va aprender acerca de John Hancock y su importancia en la Declaración. Ellos van a reconocer su firma y explicar por qué es importante.

El Tema – La Responsabilidad

John Hancock era el presidente del comité que estaba escribiendo La Declaración de la Independencia. Cuando la declaración estaba escrita, Hancock dio un discurso a los delegados haciendo énfasis en la importancia del documento que ellos estaban por firmar. Hancock y todos los otros firmantes tomaron la responsabilidad por la proclamación de ser libres de la soberanía del rey firmando la declaración. La firma de una persona es una declaración de estar de acuerdo con las cosas que el o ella firma.

TEKS

SS Kindergarten Historia. Identifica las figures históricas quien han ayudado a formar nuestro estado y nación.

SS 1 Gobierno. Identifica y explica las ideas en La Declaración de la Independencia.

El Tiempo Necesario

45 minutos

Los Materiales

- Una copia de La Declaración de la Independencia (see Declaration of Independence lesson)
- El papel con la firma de John Hancock (see English lesson)
- Útiles para calcar (por ejemplo trozos de algodón, pintura, lápices de cera de colores, dulces duros, pegamento.)
- Website - www.americanheritage.org

La Preparación

- Prepare papeles con La Declaración de la Independencia o unas transparencia.
- Copias de la firma de John Hancock para cada estudiante.
- Junte un surtido de útiles para el arte.

El Enfoque

Los estudiantes aprenderán de las acciones de los fundadores de la nación que la gente debe tomar responsabilidad por sus acciones. Muéstreles la reproducción de La Declaración de la Independencia. Deje que la vean por un minuto sin hablar. Luego pregúnteles qué es lo que ven. Señale las partes del documento incluyendo el título, el cuerpo principal del texto, y las firmas incluyendo la de Hancock.

Explique a los estudiantes que ésta es La Declaración de la Independencia. Fue escrita en el 1776 cuando el pueblo americano decidió que ellos querían ser libres del rey. Los hombres que la escribieron sabían que el rey se enojaría y mandaría soldados con armas para forzar a la gente a que lo obedecieran. Si los americanos perdían la guerra que seguiría, los hombres que firmaron la declaración serían los primeros a ser castigados.

John Hancock era el líder de los firmantes de La Declaración de la Independencia. Él fue el presidente del Congreso Continental que aprobó La Declaración de la Independencia. Él entendía el peligro en que se encontraba pero firmó de todas maneras. Fue el primero en firmar la declaración el 4 de julio de 1776. Los otros hombres la firmaron después. Hancock firmó su nombre en letras grandes para que todos, especialmente el rey lo pudiera ver claramente. Su firma es tan famosa que hasta hoy en día cuando alguien pide la firma a otra persona le dicen, “Pon tu John Hancock allí.” (See Links on www.americanheritage.org for additional resources on the Signers of the Declaration.)

Las Actividades

1. Déle a los estudiantes una copia de la firma de John Hancock. Pregúnteles si reconocen las letras. Explíqueles que es una manera de escribir en cursivo con letras hermosas llamadas *caligrafía*.
2. Dígales a los estudiantes que tracen las letras con sus dedos varias veces para ver como se siente cuando escriben así. Las letras también se pueden calcar con un trozo de algodón o con el borrador de un lápiz.
3. Los estudiantes pueden calcar la firma con pintura o colores de cera. Ellos también pueden calcar la firma pegando dulces o brillantina.

Por supuesto que ésta actividad puede ser adaptada para usarla con lo que tenga a la mano. La firma puede ser decorada con frijoles, merenguitos, pintura que resplandece en la oscuridad, o con pedacitos de papel picado. Los estudiantes mayores también pueden disfrutar del reto de copiar la firma a mano alzada. Ellos también pueden tratar de escribir con una pluma de ave o pluma fuente, si hay una. Permita a los estudiantes a que se enfoquen en la firma de un modo placentero para que recuerden.

La Clausura

Pregunte a los estudiantes lo que quieren decir cuando alguien dice, “Pon tu John Hancock allí.” Recuérdele a los estudiantes que nosotros somos libres por la valentía de John Hancock y de los otros hombres que firmaron La Declaración de la Independencia.