

SELF-EVIDENT
The Truths That Built a Nation
Young Explorers Edition • Grades Three through Six

LESSON FOUR
“Created Equal”

The Words We Are Studying

“ . . . that all men are created equal . . . ”

The Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776

The Big Idea

Being equal does not mean everyone is the same. It means everyone is worth the same in God’s eyes and should be treated fairly.

Words to Know

Equal. Having the same value or worth. Being equal does not mean being exactly alike.

Fair. Treating people the right way and giving them what they deserve, without playing favorites.

Worth. How valuable someone is. The Declaration says every person’s worth is equal.

What It Means

This is one of the most famous lines in America: all people are created equal. But it is easy to get confused about what it means.

It does not mean everyone is the same. People come in different sizes, with different talents. One person is great at math, another at drawing, another at running fast. That is a good thing!

Equal means something deeper. It means every person is worth the same in God’s eyes. A king is not worth more than a farmer. A famous person is not worth more than you. Everyone gets treated fairly because everyone has the same value.

A Picture to Help You Remember

Imagine a teacher who only listens to the kids with the nicest clothes and ignores everyone else. That would not be fair, would it? The other kids are just as valuable.

Now imagine a teacher who treats every student with the same respect, no matter what they wear or how much money their family has. That teacher understands what created equal means. Every single student matters the same.

Here is something honest and important: a long time ago, even though the Founders wrote that all people are equal, America still allowed slavery, which was very wrong. Later, many brave Americans pointed back to these very words, all people are created equal, and used them to help end slavery. The words were true even when people were not living them out yet.

What a Founder Said

“Just and true liberty, equal and impartial liberty . . . is a thing that all men are clearly entitled to by the eternal and immutable laws of God and nature.”

— Samuel Adams, The Rights of the Colonists, 1772

In plain words: Real freedom, the same fair freedom for everybody, is something every person deserves, because God set it up that way.

Why It Matters for You

When you understand that everyone is equal in worth, you do not look down on anybody, and you do not think anybody is better than you either.

You can stand up for people who are being treated unfairly, because you know they are just as valuable as anyone else.

Let’s Talk About It

1. What is the difference between being equal and being exactly the same?
2. Why is it wrong to treat someone as less important because of how they look or what they own?
3. The Founders did not always live out what they wrote. How can words still be true even when people do not follow them?
4. Have you ever seen someone treated unfairly? What could you do to help?

Try This

Think of one person who sometimes gets left out. This week, do one kind thing to show them they are just as valuable as everyone else. Come back and share what you did.

A Verse to Remember

“The rich and poor have this in common: The Lord is the Maker of them all.” (Proverbs 22:2)