

Teaching Guide

SEGMENT 7, WEBISODE 1

Please note: Each segment in this Webisode has its own Teaching Guide



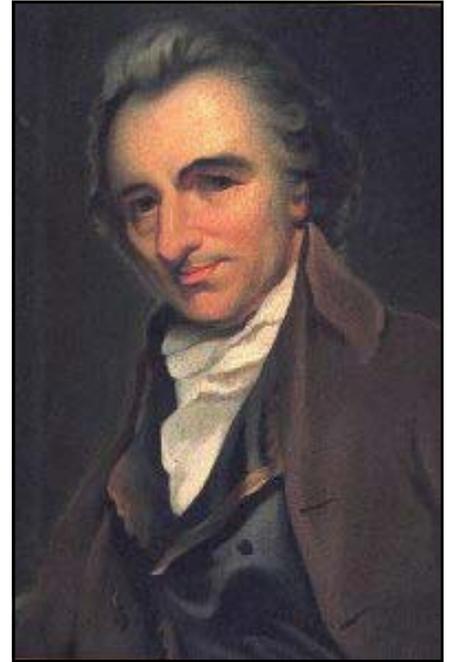
Segment Overview



Let's Discuss

By spring 1775, armed conflict had already begun in the New England colonies; the city of Boston was under siege. The Second Continental Congress, assembled in Philadelphia, sent George Washington to New England to organize the militia and farmers, but the colonial resolve stopped there. The representatives had to decide what to do and quickly if the infant army were to survive. The problem lay in the colonists themselves: the shopkeepers, artisans, and farmers of the various regions had no unified opinion on how to respond to the mother country. In January 1776, Thomas Paine, sensing the wavering public opinion, printed a pamphlet called *Common Sense*, America's first political blockbuster, selling 150,000 copies in its first printing. *Common Sense* argued in language, metaphors, and analogies that everyone could understand for complete separation from England, and provided a vision for a new government. The wildly successful *Common Sense* swayed the majority of colonists into wanting to create a new, uniquely American approach to government. Seven months after the first printing of *Common Sense*, the Continental Congress issued the Declaration of Independence. The goal was clear. There was no turning back.

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Thomas Paine

Teacher Directions

1. Ask the students the following questions.
 - Why was a pamphlet an effective means of distributing information?
 - When you imagine the pamphlet *Common Sense*, how does it look?
 - Why was Thomas Paine's pamphlet so effective?
 - How did Thomas Paine convince his readers to want a complete break with England?
2. Show an image of the pamphlet *Common Sense* to the students. If possible, use the link to *Common Sense* @ <http://www.earlyamerica.com/earlyamerica/milestones/commonsense>.



History Sleuth

Teacher Directions

1. Tell students that many historians refer to the statement by Thomas Paine, “These are the times which try men’s souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country...” as a quote from *Common Sense*, but is it really?
2. Distribute Student Sheet: *Will the Real Common Sense Please Stand Up?*

Note to the Teacher: Explain to students that printers routinely substitute the letter “f” for “s” for ease of printing; hence, “summer” is written “fummer.”

3. Direct students to examine some of the opening lines of *Common Sense* and some of the opening lines of Thomas Paine’s pamphlet *The Crisis*.
4. Ask the students.

From which pamphlet does the quote come? Ask students why someone would attribute the quote to *Common Sense*. (Hint: Look at who signed *The Crisis*).
5. Working with a team partner, students paraphrase the above quote. Students share their quotes with the class.

Teacher Directions

1. Students in small teams discuss the following situation.

You believe in a certain cause very much and want to persuade others to join you in promoting your cause. How would you go about convincing others? What methods would you use, and what forms of communication would be the most effective?
2. Students share their ideas with the class.

Teacher Directions

1. Distribute the Student Sheet: *Another Paine Pamphlet*
2. Students read the Student Sheet and discuss the following questions.
 - What ideas did Tom Paine present in this pamphlet that may have been new to the slave holding colonialists?
 - Do you think this pamphlet had the same effect as *Common Sense*? Why or why not?



What do you Think?



Moving Toward Freedom



Connections

Teacher Directions

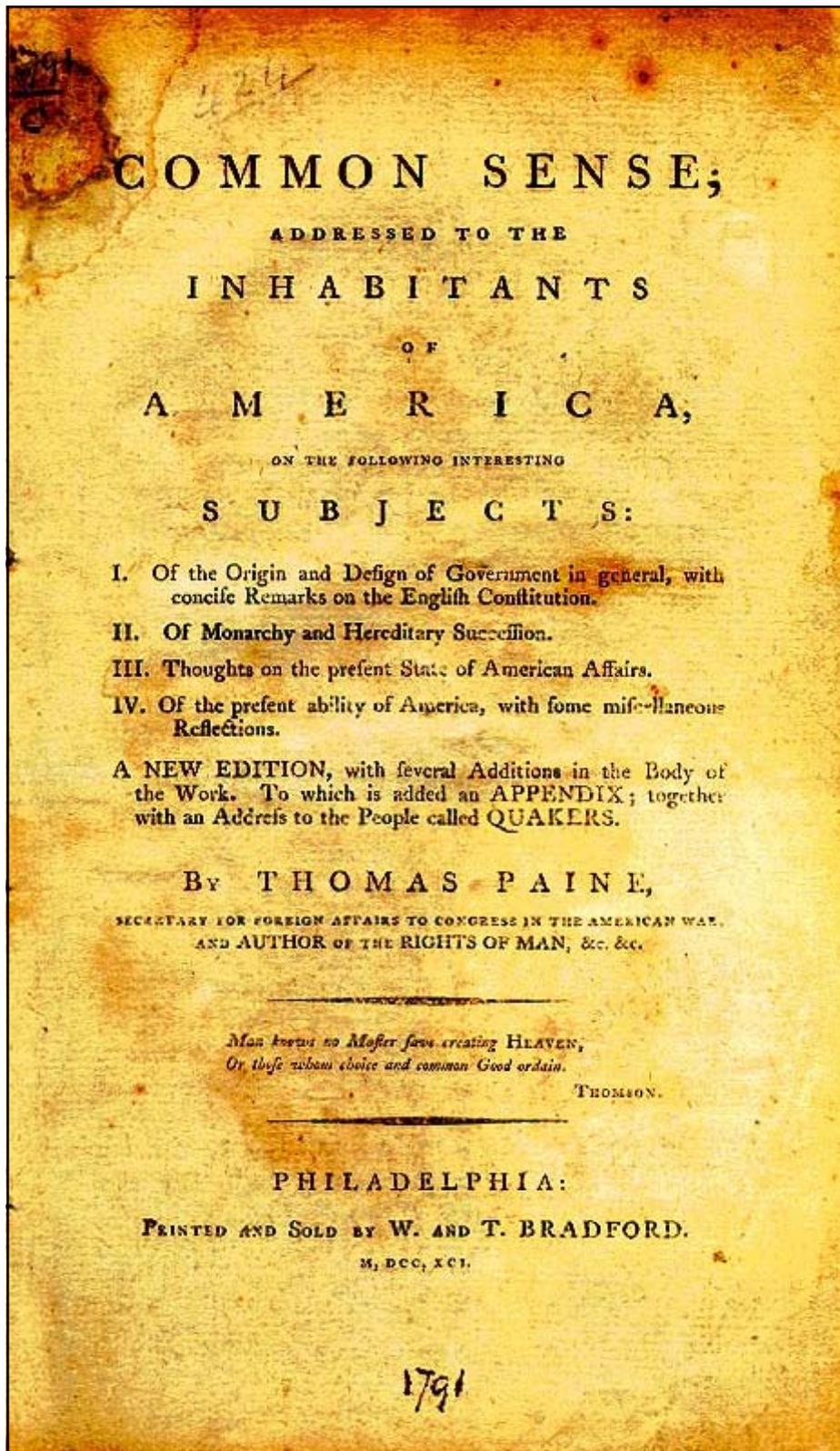
Use the following activities with your students.

Science — Students read about the leading scientists of the late eighteenth century: Voltaire and Benjamin Franklin. These scientists began to use the methods of rational reasoning through observation to create conclusions. Students consider and discuss: How did Thomas Paine use these methods to create the political philosophy presented in *Common Sense*?

Language Arts — Students create a pamphlet persuading classmates to agree to a certain argument or point. Direct students to pick a topic that is not very popular and use common, everyday language and simple analogies to present their ideas. Ask students if they can persuade some people to change their minds after reading their pamphlets. How might they print enough copies for the whole class? What technology in printing do we have today that Tom Paine did not?

Mathematics — The first edition of *Common Sense* sold 150,000 copies. If the population of the colonies was under three million people, and two people read each copy, what percentage of the population read the first edition?

Will the Real Common Sense Please Stand Up?



Will the Real Common Sense Please Stand Up?

The American CRISIS.

NUMBER 1.

By the Author of COMMON SENSE.

THESE are the times that try men's souls: The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it NOW, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered, yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly:—'Tis dearness only that gives every thing its value. Heaven knows how to set a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed, if so celestial an article as FREEDOM should not be highly rated. Britain, with an army to enforce her tyranny, has declared, that she has a right (*not only to TAX, but*) "to BIND us in ALL CASES WHATSOEVER," and if being bound in that manner is not slavery, then is there not such a thing as slavery upon earth. Even the expression is impious, for so unlimited a power can belong only to GOD.

WHETHER the Independence of the Continent was declared too soon, or delayed too long, I will not now enter into as an argument; my own simple opinion is, that had it been eight months earlier, it would have been much better. We did not make a proper use of last winter, neither could we, while we were in a dependent state. However, the fault, if it were one, was all our own; we have none to blame but ourselves*. But no great deal is lost yet; all that Howe has been doing for this month past is rather a ravage than a conquest, which the spirit of the Jerseys a year ago would have quickly repulsed, and which time and a little resolution will soon recover.

I have as little superstition in me as any man living, but my

"The present winter" (meaning the last) "is worth an
"age, if rightly employed, but if lost, or neglected, the whole
"Continent will partake of the evil; and there is no punish-
"ment that man does not deserve, be he who, or what, or
"where he will, that may be the means of sacrificing a season
"so precious and useful."

COMMON SENSE.

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Will the Real Common Sense Please Stand Up?

INTRODUCTION.

PERHAPS the sentiments contained in the following pages, are not yet sufficiently fashionable to procure them general favor; a long habit of not thinking a thing *wrong*, gives it a superficial appearance of being *right*, and raises at first a formidable outcry in defence of custom. But the tumult soon subsides. Time makes more converts than reason.

As a long and violent abuse of power, is generally the Means of calling the right of it in question (and in matters too which might never have been thought of, had not the Sufferers been aggravated into the inquiry) and as the K— of England had undertaken in his *own Right*, to support the Parliament in what he calls *Theirs*, and as the good people of this country are grievously oppressed by the combination, they have an undoubted privilege to inquire into the pretensions of both, and equally to reject the usurpation of either.

In the following sheets, the author hath studiously avoided every thing which is personal among ourselves. Compliments as well
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Will the Real Common Sense Please Stand Up?

4 INTRODUCTION.

well as censure to individuals make no part thereof. The wise, and the worthy, need not the triumph of a pamphlet; and those whose sentiments are injudicious, or unfriendly, will cease of themselves unless too much pains are bestowed upon their conversion.

The cause of America is in a great measure the cause of all mankind. Many circumstances hath, and will arise, which are not local, but universal, and through which the principles of all Lovers of Mankind are affected, and in the Event of which, their Affections are interested. The laying a Country desolate with Fire and Sword, declaring War against the natural rights of all Mankind, and extirpating the Defenders thereof from the Face of the Earth, is the Concern of every Man to whom Nature hath given the Power of feeling; of which Class, regardless of Party Censure, is the

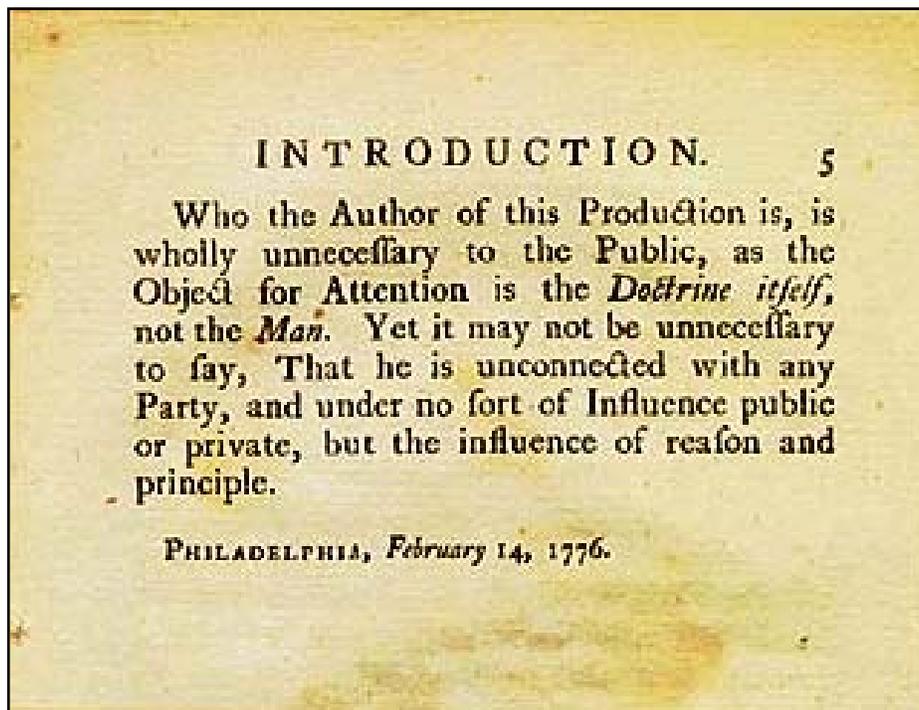
A U T H O R.

P. S. The Publication of this new Edition hath been delayed, with a View of taking notice (had it been necessary) of any Attempt to refute the Doctrine of Independance: As no Answer hath yet appeared, it is now presumed that none will, the Time needful for getting such a Performance ready for the Public being considerably past.

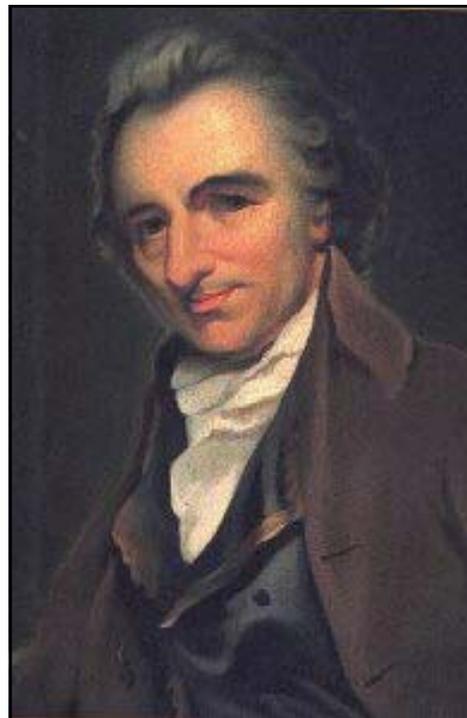
Who

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Will the Real Common Sense Please Stand Up?



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Thomas Paine