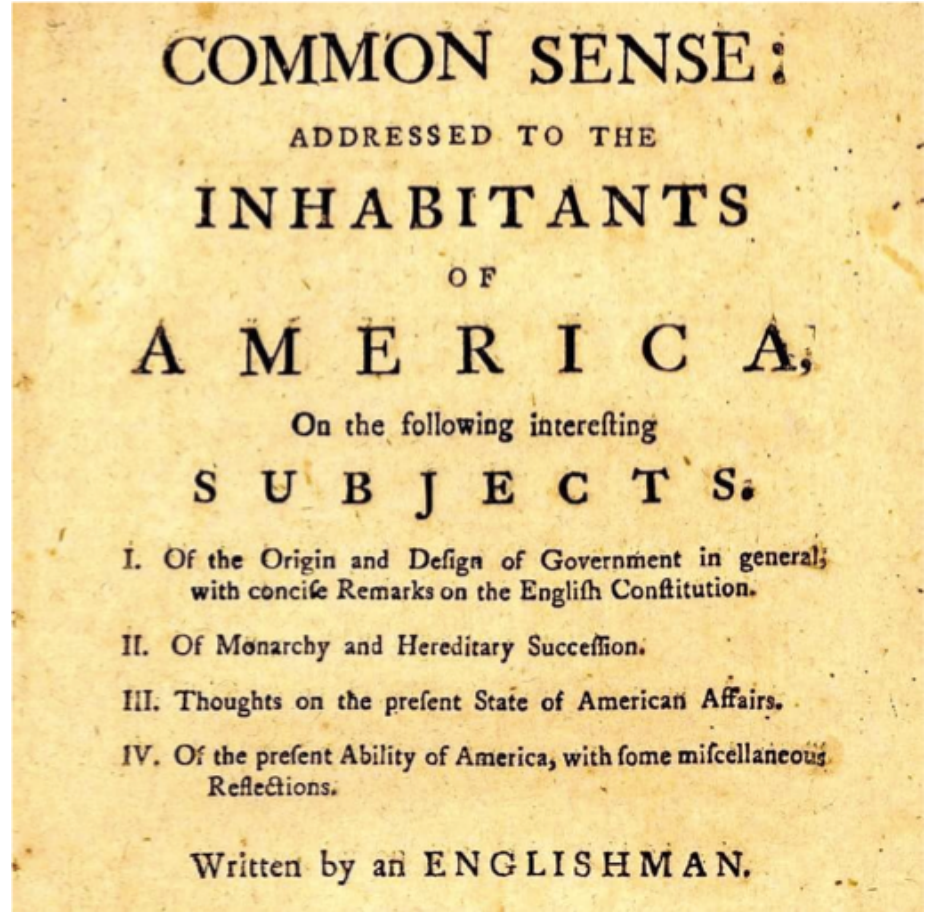


# SSUSH3: Analyze the causes of the American Revolution



***ELEMENT C: Explain the importance of Thomas Paine's Common Sense to the movement for independence.***

## *Common Sense*

- Common Sense was published anonymously by Thomas Paine in January 1776.
  - Initially 100,000 copies were printed, and it is generally believed that the short work was either read or heard by almost every American colonist.
  - Paine wrote a clearly worded rationale for independence that the common man could understand.
    - Paine’s argument helped to persuade many colonists who were undecided to support the cause of independence.
    - The title, Common Sense, was intended to make people of the colonies think about the absurdity of a large continent (America) being controlled by a small island (England).
    - He also asked readers to consider why they would remain loyal to a corrupt king whose laws were unreasonable.
  - Prior to Common Sense’s publication, most colonists blamed Parliament for their unfavorable situation – not the king.
    - Paine effectively shifted the blame from Parliament to King George III.
  - He also urged reluctant colonists to follow the course of independence through his blunt prose written in the vernacular of the time. A famous line from the fifty-page pamphlet is, “tis time to part.”