

Name _____



Revolutionary Reasons

Directions: Read the historical passage carefully. Think about why the author might have written it. Was it to **inform, persuade, document, or reflect**? Use evidence from the text to support your answer. Answer the guiding questions that follow.

Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* (1776, adapted excerpt)

"It is absurd for a continent to be ruled by an island. The distance alone makes governing impossible, for by the time news reaches us from Britain, months have passed. Besides, this land was meant for freedom, not for kings. Britain claims to protect us, but in truth, we are dragged into wars that are not our own. If we must always rely on a power across the sea, we will never prosper as an independent people. The time has come to break away and form a government of our own choosing. Independence is not only possible; it is necessary."

Guiding Questions

1. What is the main message the author is communicating?
2. Which purpose (inform, persuade, document, reflect) best describes this passage? Explain your choice.
3. How does Paine use reasoning or evidence to support his purpose?
4. What emotions or ideas is Paine trying to stir in his readers?
5. How might this piece have influenced its historical audience in 1776?