

Alex Rosenleaf Grade 11 US History
TAH 2010-2011 Instructional Plan
Biographies of the Nation

Essential Question:

How and why did American attitudes toward order and liberty change between 1776 and 1787?

Standards:

This lesson supports United States History Era 3, Standards 2 & 3 of the National Center for History in the Schools. These standards address the impact of the American Revolution as well as the debate surrounding writing and ratification of the Constitution.

Background:

The American Revolution was declared and fought over a set of principles. Of these principles, as outlined in the Declaration of Independence, the most enduring deal with Freedoms. Americans, according to Jefferson, have the right to life, liberty and to pursue happiness.

During the war the Continental Congress established Articles of Confederation to bind together, however loosely, the colonies/states. This plan of government emphasized America's dislike of authority, with a weak congress and no executive power.

By 1787, however, many Americans are clamoring to change the government to allow for a stronger central government. The question of why Americans, in the space of a little more than a decade, transformed from ardent small government supporters to advocates of a strong central executive can be perplexing. This lesson seeks to assist students in identifying reasons for this change.

Activity:

Divide the class into two to four groups. Each group to be given copy of part of either the Articles of Confederation or the American Constitution. The teacher can, at their discretion, divide the documents into smaller chunks depending upon reading level. There should be a few students in each group, however, so that groups can discuss the documents together.

Images of the original Articles of confederation are located at this website: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Articles_page1.jpg Full text is available at this website: <http://www.law.ou.edu/ushistory/artconf.shtml>

Images and full-text of the constitution are available at this website: <http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution.html>

Using the Primary Source Toolbox adapted by Brian Riley, ask students to examine their document or portion of document. Give students 10-30 minutes for this activity, depending on how large each piece of the documents are, as well as the reading level of the students.

After students have examined and discussed their document within their groups, students should break into 1-2 larger groups to discuss and share their findings with their classmates. Each student should summarize their portion of the document, as well as their

findings based upon the Primary Source Toolbox. After all students have shared their findings, with their groups, students should be given time and resources to write on the following question: "How did American attitudes toward order and liberty change between the writing of the Articles of Confederation and the ratification of the Constitution? Why, do you think, those attitudes changed?" Students should be allowed to use their textbooks and/or other resources to identify why the changes occurred.

Assessment:

Student assessment for this lesson will be based upon the ending writing assignment. Papers should be graded on a suggested scale of 50 points, with 25 points awarded for the how portion of the assignment and 25 points for the why portion. (Student examples will be provided during school year 2011-2012.)

Additional Resources:

US Constitution. Wikipedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Constitution accessed 15June2011

Primary Documents in American History - The Constitution. Library of Congress. <http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/Constitution.html> accessed 15June2011

Articles of Confederation. Wikipedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Articles_of_Confederation accessed 15June2011

Primary Documents in American History - The Articles of Confederation. Library of Congress. <http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/articles.html> accessed 15June2011

Bibliography

File:articles page1.jpg. Wikipedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Articles_page1.jpg accessed 15June2011

A Chronology of US Historical Documents. University of Oklahoma School of Law. <http://www.law.ou.edu/ushistory/artconf.shtml> accessed 15June2011

The Charters of Freedom. National Archives. <http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution.html> accessed 15June2011

Primary Source Toolbox. Adapted by Brian Riley. http://biographiesofthenation.pbworks.com/f/Riley_Jun14_I_LP.pdf accessed 15June2011

Primary Source Toolbox

1. What strikes you in reading this document? What sorts of things leap out at you? What grabs your attention?
 - Make at least two observations.
2. What puzzles you? What don't you get? What do we need to talk about & to try to figure out? What do you find out here that you didn't know, or that challenges something you thought you knew?
 - Ask two or more questions.
3. What patterns do you see? How does this source relate to other sources from this time? What concepts, images or key words keep coming up?
 - Identify at least one pattern.
4. What connections do you see? Does this source remind you of a source or issue from another historical era? Does this source remind you of a source or issue from contemporary times?
 - Note one or more connections.

Source: Developed by Dr. Karen Halttunen, USC Department of History. Adapted by Brian Riley, Vacaville High School, Vacaville, CA..