



## Common Sense

### Using Evidence

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

#### Objective

*What did Thomas Paine think was "Common Sense"?*

#### **Primary Source Document Excerpt 1 - Common Sense - Thomas Paine (1776)**

1	Men of passive dispositions look somewhat lightly over the offenses of Great Britain, and, still hoping for the best, are likely to call
2	out, "Come, come, we shall be friends again for all this."...But examine the passions and feelings of mankind: bring the idea of
3	reconciliation to the nature of man, and then tell me whether you can hereafter love, honour, and faithfully serve the power that has
4	carried fire and sword into your land? If you cannot do all these, then you are only deceiving yourselves....
5	Your future connection with Britain, whom you can neither love nor honour, will be forced and unnatural, and being formed only on
6	the plan of present convenience, will in a little time fall into a worse condition more wretched than the first. But if you say, you can
7	still pass the violations Great Britain has done the colonies over, then I ask, hath your house been burnt? Hath your property been
8	destroyed before your face? Are your wife and children destitute of a bed to lie on, or bread to live on? Have you lost a parent or a
9	child by their hands, and yourself the ruined and wretched survivor? If you have not, then are you not a judge of those who have.
10	But if you have, and can still shake hands with the murderers, then are you unworthy the name of husband, father, friend or lover,
11	and whatever may be your rank or title in life, you have the heart of a coward...

#### **Analysis Questions:**

- 1) *Contextualization:* Which historical event or events in Pre-Revolutionary America do you think the author referring to when he writes in lines 3 and 4: "...then tell me whether you can hereafter love, honour, and faithfully serve the power that has carried fire and sword into your land?..." **HINT- What was the war that the British fought on American soil to gain more land?**
- 2) *Analysis:* How would you describe the tone of this excerpt? (Tone- how does the words the author use make the audience feel?) Use evidence from the text to support your claims.
- 3) *Analysis:* How does the author try to appeal to the emotions of American colonists in his attempt to build an argument and support for the American revolution? Use evidence from the text to support your claims.

## **Primary Source Document Excerpt 2 - *Common Sense* - Thomas Paine (1776)**

1	But there is another and greater distinction for which no truly natural or religious reason can be assigned, and that is, the distinction of men into KINGS and SUBJECTS. Male and female are the distinctions of nature, good and bad the distinctions of heaven; but how a race of men came into the world so exalted above the rest, and distinguished like some new species, is worth enquiring into, and whether they are the means of happiness or of misery to mankind . . .
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5	To the evil of monarchy we have added that of hereditary succession; and as the first is a degradation and lessening of ourselves, so the second, claimed as a matter of right, is an insult and an imposition on posterity. For all men being originally equals, no <i>one</i> by <i>birth</i> could have a right to set up his own family in perpetual preference to all others for ever, and though himself might deserve <i>some</i> decent degree of honors of his contemporaries, yet his descendants might be far too unworthy to inherit them. One of the strongest <i>natural</i> proofs of the folly of hereditary right in kings, is, that nature disapproves it, otherwise, she would not so frequently turn it into ridicule by giving mankind a donkey <i>for a lion</i> .
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### **Analysis Questions:**

- 1) *Contextualization:* Who was the head of the British government, and therefore American government, in 1776? **HINT- They took your candy!**
- 2) *Analysis:* How would you describe the tone of this excerpt? (Tone- how does the words the author use make the audience feel?) Use evidence from the text to support your claims.
- 3) *Analysis:* How does the author try to appeal to the emotions of American colonists in his attempt to build an argument and support for the American revolution? Cite evidence from the text to support your claims.
- 4) *Analysis:* Based on the excerpts, why do you think the author, who was trying to convince other American colonists to support the revolutionary movement, called the larger written piece, *Common Sense*? **Hint- Think about what the term common sense means**