

Matrix of Excerpts from *Common Sense*

Student Handout **4.1A**

Directions: Use the matrix below to record your interpretation of the excerpt your pair has been assigned. Create an act-it-out of the excerpt. Then use this matrix to take notes during class presentations about the other excerpts.

Letter	Excerpt from <i>Common Sense</i>	What the excerpt means in our own words
A	"I have heard it asserted by some, that as America hath flourished under her former connection with Great Britain, the same connection is necessary towards her future happiness, and will always have the same effect. Nothing can be more fallacious than this kind of argument."	
B	"We have boasted the protection of Great Britain without considering that her motive was interest, not attachment; and that she did not protect us from our enemies on our account, but from her enemies on her own account. . . ."	
C	"But Britain is the parent country, say some. Then the more shame upon her conduct. Even brutes do not devour their young, nor savages make war upon their families. . . ."	
D	"I challenge the warmest advocate for reconciliation, to show a single advantage that this continent can reap, by being connected with Great Britain. I repeat the challenge: not a single advantage is derived."	
E	"Small islands, not capable of protecting themselves, are the proper objects for kingdoms to take under their care; but there is something absurd, in supposing a continent to be perpetually governed by an island. In no instance hath nature made the satellite larger than its primary planet."	
F	"Nothing but independence . . . can keep the peace of the continent. . . . A government of our own is our natural right: and when a man seriously reflects on the precariousness of human affairs, he will become convinced, that it is infinitely wiser and safer, to form a constitution of our own in a cool deliberate manner, while we have it in our power. . . ."	