**Main Point Reading Day 4**

**Declaration of Independence**

**What did Thomas Pain argue for in his pamphlet, Common Sense?**

Common sense was an instant best-seller. Published in January 1776 in Philadelphia, nearly 120,000 copies were in circulation by April. Paine's brilliant arguments were straightforward. He argued for two main points: (1) independence from England and (2) the creation of a democratic republic.

**Who was the author of the Declaration of Independence?**

The Declaration of Independence is at once the nation's most cherished symbol of liberty and Jefferson's most enduring monument. Written by Thomas Jefferson between June 11 and June 28, 1776, here, in exalted and unforgettable phrases, he expresses the convictions in the minds and hearts of the American people. The political philosophy of the Declaration was not new; its ideals of individual liberty had already been expressed by John Locke and the Continental philosophers. What Jefferson did was to summarize this philosophy in "self-evident truths" and set forth a list of grievances against the King in order to justify before the world the breaking of ties between the colonies and the mother country.

**What was one of the main ideas found in the Declaration of Independence?**

The Declaration of Independence can be broadly classified into four sections. The first section, or the introduction, states the purpose of the document. The second part explains the theory of a good government and the individual rights each person is entitled, and that the government must respect those rights. The third section is a list of grievances against King George III, and the final part of the document asserts sovereignty of United States of America.

**What day did Congress approve the Declaration?**

On July 1, 1776, the Second Continental Congress met in Philadelphia, and on the following day 12 of the 13 colonies voted in favor of Richard Henry Lee’s motion for independence. The delegates then spent the next two days debating and revising the language of a statement drafted by Thomas Jefferson. On July 4, Congress officially adopted the Declaration of Independence, and as a result the date is celebrated as Independence Day.

