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Review: Declaration of Independence

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Freedman, Russell, *Give Me Liberty!: The Story of the Declaration of Independence*. Holiday House, 2000. ISBN: 0823414485 (Ages 9-12)

Fink, Sam, author and illustrator, *The Declaration of Independence: The Words that Made America*. Scholastic, 2002. ISBN:0439407001

Description:

Give Me Liberty: The Story of the Declaration of Independence by Russell Freedman is an excellent companion book to *The Declaration of Independence: The Words that Made America*, written and illustrated by Sam Fink. Freedman tells of the events leading up to the start of the American Revolution beginning with the Boston Tea Party on December 16, 1773 and ending with the ratification of this most vital document in our history on July 4, 1776. His last chapter titled "Your Rights and Mine," relates the importance of the Declaration to the lives of American citizens today. Also included in this volume is a copy of the Declaration, instructions on how to see the original document on display, a chronology of events leading to its signing, and an index. Illustrations are period paintings and drawings used with permission from museums and special collections.

Sam Fink takes the Declaration and presents it phrase by phrase accompanied by his unique colored pen and ink cartoon-like illustrations. Phrases that might normally be obscure to young people are made clear with his sometimes serious, sometimes humorous drawings. An annotated chronological list of events leading up to the writing of the Declaration, a glossary of words found in the Declaration, a list of selected resources and an index finish out the pages.

Critique:

By themselves these titles are valuable resources for upper elementary and junior high students. Together they make an even stronger contribution to an understanding of the Declaration of Independence. Giving historical context coupled with a detailed explanation of the wording of the document, they offer a broad understanding of one of our country's most important documents.