

Common Sense

Thomas Paine

What changes when Paine says the decision belongs not just to the present but to posterity?

TOTAL TIME

PASSAGE

30 minutes	Posterity enters the argument
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FIND THE ANCHOR TEXT

Use the Anchor Text Table of Contents in the Enhanced Reader to open the START anchor. Then use the dropdown to select the END anchor.

SECTION / LOCATION	Thoughts on the Present State of American Affairs
START	The sun never shined on a cause of greater worth.
END	Now is the seed time of continental union, faith and honor.
PASSAGE ID	sec-cs-04

THE MOVE

Expand the audience of a decision beyond the people making it

WHY THIS PASSAGE

Paine expands the decision about independence beyond the people currently alive. Once posterity becomes part of the audience, delay and compromise carry future consequences, and present choices become stewardship.

MARK

Underline references to future generations, posterity, or time beyond the present. Circle the seed-time image. Star the sentence that most clearly enlarges who is affected by the decision.

NOTICE

- How does the argument change when future people are treated as stakeholders?

- What responsibility does the present generation acquire once posterity enters the frame?
- Why is 'seed time' an effective image for a political decision whose results will appear later?

THINK

Answer provisionally: What changes when Paine says the decision belongs not just to the present but to posterity? Choose the strongest interpretation you can defend from this passage alone.

WRITE

Write a short evidence-based response to: What changes when Paine says the decision belongs not just to the present but to posterity? Use at least two details from the assigned passage and explain how they support your interpretation.

CLOSE

Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and explain why.

STRONG ANSWER	Posterity enlarges the moral audience. Present choices are no longer only about current inconvenience or benefit; delay and compromise become actions that shape lives of people not yet born.
EVIDENCE	Use references to future generations, seed-time, or consequences extending beyond the present.
WATCH FOR	Do not say Paine simply wants readers to think long-term. Explain how future people acquire a claim on present decision-makers.
SOLO	Read the exact passage independently.
SUPPORTED	Use narration and sentence highlighting while reading the same passage.
LISTENING	Listen to the exact passage; visual following is optional. Same question and evidence demand.

STUDENT PAGE · SAME PASSAGE, SAME THINKING

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What changes when Paine says the decision belongs not just to the present but to posterity?

START ANCHOR	The sun never shined on a cause of greater worth.
END ANCHOR	Now is the seed time of continental union, faith and honor.

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OPEN THE MARKED PASSAGE IN TUMBLELIT

SOLO: read independently. SUPPORTED: use narration + highlighting. LISTENING: listen to the exact passage. The question and evidence task stay the same.

1. MARK - Underline references to future generations, posterity, or time beyond the present. Circle the seed-time image. Star the sentence that most clearly enlarges who is affected by the decision.
2. NOTICE - How does the argument change when future people are treated as stakeholders? What responsibility does the present generation acquire once posterity enters the frame? Why is 'seed time' an effective image for a political decision whose results will appear later?
3. THINK - Answer provisionally: What changes when Paine says the decision belongs not just to the present but to posterity?
4. WRITE - Write a short response using at least two pieces of evidence from this passage.

Use evidence from the assigned passage. Show what you noticed and how the text supports your interpretation.