

## Things Students Can Do

1. Memorize and recite the first two sentences of the *Declaration of Independence*.
2. Research the life of Thomas Jefferson and then write a 3-5 page essay on what they think was the most remarkable thing about him.
3. Study the vocabulary that Thomas Jefferson used in the *Declaration of Independence*, and then write their own declaration on a topic of their choice, using as many of these words as possible.
4. Research Thomas Jefferson's history as a slave owner and as an advocate of abolition, and then conduct an open-ended discussion on the question, "Why did Thomas Jefferson not free his slaves?"
5. Locate the full text of Jefferson's original rough draft of the *Declaration*, that shows the changes made afterwards by the committee and the full Congress. Work in small groups to evaluate the changes. Were all of the changes improvements, or were some of Jefferson's original sentences better?
6. Read about John Locke and the Enlightenment, and then conduct a group discussion about whether Jefferson was only restating Enlightenment ideas, or whether he pushed Enlightenment thinking into new areas.
6. Research Jefferson's work as an architect at Monticello and the University of Virginia. Discuss: How talented was he?