

Definitions

To understand the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and the Washington state Constitution, students must understand the words used in them such as:

	Where used	Context	Meaning
blessings and posterity	Preamble to US Constitution	... and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, ...	The bestowal of divine favor Future generations. All of one's descendents
conjured	Declaration of Independence	We have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations,	To call upon, appeal to, or entreat solemnly by some oath USURPA'TION , The act of seizing the property of another, without right;
consanguinity	Declaration of Independence	They too have been deaf to the voice of Justice and to consanguinity.	Relationship resulting from a common ancestry; a blood relationship
created equal	Declaration of Independence	... that all men are created equal ...	Equal before the law
despotism	Declaration of Independence	... a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism...	Unlimited authority; absolute power
endowed	Declaration of Independence	... endowed by their Creator	A free gift
Law of Nature	Declaration of Independence	... and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitles them, ...	Law of nature, is a rule of conduct arising out of the natural relations of human beings established by the Creator, and existing prior to any positive precept. Thus it is a law of nature, that one man should not injure another, and murder and fraud would be crimes, independent of any prohibition from a supreme power. (Webster's 1828 Dictionary)
licentiousness	Article I, sec 11 WA state Constitution	... but the liberty of conscience ... shall not be so construed as to excuse acts of licentiousness ...	Lacking in moral restraint; sexually abandoned; lewd. Disregarding or not conforming to established rules or limits.
initiative	Article II WA state Constitution	The first power reserved by the people is the initiative.	The right or power to propose legislative measures. The process by which the electorate acts to originate legislation.
ordain	Preamble to US Constitution	Do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.	To order or decree; enact; establish. To predestine; destine; said of God, fate, etc. To invest with ministerial or priestly functions.
providence	Declaration of Independence	... with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, ...	The care exercised by God over the universe.
rectitude	Declaration of Independence	... appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, ..	Uprightness in principles and conduct. Correctness, as of judgement.
referendum	Article II WA state Constitution	The second power reserved by the people is the referendum, ...	The submission of a proposed public measure or law that has been passed upon by a legislature or convention to a vote of the people for ratification or rejection.
tranquility	Preamble to US Constitution	... insure domestic Tranquility, ...	Free from disturbance; calm, quiet
tyrant	Declaration of Independence	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.	One who rules oppressively or cruelly; a despot. One who exercises absolute power.
unalienable	Declaration of Independence	...endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.	Not alienable, that cannot be alienated, that may not be transferred, as unalienable rights. (Webster's 1828 Dictionary)