

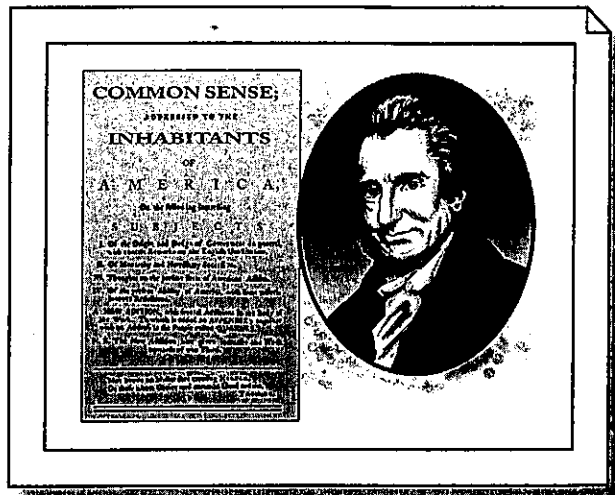
Name:

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AN IMPORTANT DECISION

Thomas Paine was a writer who had many ideas about government. In 1774, he moved from England to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. At that time, many colonists did not like being ruled by England. They felt the British government was treating the 13 colonies unfairly. Paine had some ideas about what the colonists should do.

Paine wanted many people to read his ideas. Books were expensive to print and buy, so he wrote pamphlets instead. Paine published these small, paper booklets so that more people could afford them.



One of his most important pamphlets is called *Common Sense*. It told the colonists they needed to break away from England. Paine wrote that the colonies should start a new country with a different government. The pamphlet said the new country should not have a king. Paine explained that government worked best if the people were in charge of it.

Common Sense was published in January of 1776. By March, it had sold 120,000 copies. Many people read the pamphlet and talked about Paine's ideas. Most of the colonists liked what Paine had to say.

That same spring, the leaders of the colonies had to make an important decision. Fifty-six representatives met to decide if the colonies should split from England. Each colony sent at least one representative to the meeting to speak for its people. Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson were at the meeting.

Many of the representatives already thought the colonies should become a new country. However, they wanted to make a decision that most colonists would agree with. The representatives were glad that lots of people had read Paine's pamphlet. After reading *Common Sense*, many people thought the colonies should separate from England. Now that more colonists agreed, the representatives decided to declare independence.

Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence. It told England that the colonies were going to become independent, or free. The 13 colonies would become a new country called the United States of America. On July 4, 1776, the representatives approved the Declaration of Independence.

AN IMPORTANT DECISION

Multiple Choice

Circle the best answer, and write the letter in the box.

1. Thomas Paine was a _____.

- A. writer
- B. soldier
- C. representative
- D. king

2. *Common Sense* was a _____.

- A. book
- B. pamphlet
- C. speech
- D. letter

3. *Common Sense* said that _____.

- A. the colonies should break away from England
- B. the colonies should start a new country
- C. government worked best if the people were in charge of it
- D. all of the above

4. _____ wrote the Declaration of Independence.

- A. Benjamin Franklin
- B. John Adams
- C. Thomas Jefferson
- D. Thomas Paine

5. The Declaration of Independence was approved on _____.

- A. January 4, 1776
- B. March 4, 1776
- C. July 4, 1776
- D. December 4, 1776

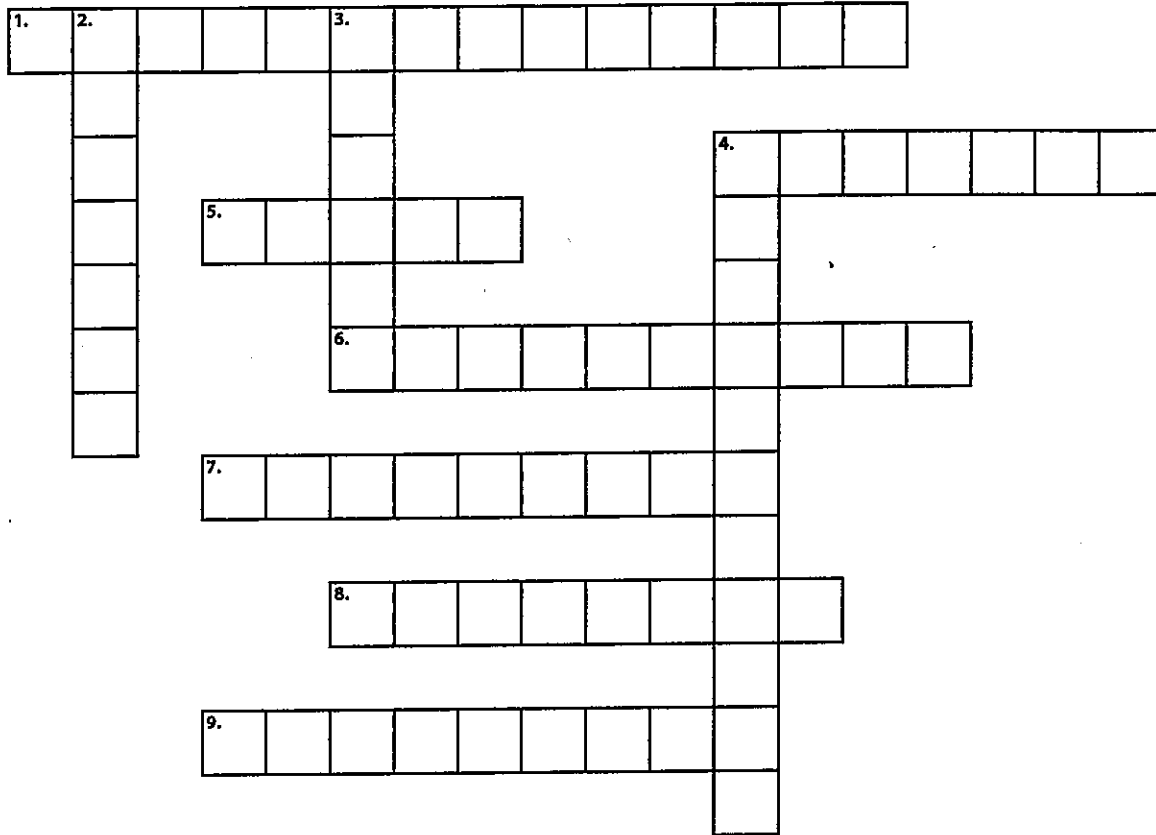
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Date:

AN IMPORTANT DECISION

Crossword Puzzle

Write the best answer in each blank, and complete the crossword puzzle.



ACROSS

1. A _____ is a person who speaks for a group of people.
4. The new _____ would be called the United States of America.
5. _____ wrote pamphlets instead of books so that more people could afford them.
6. Paine had many ideas about _____.
7. _____ wrote the Declaration of Independence.
8. The Declaration of Independence said the 13 _____ were going to be free from England.
9. Thomas Paine wrote many _____.

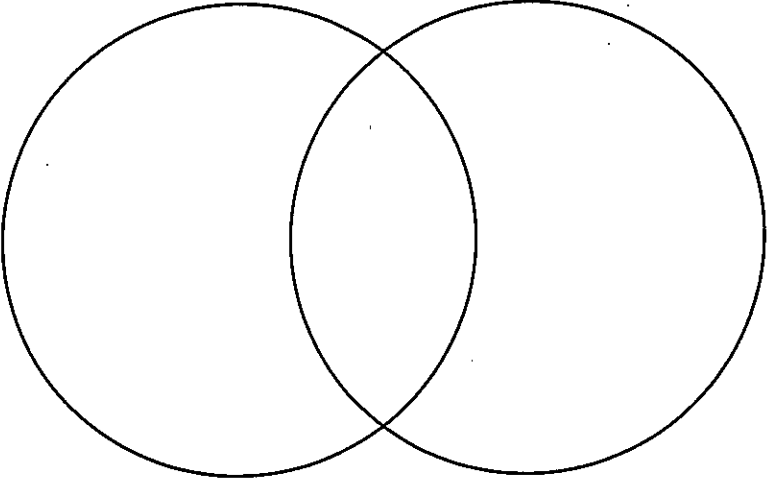
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2. Thomas Paine moved from _____ to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1774.
3. Fifty-six representatives met in the _____ of 1776.
4. _____ was the pamphlet that said the colonies should break away from England.

AN IMPORTANT DECISION

Venn Diagram – *Common Sense*/Declaration of Independence

Use the words in the word bank to fill in the Venn diagram. Use the completed Venn diagram to answer the following questions. Write the answers in complete sentences.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • written by Paine • written by Jefferson • pamphlet • government document • colonies break away • people in charge • colonies become new country • no king 	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; text-align: center;"> <div><i>Common Sense</i></div> <div>Declaration of Independence</div> </div> 
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1. Who wrote the Declaration of Independence?

2. Which document was a pamphlet?

3. What ideas are the same in the Declaration of Independence and *Common Sense*?

Name:

Date:

AN IMPORTANT DECISION

Extension Activities

Choose one of the following activities to complete. Write the answer in complete sentences.

1. Thomas Paine wrote many pamphlets. Look on the Internet or at the library to find out the name of another pamphlet written by Paine. What is the pamphlet about?

2. The Declaration of Independence was based on some of Paine's ideas. It was also based on some of John Locke's ideas. Locke wrote a book called *Two Treatises of Government*. Look on the Internet or at the library to find out three facts about John Locke.

3. Thomas Paine published small, inexpensive pamphlets. Do you think that was a good idea? Why or why not?

QUIZ: AN IMPORTANT DECISION

True/False

Decide if each statement is true or false, and write "true" or "false" in the blank.

- _____ 1. Thomas Paine wrote a pamphlet called *Common Sense*.
- _____ 2. Benjamin Franklin wrote the Declaration of Independence.
- _____ 3. A colonist is a person who speaks for a group of people.
- _____ 4. The Declaration of Independence said the colonies would be free.
- _____ 5. On July 4, 1776, *Common Sense* was published.

Multiple Choice

Circle the best answer, and write the letter in the box.

6. Thomas Paine wrote _____ so that more people could afford them.
- A. letters
 - B. newspaper articles
 - C. pamphlets
 - D. books
7. In the spring of 1776, _____ representatives met.
- A. 12
 - B. 56
 - C. 365
 - D. 120,000

Short Answer

Answer the following question in complete sentences.

8. What are two things that *Common Sense* said the colonies should do?
