The Musical *1776* takes place inside the meeting room where America's future was debated—and nearly abandoned.

By the summer of 1776, the American colonies were already at war with Great Britain, but no one had officially agreed to declare independence. Representatives from the thirteen colonies gathered in Philadelphia as part of the Second Continental Congress to decide what came next. Some believed breaking away was necessary. Others feared it would lead to chaos, war and total collapse.

In this musical, there are no battle scenes and no guaranteed victories—only speeches, power struggles and the pressure of deciding the fate of a new nation. Every word matters. The question isn't just, should we declare independence? It's also who does that independence include?

Meet the Founders... in their Argument Era

John Adams - Massachusetts Delegate | Will Not Drop It
Adams is loud, relentless and done with waiting. He wants independence *now* and refuses to stay quiet, even when everyone's annoyed. Not here to be liked—here to get it done.

John Dickinson - Pennsylvania Delegate | Pushing Back
Dickinson thinks independence is risky and possibly a disaster. He's not the villain; he's the one asking, *"Are we sure this won't go badly?"* Someone has to say it.

Thomas Jefferson - Virginia Delegate | The Writer Under Pressure
Jefferson is brilliant, quiet and overwhelmed. He's tasked with writing the Declaration, even though he'd rather be anywhere else. Big words—huge responsibility.

Benjamin Franklin - Pennsylvania Delegate | Low-Key Running the Room
Franklin stays calm while everyone else spirals. He uses humor, patience and timing to move things forward. Doesn't raise his voice—still gets results.

Abigail Adams - Voice from the Outside | Calling It Out
Abigail isn't in Congress, but she's not silent. Through letters, she pushes the men in power to think about women, fairness and who's being left out. Way ahead of her time.

PLOT TWIST!

When the Constitution was written in 1787, it didn't use the words "*democracy*" or "*democratic*." The writers were low-key nervous about pure democracy—worried people might vote on impulse—so they built a republic instead, with checks, balances and arguments baked in. A little sus? Maybe. But it worked.

Let's create our own Constitution:

Just like the founders, you're being asked to decide what matters enough to protect. No phones. Closed doors. Big arguments. What do you decide?

Pick Your Role (Check One)

If you were in the room, you would most likely be:

☐ The peacemaker ☐ The rule-maker ☐ The rebel

☐ The quiet observer ☐ The moderator

Making the Rules

If your opinion could influence the beginning of a nation, how would you rank these ideas—from most important (1) to least important (5)?

☐ Freedom of speech ☐ Protection from unfair laws ☐ Who gets to vote

☐ Limits on government power ☐ Add your own _____

One Line That Matters

If the Constitution could only teach us one important lesson, it would be:

_____

Finish the Sentence

We the _____,

in order to _____,

promise to _____,

and protect _____,

for ourselves and those who come after us.