



Social Studies Exemplary Text Student Handout

A government of our own is our natural right: And when a man seriously reflects on the precariousness of human affairs, he will become convinced, that it is infinitely wiser and safer, to form a constitution of our own in a cool deliberate manner, while we have it in our power, than to trust such an interesting event to time and chance. If we omit it now, some Massenello* may hereafter arise, who laying hold of popular disquietudes, may collect together the desperate and the discontented, and by assuming to themselves the powers of government, may sweep away the liberties of the continent like a deluge. Should the government of America return again into the hands of Britain, the tottering situation of things, will be a temptation for some desperate adventurer to try his fortune; and in such a case, what relief can Britain give? Ere she could hear the news the fatal business might be done, and ourselves suffering like the wretched Britons under the oppression of the Conqueror. Ye that oppose independence now, ye know not what ye do; ye are opening a door to eternal tyranny, by keeping vacant the seat of government.

(*Thomas Anello, otherwise Massenello, a fisherman of Naples, who after spiriting up his countrymen in the publicmarket place, against the oppression of the Spaniards, to whom the place was then subject, prompted them to revolt, and in the space of a day became king.)

Paine, T. (1776). *Common Sense*. New York: Penguin, 2005.

This is an example of exemplary text found in *Common Core Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects: Appendix B Text Exemplars and Sample Performance Tasks*. Retrieved from http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_B.pdf

Social Studies Exemplary Text Teacher Resource

A government of our own is our natural right: And when a man seriously reflects on the **precariousness** of human affairs, he will become convinced, that it is **infinitely** wiser and safer, to form a constitution of our own in a cool deliberate manner, while we have it in our power, than to trust such an interesting event to time and chance. If we omit it now, some Massenello* may hereafter arise, who laying hold of popular **disquietudes**, may collect together the desperate and the discontented, and by assuming to themselves the powers of government, may sweep away the liberties of the continent like a **deluge**. Should the government of America return again into the hands of Britain, the **tottering** situation of things, will be a temptation for some desperate adventurer to try his fortune; and in such a case, what relief can Britain give? Ere she could hear the news the fatal business might be done, and ourselves suffering like the wretched Britons under the oppression of the Conqueror. Ye that oppose independence now, ye know not what ye do; ye are opening a door to eternal tyranny, by keeping vacant the seat of government.

(*Thomas Anello, otherwise Massenello, a fisherman of Naples, who after spiriting up his countrymen in the publicmarket place, against the oppression of the Spaniards, to whom the place was then subject, prompted them to revolt, and in the space of a day became king.)

Paine, T. (1776). *Common Sense*. New York: Penguin, 2005.

EFL 6
Word Count 240

Teacher introduces the text with minimal commentary and students read it independently. Teacher then reads passage aloud. Give a brief definition to words students would likely not be able to define from context (underlined in text). Teacher guides the students through a series of text-dependent questions. Complete the performance task as a cumulative evaluation of the close-reading.

Text-Dependent Questions

1. What will a man become convinced of when reflecting on the precariousness of human affairs?
2. What does the footnote say about Massenello? Paraphrase this to show its importance to the text.
3. What does Paine claim is “our natural right”?
4. What does Paine say opens the door to eternal tyranny? What do you think he means by this?

Performance Tasks for Informational Texts

Students delineate and evaluate the argument that Thomas Paine makes in *Common Sense*. They assess the reasoning present in his analysis, including the premises and purposes of his essay. [RI.11–12.8]

This is an example of exemplary text found in *Common Core Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects: Appendix B Text Exemplars and Sample Performance Tasks*. Retrieved from http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_B.pdf