

**Scenes 6, 7, 8**

**Clerk 1 - Cataleya**

**Benjamin Franklin - Max**

**Thomas Jefferson - Cece**

**John Hancock - Ella**

**Students 1-5 Eva, Daisy, Bianca, Ivy, Zohe**

**Betsy Ross - Nora**

**John Jay - Hakeem**

**Redcoat 1 - Praneel**

**Redcoat 2 - Ishan**

**Redcoat 3 - Alex**

**Redcoat 4 - Mesbah**

**Minutemen: Adreayn, Firdous, Llewellyn, Cesar**

**Clerk:** Hear ye, Hear, ye. On this day, July 4, 1776, the Second Continental Congress is now in session in Independence Hall, Philadelphia. The Honorable John Hancock presiding.

**Ben Franklin:** Thomas. Tom Jefferson. Where's John Hancock?

**Jefferson:** Oh, hello Ben. Well, I, uh, sent him out to get some coffee cake.

**Franklin:** Coffee cake?

**Jefferson:** Well, of course. What's a continental congress without a continental breakfast?

**Franklin:** I, heartily agree, Tom, but we already have a selection of coffee, juices and those delicious individually wrapped danishes.

**Jefferson:** True, but I thought John needed something to do this morning. He's been acting a bit strange since we voted to endorse the Declaration of Independence this morning.

**Franklin:** A brilliant document, Tom. And now we must all hang together or assuredly, we shall all hang separately.

**Jefferson:** It's been over a year since the first shots were fired between us and the British. Just a month later, we elected George Washington to head the Continental Army. We've been unofficially at war ever since.

**Franklin:** King George has rejected our efforts at reconciliation.

**Jefferson:** Tom Paine put it nicely when he wrote that "These are the times that try men's souls."

**Franklin:** Yes, that was well put.

(pauses a moment to reflect)

It doesn't rhyme though, does it?

**Jefferson:** What?

**Franklin:** I think my own maxims always stick a bit better with a cute rhyme. "Vessels large may venture more but little boats should keep near shore." See how it flows?

**Jefferson:** Sure, Ben, but I don't think.....

**Franklin:** Or remember this? "Here Skugg lies snug as a bug in a rug."

**Jefferson:** What exactly does that mean?

**Franklin:** That's not the point. I've got four rhyming words out of ten. That's a forty percent rhyme rate. You won't find that in any of the British poets. Check out Shakespeare or Poe. They've got a ten - maybe fifteen percent rhyme rate max.

**Jefferson:** That's great, Ben.

**Franklin:** Great? It's **crucial**. The British may have better trained soldiers. They may have more money, experience and weapons. **But America has rhymes!** Victory will be ours!

**Jefferson:** Uh oh ~ look out! Here comes John Hancock.

**Hancock:** (entering) Where is it? Where is it?

**Jefferson:** What are you looking for?

**Hancock:** The Declaration of Independence.

**Franklin:** It's quite exciting, isn't it?

**Hancock:** You bet. Now where is it?

**Franklin:** Right here in Tom's head. He wrote it. Tom, recite that bit about the self evident truths again.

**Jefferson:** (clearing throat and then speaking with pride) "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."

**Hancock:** Yeah, yeah, yeah, that's great. But WHERE IS IT? Where's the parchment itself? I'm ready!

**Franklin:** Ready for what?

**Hancock:** (reaching into his jacket pocket) Ready to SIGN it, of course.

**Jefferson:** John, I told you this morning. The final document won't be ready to sign for a month or so.

**Hancock:** But I'm ready NOW! I've been practicing!

(rolls out paper with several signatures on it)

(Jefferson and Franklin shake heads and walk away. They exit. Betsy and students re-enter)

**Student 1:** Did the colonist really think they could defeat the British?

**Jay:** Well, we definitely had some disadvantages.

**Student 2:** I'll say. There was no real unity. The colonies distrusted each other.

**Student 3:** There was no central authority to raise money through taxes.

**Student 4:** The army was hard to organize and nearly impossible to keep together.

**Student 5:** And don't forget, probably no more than **one third** of the colonists even wanted independence all that much. And there were hundreds of thousands who remained loyal to England.

**Jay:** True. But the British soldiers were THREE THOUSAND miles away from home and had a huge area to try to control.

**Student 1:** And the British had second rate generals.

**Student 2:** While the colonists had George Washington, who turned out to be a fantastic leader.

**Student 3:** And don't forget the French ~ they were always ready to help anyone who might hurt England.

**Student 4:** But you're forgetting one of the biggest advantages!

**Betsy:** I was wondering when you'd remember!

**Student 5:** Remember what?

**Betsy:** (bragging) My FLAG, of course! I tried to talk them into a red, white and blue lounge chair with a matching ottoman, but they said their budget was limited to a flag.

**Student 4:** Yes, your flag was wonderful. But I was thinking about how the colonists fought dirty.

**Jay:** I beg your pardon!

**Student 4:** Oh, I didn't mean it that way. I mean, they were literally dirty. They blended in with the scenery. Camouflage!

(They exit. The Redcoats enter.)

**Redcoat 1:** I tell you, it ain't right. They should stand up and fight like we do.

**Redcoat 2:** Yeah. Instead of a sneaking around with those fur caps and deerskin coats all quiet like. You can't even see 'em. It ain't fair.

**Redcoat 3:** I mean, look at us. All polished up bright and red. They can see us coming from miles away. That's the proper way to fight.

**Redcoat 4:** Well, I'm on to them. You won't find one of them Minute Men sneaking up on me. No srrrrreeee.

### **Song #7: Bet You Can't Find Me**

(Minuteman 1 solo on verse 1)

(Small group minuteman on verse 2)

(Everyone freezes on the last word of the song. After the applause, they exit. Alice, Ethel, Bob and Bert enter with a table of items on it. They address the audience)