

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## All Men Are Created Equal?

**Instructions:** Read the two excerpts below, then answer the response questions that follow. Use complete sentences and cite phrases or ideas from the texts to support your analysis.



### Excerpt 1: Declaration of Independence (July 4, 1776)

From the opening of the document drafted by Thomas Jefferson:

*"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness... That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it."*

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### Excerpt 2: Abigail Adams, Letter to John Adams (March 31, 1776)

From a private letter sent while John was helping shape a new government:

*"I desire you would remember the ladies, and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the husbands. Remember, all men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation."*

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## Response Questions

1. How does each writer express the idea of equality or rights? What differences do you notice in how they approach this idea?
2. Compare the tone of Jefferson's public document with Abigail Adams's private letter. How do the tone and audience influence the way each message is delivered?
3. How does Abigail Adams challenge the ideals presented in the Declaration of Independence? Be specific.
4. Do you think Abigail Adams's concerns align with the broader goals of the Revolution, or do they represent a separate issue? Explain your reasoning.
5. Based on these excerpts, what do these sources reveal about the limits of Revolutionary ideals in practice?