Directions: After reading John Adams’s letters to his wife Abigail, discuss and answer the following questions with your partner(s). Please be prepared to share your responses with the class.

Reading Comprehension Questions
1. In Letter A, to what resolution is Adams referring?

2. In Letter A, why does John Adams refer to James Otis?

3. In Letter B, what does John Adams predict about the date July 2?

Critical Thinking Questions
4. Write three adjectives to describe John Adams’s mood in Letter A.

5. Write three adjectives to describe Adams’s mood in Letter B.

6. Does Adams believe that once independence is declared, there will be no further challenges to meet? Explain why or why not.

7. Explain what Adams means when he says, “The furnace of affliction produces refinement, in states as well as individuals.”

8. Which letter do you think was written first, Letter A or Letter B? Why?

9. How do private letters, such as these, differ from historical documents that are written for a public audience? What can we learn from letters that we cannot always learn from public documents?