

JUST HOW SERIOUS IS IT?

Learning Objective: The student(s) will

- A. Analyze the meaning of the grievances of the Declaration of Independence.
- B. Categorize the grievances according to their importance to the colonists.

TEKS: 8.4A; 8.15C; Govt.7F

Materials Needed: sets of the grievance strips for each group of three to four students.

Teaching Strategy:

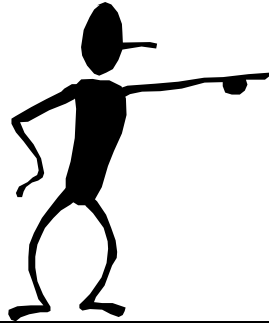
1. Explain to the students that the Declaration of Independence was written for many audiences and purposed, one of which was to persuade the colonists that a war for independence was the best course of action based on the actions of the British government. Therefore Jefferson's grievances can be divided into three categories:
 - a. **Less serious** or mild-these grievances were considered the least serious and rather mild. Jefferson blamed King George III alone for these offenses.
 - b. **More serious**-these grievances alluded to the role of Parliament in collusion with the king in actions deemed more serious.
 - c. **Most serious**.-these grievances were considered war crimes. These were the grievances that hopefully would persuade the colonists to go to war. In this category, Jefferson again blamed the king for these actions.
2. Divide the students into groups of three or four and give each group a packet of the grievances and the signs for the three categories. Explain to the students that they are to read each grievance and paraphrase it in their own words. They then should decide to which category it belongs-**Less Serious, More Serious, and Most Serious (War Crimes)**. To get the most serious, they should look at the ones that would make them the angriest if they had been living in the colonies at the time and subject to these actions by the British government.

Hint-to assist groups that are experiencing difficulty in deciding to which category each belongs, give them the following hints.

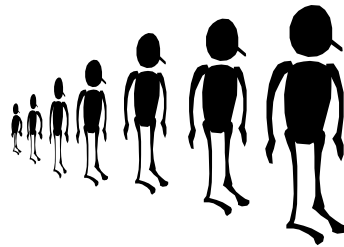
- "He" refers to King George and "others" refer to Parliament
- There are 12 grievances that fall into the "**less serious**" category; 9 grievances that fall into the "**more serious**" category; and six that are considered "**most serious**" or **war crimes**.

<p>GT/AP Extension: Students should look in the Constitution to see which ones were corrected when the Constitution was written and be able to explain how they were corrected.</p>
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Least Serious



More Serious



Most Serious/War Crimes



Grievances

<p>1. He has combined with others...for quartering large bodies of armed troops among us.</p>	<p>2. He has abdicated government here, by declaring us out of his protections and waging war against us.</p>
<p>3. He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.</p>	<p>4. He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation.</p>
<p>5. He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.</p>	<p>6. He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.</p>
<p>7. He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people and eat out their substance.</p>	<p>8. He has combined with others...for abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighboring province, establishing the therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries, so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these colonies.</p>
<p>9. He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.</p>	<p>10. He has made judges dependent on his will alone for the tenure of their offices, and amount and payment of their salaries.</p>
<p>11. He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature, a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only.</p>	<p>12. He has combined with others...for imposing taxes on us without our consent.</p>
<p>13. He has endeavored to prevent the population of these states; for that purpose obstructing the laws of naturalization of foreigners, refusing to pass others to encourage their migration hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.</p>	<p>14. He has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power.</p>
<p>15. He has combined with others...for cutting off our trade with all parts of the world.</p>	<p>16. He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burned our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.</p>
<p>17. He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly, for opposing, with manly firmness, his invasions on the rights of the people.</p>	<p>18. He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies, without the consent of our legislature.</p>

19. He has combined with others...for taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering, fundamentally, the forms of our governments.	20. He has combined with others...for suspending our own legislature, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.
21. He has combined with others...for depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury.	22. He has constrained our fellow-citizens, taken captive on the high seas, to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.
23. He has excited domestic insurrections among us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions.	24. He has refused, for a long time after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise; the state remaining, in the meantime, exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without and convulsions within.
25. He has combined with others...for protecting them, by a mock trial, from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitant of these states.	26. In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms; our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.
27. He has combined with others...for transporting us beyond seas, to be tried for pretended offenses	

KEY:

Least Serious-3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 17, 18, and 24

More Serious-1, 8, 12, 15, 19, 20, 21, 25, and 27

Most Serious (War Crimes)- 2, 4, 16, 22, 23, and 26