MR. NUSSBAUM
LEARNING + FUN

The $4.00 Declaration of Independence

In 1989, a man in Philadelphia purchased an old painting at a flea market for $4.00. He bought for the painting for its worn, yet ornate frame and decided to tear the painting away. Behind the canvas, however, he found an old, folded document and recognized it as the Declaration of Independence. Believing it was simply an old copy, he it aside for a few years before a friend urged him to contact a professional.

The man contacted Sotheby's, a famous auction house and authentication service. Sotheby's executive vice president David Redden traveled to Pennsylvania to take a look. Immediately, he realized the folded piece of paper was an original copy of the Declaration of Independence. Only 25 are known to exist. The owner of the document sold it at auction through Sotheby's for a whopping $8.1 million dollars, making his original $4.00 purchase one of the best buys in history!

Put yourself in his shoes! Finish the story below with a description of how you (luckily) found a coveted piece of history.

It looked as if the house had been vacant for hundreds of years. There were cobwebs everywhere and the wooden floorboards creaked loudly. In the clouds of dust, I saw what appeared to be an old staircase. Gingerly, I pulled myself up the cracked steps, making sure not to put too much weight on any step, lest it should shatter. At the top of the steps, I noticed several rooms, only one of which had a door. Old candelabras, some of which still had remnants of wax candles adorned the walls in between the doors. A painting of an old man with a menacing expression was strewn on the floor. Its gold frame, although broken, still sparkled.

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