

Lesson plan: The Critics of the Constitution

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Subject: Can be used in AP Government and Politics and AP US History

Grade level: 10-12th

Objectives:

1. Students will examine primary sources in relation to attacks set upon those against the formation of the Constitution.
2. Students will identify key pieces of evidence to defend or refute a historical position
3. Students will demonstrate and practice historical thinking skills such as corroboration, interpretation, and contextualization in their research of sources.
4. Students will participate in a mock trial to display information and understanding on research for the essential question.
5. Students will develop a 2-3 page reflection on their understanding of the mock trial activity and of their conclusions discovered through research.

State Standards:

B.12.1 Explain different points of view on the same historical event, using data gathered from various sources, such as letters, journals, diaries, newspapers, government documents, and speeches

B.12.2 Analyze primary and secondary sources related to a historical question to evaluate their relevance, make comparisons, integrate new information with prior knowledge, and come to a reasoned conclusion

B.12.3 Recall, select, and analyze significant historical periods and the relationships among them

B.12.4 Assess the validity of different interpretations of significant historical events

Common Core State Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.3

Essential Question:

Did Alexander Hamilton have the necessary evidence and authority to discredit George Clinton in his stance on the development and formation of the US Constitution?

Lesson Outline

Part One: Identifying and Investigating evidence from primary sources

1. **Focus lesson**(10-15 mins):

Teacher will present foundation on the *mentality* and *anxiety* surrounding the Constitutional Convention to set the stage for

- a. Model how to use historical thinking skills of interpret, contextualize, and corroborate during a mini-lesson.
- b. Will provide examples of primary sources to support and demonstrate the environment at this time. (Will have them on SMART BOARD)

Source A: Rule of Secrecy Source (Centinal IV, Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer, 30 November 1787)

Source B: Pennsylvania Herald, 13th June 1787

2. **Guided Instruction:** (35 mins.)

Students will be placed into groups of 3-4 students. Each group will be provided a packet that will contain three of the six sources located in the section Various Arguments Against the Constitution's Critics.

While with their groups, students will be responsible for and accountable for the following criteria:

- A. Determine the level and significance of criticism again the Constitution
- B. Provide key evidence to support conclusion
- C. Explain how the evidence can be interpreted to support findings of criticism.

Students will place their information in a poster format to share with the rest of the class in a small jigsaw discussion.

Evidence discovered within sources:	Significance of the evidence in relation to
Summary of group's findings	Picture group's understanding

The class will reconvene after the jigsaw activity to review findings and discuss how primary sources can provide insight to historical events.

(Transition to next part of the lesson.)

Part Two of Lesson: Mock Trial and Historical Argumentation

1. **Focus Lesson:** (10 mins)

Mini lesson on the introduction of George Clinton and Alexander Hamilton as key figures within the Convention time period.

Mini Biographies on each

Relevance and importance to the Constitutional Convention

2. **Small Group Work/Collaboration:** (2 days for research (in-class) and 1 day for mock trial)

Student will be instructed on the process and the components of a trial. /?

- A. Investigating the arguments and comments made by Alexander Hamilton towards Governor George Clinton and his stance/position on occurrence of the Constitutional Convention.
- B. Students will be divided into new groups. One group will represent Hamilton and the other group Clinton.
- C. Each group will be provided the website to obtain the primary sources on Hamilton and Clinton where the students then will have to use historical skills (as practiced above) to identify, locate, analyze and evaluate the evidence to answer the key question above.
- D. One student in each group will represent Hamilton and one will represent Clinton. These students will need to complete detailed research to gain insight on their historical figure and be ready to help present their case to the judge (The teacher) during the mock trial.
- E. Each group will be responsible for developing a presentation (includes pictures, quotes, evidence, etc) that will present their findings and answer the essential question.
- F. Students are to use the sources provided on the CSAC website, though not limited to in their research and presentation.
- G. Presentation must present a historical argument and provide both evidence and analysis of findings.

Independent Work: Final Assessment:

Students will develop a 2-3 page (MLA format) reflection on their learning which will include specific measurements of historical research learned as well as provide personal reflection on the challenges and outcomes obtained through historical inquiry