

We the People are Looking for Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness

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Introduction

In my third grade classroom, students will be participating in civics lessons. Students will develop an understanding that as American citizens each person has responsibilities, rights, and privileges. This unit will share information regarding the two major documents that have shaped us as a nation—the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution--and what these documents do to define us as Americans. Using these documents to guide us, students will be expected to define what responsibilities they have as a citizen, compare and contrast the concepts of rights and privileges, and make decisions and justify which rights are the most important to them. Students will also become aware of how their responsibilities, rights, and privileges affect others and how the responsibilities, rights, and privileges of others affect them.

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness”¹ These words from the Declaration of Independence may well be the most recognized words in our country and have transferred this document from an announcement of independence into a national symbol. These words mean different things to different people and my students will have an opportunity to develop a personal definition.

“We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.”² I have a difficult time saying these words without singing them to the tune I learned while watching “School House Rock”. This preamble is rich with vocabulary and in order for my students to understand it and enter the world of the Constitution we will complete a variety of activities to foster comprehension and interest.

Rationale

My third grade students are aware that our classroom has a set of rules. They realize that they have responsibilities in our classroom that help to ensure that our day runs smoothly. They know that there are jobs they must complete as members of our classroom. And

they know that there are advantages to them when they are in Miss Gormley's classroom. This is an excellent starting point for me to make a connection between our classroom to our community and our country.

At first glance, the idea of liberty seems like an easy concept to define, yet as you begin a conversation one quickly realizes that liberty means different things to different people. I would like to lead a discussion with my third graders uncovering what liberty means to them. After this, we will look at some of the events that led up to the writing of the Declaration of Independence and what role liberty played in this document. We will then repeat the process as we look at the U.S. Constitution, thus setting the stage for using the Constitution to explore the role of the president.

We will use two historical documents, the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution, to gather information about the past. We will read biographies of some of the founding fathers to understand the mindset of the men who drafted these documents and compare and contrast how their lives were different from the lives of my students. We will also draw up a classroom constitution in which their roles as citizens of our classroom will be defined. What rights, responsibilities, and privileges will they feel are important?

Demographics

The Red Clay Consolidated School District is located in Northern New Castle County, Delaware with a combination of urban and suburban settings. Some of its elementary schools are located in the heart of the largest city in the state. The district is comprised of 28 schools with approximately 1000 teachers. It services over 16,000 students. Of those students, 27% are African American, 4% are Asian, 20% are Hispanic, and 49% are White. Students' needs vary, with almost 15% receiving Special Education Services and 10% receiving English Language support. In addition, 41% of the students come from families with low incomes.

Highlands Elementary is an urban school in the city of Wilmington, Delaware. We are a small K-5 school with an enrollment of an average of 320 students. Our minority population represents 86% of our student body with 81% of the students falling into the low socio-economic status. I am a third grade teacher with a class size varying between 24-28 students, which is representative of the make-up of our school.

Background Information

Declaration of Independence

Causes leading to the writing of the Declaration of Independence

The American colonies were a part of the British Empire and were growing increasingly discouraged with the oppressive tyranny of King George III and Parliament. The British Government was requiring the American colonies to pay a large share of the war debt for the French and Indian War. The colonists thought that the taxes imposed on them by the British were harsh and they were angered by the lack of a voice in Parliament. The American colonies were not given representation in the British government. The colonists reacted to the tax on tea through the Boston Tea Party. This protest had angry colonists dumping a shipment of tea into the Boston Harbor to send a message that they would no longer tolerate taxation without representation.

The American colonists began thinking of independence and believed they could successfully govern themselves and went from considering themselves as British subjects to American colonists. The Loyalists argued that a connection with Great Britain was important for trade and protection. After the King continued to refuse to compromise with the colonies, many more believed the only path was independence.

Writing the Declaration of Independence

The Declaration of Independence is considered one of the most historic state documents in history in regards to the struggle of liberty and freedom. As Jefferson wrote the document, he painstakingly chose his words. Jefferson was aware that this document not only would be responsible for announcing the intentions of the colonies, he also recognized this document would become a public symbol with supreme importance. As the document was being drafted, the committee of five, and especially Jefferson, needed to make a statement developing a political philosophy which affirmed the right of a people to break free from the sovereign and form a new government.

The Continental Congress was the governing body of the colonies with representatives from the thirteen colonies. After months of discussion, during the summer of 1776, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, members of the congress decided to formally declare independence and appointed a committee of five to draft the document. The committee of five included John Adams of Massachusetts, Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania, Thomas Jefferson of Virginia, Robert Livingston of New York, and Roger Sherman of Connecticut. After discussing the general outline of the document, Thomas Jefferson was chosen to write the first draft. Jefferson used ideas from a variety of sources including the Constitution of Virginia.

After seventeen days of writing and consulting the other committee members, the document was presented to the entire congress and final changes were made. The Declaration of Independence consisted of the introduction, which explained why they were declaring independence. The Preamble is the most widely recognized part of the document and explains the political philosophy. The body of the document lists all of the grievances against King George III. The conclusion announces that the colonies are now free and is followed by the fifty-six signatures of the representatives. On July 2, 1776

representatives at the Continental Congress officially voted for independence. Adams predicted that July 2 would become a great American holiday! Why then do we celebrate independence on July 4? This is the day that the wording of the document was approved.

The Articles of Confederation

The Articles of Confederation is considered the first constitution of the United States. It was an agreement between the 13 founding states that proclaimed their sovereignty and was drafted by the Continental Congress in 1776 and was sent to the states for ratification, or approval. The Articles were ratified in 1781 by all 13 states. The Articles gave the new government legitimacy and enabled the states to conduct diplomatic relations with foreign governments, create agreements over territories and Indian relations, and direct the Revolutionary War. The United States were now a sovereign nation, yet there was little structure to the government with limited ways to finance itself or enforce laws in the states. Congress printed money yet that money held little value. Emissaries that went abroad to represent our nation found it impossible to secure treaties because there was no guarantee that the individual states would honor the treaties. Historians generally agree that the Articles were too weak to hold the growing nation together and that a consensus for a stronger centralized government began to grow. On February 21, 1787 a convention of state delegates convened in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with the purpose of revising the Articles of Confederation.

The Constitution of the United States

The Constitution is the set of written laws which govern citizens of the United States and describes the organization and powers of the government. It contains the Preamble, seven original articles, and twenty-seven amendments. The delegates to the Constitutional Convention decided that the Articles of Confederation needed to be completely replaced, rather than merely amended. The Constitution was adopted in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on September 17, 1787 but needed to be ratified by at least nine states, 2/3 of the states at the time, to go into effect. Delaware was the first state to ratify, or approve, the Constitution on December 7, 1787 and it was ratified later by ten other states. The Constitution went in effect on March 4, 1789 and George Washington was sworn into the office of the President of the United States of America as our first president on April 30, 1789. The Constitution establishes the rules and separates the powers of three branches of the federal government; the legislative, the executive, and the judicial. Each branch is designed to have equal power thus creating a system of checks and balances to allow one branch to limit the power of the others.

As the Convention worked to craft the document that would set up a new government, different state representatives had a variety of plans in mind. Larger, more populous states wanted representation to be based according to populations. Smaller, less populous

states were concerned that the larger states would gain more control from a government solely developed around population and that their voices and interests would be lost. They therefore put forth plans to create a government based on one vote per state.

The Virginia Plan

The Virginia Plan was also known as the Large State Plan. Edmund Randolph, the governor of Virginia, introduced a plan with 15 resolutions to the Constitutional Convention. This plan proposed a bicameral legislature, thus creating two chambers; the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Senate was designed to be selected by state legislatures, the idea being that the Senators would be wealthier and wiser. Members of both chambers would be apportioned according to the population of the states. This would give more populous states greater representation and influence in Congress. The Virginia Plan also called for a government with three branches. The executive branch would be selected by the legislative branch.

The New Jersey Plan

The New Jersey Plan, also known as the Smaller State Plan, was presented by William Paterson. The plan gave each state one vote in Congress, thus giving equal power to both large and small states.

The Great Compromise

The Convention was becoming deadlocked over these issues and created a committee with one delegate from each state to reach a compromise. It was decided that in the upper house each state would be given equal representation and in the lower house each state would have proportional representation. So in the Senate each state would have two seats and in the House of Representatives each state would have one representative for every 40,000 residents, slaves counting as $\frac{3}{5}$ of a resident.

Bill of Rights

As the states began debating the adoption of the Constitution, many feared that the document could lead to tyranny by the Federal Government because citizens' rights were not protected. A political faction known as the Anti-Federalists wanted the document to specifically name the individual rights that citizens were entitled to and to place specific limitations on the federal government's ability to infringe upon those rights. Many states ratified the Constitution with the understanding that these rights would be added to the Constitution by amendment. The first ten amendments to the Constitution are collectively known as the Bill of Rights. These amendments serve to protect the rights of liberty and property and to limit the Federal government's power in judicial proceedings as well as reserve some powers at the state level. There were originally 12 amendments but the first two, which dealt with apportionment of elected representatives and congressional pay

raises, did not receive the necessary $\frac{3}{4}$ ratification votes by the states and therefore were not included. There have since been 17 more amendments added to the Constitution.

Article I

Article 1 of the United States Constitution sets up the Legislative branch of the government, creating two houses: the Senate and the House of Representatives. Details are listed regarding the election of these officials. Members of the House of Representative will be elected every two years, need to be at least 25 years old, should be a citizen for at least 7 years, and must live in the state in which they are elected. The number of representatives is determined by the population of the state with every state having at least one representative. The House has sole Power of Impeachment. The Senate members will be elected every six years, will need to be at least 30 years, should be a citizen for at least 9 years, and must live in the state in which they are elected. Each state will elect two Senators. The Vice President will be President of the Senate but will not have a vote unless the vote is evenly divided. The Legislative Branch of the government is given several enumerated powers, including the power to create laws, coin money, declare war, and levy taxes.

Article II

The United States Constitution explains the qualifications for the Executive branch of the government. This exclusively deals with the President of the United States. The President is elected for a term of four years, must be a natural born citizen, should be at least 35 years old, and should have resided in the United States for at least 14 years. Before a President takes office, he shall take the following Oath or Affirmation:--"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States." The President is considered Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States. The President can grant pardons and can make treaties, provided $\frac{2}{3}$ of the Senate approves. The President insures the laws are executed correctly and is responsible for signing the Laws that the Legislative Branch agrees on, or the President can veto the Law. If a President vetoes the Law, it will need to go back to both Houses and will need to be re-voted upon, passing with at least $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote.

Article III

The Judicial Branch of the government is detailed in Article III of the United States Constitution. There is one Supreme Court and lesser courts that Congress deems necessary. The Judicial Power will extend to all cases which bring into question the Constitution. The Supreme Court will have original jurisdiction over cases involving Ambassadors, where a State is a Party, and public ministers and consuls. In all other cases, the Supreme Court will have appellate jurisdiction.

Checks and Balances

The Constitution puts into action the idea of Separation of Powers. This was detailed in order to prevent any one branch of the government to become too powerful by sharing specific duties. While there is the Separation of Powers, the Constitution also creates a series of Checks and Balances giving each branch the right to challenge another branch with each branch having an effect on the other.

Legislative Branch

The Legislative Branch has checks in place to hold not only the Executive Branch and Judicial Branch in check but, since it is a two House system, also the Legislative Branch. Some checks on the Executive Branch include overriding Presidential vetoes, power to declare war, power to enact taxes and allocate funds as well as approve the replacement of the Vice-President. The House has the power to begin impeachment proceedings against the President and to select the President in the result of no majority in electoral votes. The Senate holds the impeachment trials and selects the Vice-President in the result of no majority in electoral votes. The Senate also approves departmental appointments, treaties, and ambassadors. The checks regarding the Judicial Branch involve the power to initiate Constitutional amendments, set jurisdiction of courts, alter the size of the Supreme Court, and, for the Senate, to confirm judicial nominations. The checks affecting each House involve the requirement that all bills must be passed by both houses, neither house may adjourn for more than three days without the consent of the other house, and all journals must be published. The House must originate all revenue bills.

Executive Branch

The Executive Branch also has a check against itself, in that the Vice-President and Cabinet can vote that the President is unable to uphold his duties as President. Other checks on the Legislative Branch include the power of veto, Commander in Chief of the Military, and Congress cannot vote to diminish compensation to the President. The Vice President is considered the President of the Senate and holds the power to break any stalemates of equal votes there. The President has the power to appoint judges and the power to issue pardons.

Judicial Branch

The Judicial Branch checks against both the Legislative and Executive Branches with the power to exercise judicial review to determine the constitutionality of congressional legislation and executive actions. The Chief Justice sits as the President of the Senate during presidential impeachment proceedings.

Teaching Strategies

Strategies

My third grade classroom has students with a variety of reading levels ranging from first grade levels to fourth grade levels and perhaps beyond. It is my intention to scaffold vocabulary and comprehension instruction in order to provide an entry point for all learners. I will prime my students with necessary vocabulary to assist students in interpreting the documents. Vocabulary activities will play a large role in dissecting and analyzing the message embedded in The Declaration of Independence and the U. S. Constitution. Students will work in cooperative learning groups comprised of students with a variety of levels of ability and learning styles as they review these primary resources. This mutual support creates an atmosphere where all students can achieve and fosters a strong sense of community within the classroom. When the initial investigation is complete, groups will be re-formed and students will share their knowledge with their classmates. We will create a timeline covering events that led to the need for and the creation of the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights that are crucial to our nation judgments about if and how the messages have changed over time.

Vocabulary Development

Vocabulary development is an integral part of all content learning. There is an undeniable link between vocabulary understanding and comprehension. As a teacher in the elementary grades, one must realize that direct and implicit instruction of vocabulary is vital and should occur daily in the classroom. A variety of vocabulary activities can aid in highlighting the most important words for content area comprehension. Two helpful strategies I use in my classroom are explained next.

Student VOC Strategy

This strategy helps students analyze word meanings from context. Create a list of key vocabulary words that are coming up. Have your students write the original sentence from where the vocabulary word is found. My students will make a prediction of what this new vocabulary word means. They should then consult a friend or a reliable resource, such as a dictionary, to determine the meaning of the word. Students will create an original sentence to show the meaning of the word. Finally they should draw a picture that will help them understand the word and explain it. This is a fantastic way for students to analyze and decode words in a text they don't understand.

Word Banks

Word Banks are places where students can keep a list of words they have learned so that they can refer to them as needed. I prefer to have students keep their word banks on rings. I use a variety of color coded index cards and assign a specific color to a specific part of speech, such as all nouns are on blue cards. Using the rings enables students to develop alphabetizing skills, parts of speech skills, and is more mobile than a journal. Students should be expected to use the words in their writing and their speaking.

Cooperative Learning Grouping

Think-Pair-Share

During Think-Pair-Share activities, students are given information or a question and must independently Think about how they will react to the prompt. The Think period should last a short time, no longer than 5 minutes. Next, they will Pair with a partner and conference about the prompt. During this period, they may develop new questions or clarify understanding. This period should also last a short time, no longer than 5 minutes. Then they will Share with another partner set, small group, or entire class. All information can be discussed and questions may lead to further investigations. The time frame on this portion will be dependent on the choice of sharing. As the essential questions are posed to stimulate student thinking, we will use the Think-Pair-Share model to inspire understanding and questions about our topic. This will provide a starting point for me as it can identify what the students already know, what they are confused about, what they know little or nothing about, and also what interests them and what they want to learn.

Three Minute Review

I stop any time during a lecture or discussion and give teams three minutes to review what has been said, ask clarifying questions, or answer questions. Using this strategy, students will be able to have time to digest the information already presented, ask questions to clear up misconceptions, and formulate additional questions to begin to connect to future learning.

Reading Strategies

Differentiated Instruction

To meet the needs of all the learners in my classroom, I will use Differentiated Instruction. Differentiated Instruction is an approach to teaching content in ways that address a variety of learning styles and needs of students while maximizing the potential of all learners. This will help me to accommodate the diversity of academic needs present in my classroom. My instruction as well as the students' research can be differentiated. I

will differentiate according to content, process, or product. Through differentiated content students will have access to a varied level of texts and/or websites and could be "buddied" with a partner at a different level to assist with the learning. Differentiated process will involve the students being offered choices about the way they gather information; students will be given access to books, audio tapes, and videos. When differentiating products, students are given learning contracts which present them with a variety of options to create different products, such as plays, poems, or Power Points, based on their individualized learning style and interest.

Making Connections

Learning occurs when students can make personal connections to the prior knowledge and future learning. Each student comes to class with prior knowledge; this will be the starting point for new information. While reading, students will make text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world connections. These connections help students to become more aware of different genres, forms, and structures within the text. When students can make a connection to a character within a story, motives, thoughts, and feelings of that character are better understood and history becomes alive for them.

Questioning

"Curiosity spawns questions. Questions are the master key to understanding. Questions clarify confusion. Questions stimulate research efforts. Questions propel us forward and take us deeper into reading."³ Teachers need to monitor their students' understanding; the questioning strategy offers teachers an opportunity to check for understanding and clear up any misconceptions. Student formulated questions are an essential component to this process and help determine where the students want to go next in learning of the topic.

Visualization

It has been said, "A picture is worth a thousand words". Learning to interpret images---also symbols, graphs, and facial expressions---improves comprehension.

Determining Importance

Students need to discriminate between what is important in a reading passage and what is not important; this is the very definition of comprehension. Once students determine what is important, they can begin to apply meaning to the selection and can build reasoning skills.

Classroom Activities

Lesson 1 Vocabulary Dissection of Declaration of Independence and US Constitution

Essential Questions-What do you do when you see an unknown word? How can I use context clues to help me understand the text?

Background Information- Students will have participated in classroom lessons that detail the reasons behind the writing of these two documents. Students will have viewed the *Schoolhouse Rock* video clip, “Fireworks,” “No More Kings,” “The Shot Heard Round the World,” and “Preamble”.

Instruction- Using copies of The Declaration of Independence and Preamble of The United States Constitution, students will use their knowledge to define and understand key words. Students will work in differentiated groups and will be able to use reference materials to assist their discovery. In order to uncover the intent of the Declaration within the framework of a third grade understanding, only a portion of the introduction will be used. The Preamble will be used for the United States Constitution. Using the Frayer model, students will create a visual representation of the words, use it in a self-created sentence, and think of possible synonyms or antonyms for the vocabulary word in order to try to gain comprehension of the words.

Culminating Activity- Students will rewrite the Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution in their own words trying to capture the intent of the original document.

Lesson 2 Rights, Responsibilities, and Privileges

Essential Questions- What is a right? What is a responsibility? What is a privilege? How are these concepts alike and different?

Background Information- As a class, we will hold a discussion about what students believe these concepts mean. Students will then create a definition and illustrate their visualization of each concept.

Instruction- I will provide a list (see Appendix B) of rights, responsibilities, and privileges. As a class, we will sort the list into the correct columns. Students will lead the discussion and then will sort the list into three columns, (rights, responsibilities, privileges) with a partner. As they complete the sort, they will have to justify their decisions.

Culminating Activity-Now that the students have developed an understanding of the concepts, students will have to decide which right they believe to be most important and explain why. They will then have to choose one right to give up and explain why.

Assessment- Students will create a poster illustrating what they decide is their most important right, responsibility, and privilege.

Lesson 3 Class Constitution

Essential Question: How can you define Liberty? Why do we vote? What responsibility do we have to vote? How do we decide the best choice?

Background Information- This activity will take place at the end of the unit. Students will have read and interpreted the United States Constitution. Students will also have participated in a lesson defining rights, responsibilities, and privileges.

Instruction- Using the knowledge they possess about the Constitution and their individual rights, students will brainstorm a list of things they feel are important. They will use this list to create their own constitution. Students will work in small groups.

Culminating Activity- Students will present their constitution to the class. After hearing all of the ideas, the class will vote to ratify one of the constitutions.

Appendix A

Vocabulary list for Lessons one

Name: _____

Declaration of Independence Vocabulary

Portion of Declaration that we will be deciphering:

“When in the Course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. “

Dissolve	
Entitle	

Declare	
Impel	
Separation	
Self-evident	
Endowed	
Unalienable	
Pursuit	
Deriving	
Abolish	

The Preamble to the United States Constitution Vocabulary

We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Union	
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Establish	
Insure	
Domestic	
Tranquility	
Promote	
Welfare	
Posterity	
Ordain	

Appendix B

Materials for Lesson two

Right- legal or social principle that is a fundamental rule about what is allowed or owed to people; something a person has a claim to, freedoms that all citizens of the United States have

Responsibility- a duty, something a person is supposed to do on the basis of moral or legal grounds

Privilege- a special benefit; a right or immunity granted as an advantage, or favor

Rights

Vote for a candidate of your choice

Say what you want to say, voice your opinion

(Amar 2005) (Becker 1922) (Wills 1978) (Maier 1997) (Landau 2008) (Taylor-Butler 2008) (Taylor-Butler, The Constitution of the United States 2008)

Go to a church

Wear the clothes you choose

Responsibilities

Go to school everyday

Work with a partner on a project

Complete and turn in your homework on time

Treat classroom materials appropriately

Listen to your teacher

Privileges:

Sit in the bean bag chairs

Ride a bicycle

Have thirty minutes of recess each day

Listen to whatever type of music you choose

Eat lunch with the teacher

Appendix C

Standards that will be addressed:

History Standard Two: Students will gather, examine, and analyze historical data K-3: Students will use artifacts and documents to gather information about the past.

History Standard Three: Students will interpret historical data K-3: Students will understand that historical accounts are constructed by drawing logical inferences from artifacts and documents.

History Standard Four: Students will develop historical knowledge of major events and phenomena in world, United States, and Delaware history [Content]. K-3: Students will develop an understanding of the similarities between families now and in the past, including:

- Daily life today and in other times
- Cultural origins of customs and beliefs around the world

K-3: Students will develop an awareness of major events and people in United States and Delaware history.

- Who lives here and how did they get here? (immigrants, demographics, ethnic and religious groups)
- Important people in our past
- Different kinds of communities in Delaware and the United States

Civics Standard One: Students will examine the structure and purposes of governments with specific emphasis on constitutional democracy K-3: Students will understand that leaders are sometimes chosen by election, and that elected officials are expected to represent the interests of the people who elected them.

K-3: Students will understand that positions of authority, whether elected, appointed, or familial, carry responsibilities and should be respected.

Civics Standard Two: Students will understand the principles and ideals underlying the American political system K-3: Students will understand that respect for others, their opinions, and their property is a foundation of civil society in the United States.

Civics Standard Three: Students will understand the responsibilities, rights, and privileges of United States citizens [Citizenship]. K-3: Students will understand that American citizens have distinct responsibilities (such as voting), rights (such as free speech and freedom of religion), and privileges (such as driving).

Appendix D

Article. II.

Section. 1.

The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his Office during the Term of four Years, and, together with the Vice President, chosen for the same Term, be elected, as follows:

Each State shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors, equal to the whole Number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress: but no Senator or Representative, or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States, shall be appointed an Elector.

The Electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by Ballot for two Persons, of whom one at least shall not be an Inhabitant of the same State with themselves. And they shall make a List of all the Persons voted for, and of the Number of Votes for each; which List they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the Seat of the Government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall, in the Presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the Certificates, and the Votes shall then be counted. The Person having the greatest Number of Votes shall be the President, if such Number be a Majority of the whole Number of Electors appointed; and if there be more than one who have such Majority, and have an

equal Number of Votes, then the House of Representatives shall immediately choose by Ballot one of them for President; and if no Person have a Majority, then from the five highest on the List the said House shall in like Manner choose the President. But in choosing the President, the Votes shall be taken by States, the Representation from each State having one Vote; A quorum for this purpose shall consist of a Member or Members from two thirds of the States, and a Majority of all the States shall be necessary to a Choice. In every Case, after the Choice of the President, the Person having the greatest Number of Votes of the Electors shall be the Vice President. But if there should remain two or more who have equal Votes, the Senate shall choose from them by Ballot the Vice President.

The Congress may determine the Time of choosing the Electors, and the Day on which they shall give their Votes; which Day shall be the same throughout the United States.

No Person except a natural born Citizen, or a Citizen of the United States, at the time of the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the Office of President; neither shall any Person be eligible to that Office who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty five Years, and been fourteen Years a Resident within the United States.

In Case of the Removal of the President from Office, or of his Death, Resignation, or Inability to discharge the Powers and Duties of the said Office, the Same shall devolve on the Vice President, and the Congress may by Law provide for the Case of Removal, Death, Resignation or Inability, both of the President and Vice President, declaring what Officer shall then act as President, and such Officer shall act accordingly, until the Disability be removed, or a President shall be elected.

The President shall, at stated Times, receive for his Services, a Compensation, which shall neither be increased nor diminished during the Period for which he shall have been elected, and he shall not receive within that Period any other Emolument from the United States, or any of them.

Before he enter on the Execution of his Office, he shall take the following Oath or Affirmation:--"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

Section. 2.

The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States; he may require the Opinion, in writing, of the principal Officer in each of the executive Departments, upon any Subject relating to the Duties of their respective Offices, and he shall have Power to grant Reprieves and Pardons for Offences against the United States, except in Cases of Impeachment.

He shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by Law: but the Congress may by Law vest the Appointment of such inferior Officers, as they think proper, in the President alone, in the Courts of Law, or in the Heads of Departments.

The President shall have Power to fill up all Vacancies that may happen during the Recess of the Senate, by granting Commissions which shall expire at the End of their next Session.

Section. 3.

He shall from time to time give to the Congress Information of the State of the Union, and recommend to their Consideration such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; he may, on extraordinary Occasions, convene both Houses, or either of them, and in Case of Disagreement between them, with Respect to the Time of Adjournment, he may adjourn them to such Time as he shall think proper; he shall receive Ambassadors and other public Ministers; he shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed, and shall Commission all the Officers of the United States.

Section. 4.

The President, Vice President and all civil Officers of the United States, shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors.

Resources

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<https://students.edfac.unimelb.edu.au/LiteracyResearch/pub/Projects/GHammett.pdf> (accessed December 28, 2012).

Landau, Elaine. *The Declaration of Independence*. New York: Children's Press Scholastic, 2008.

Maier, Pauline. *American Scripture: Making the Declaration of Independence*. New York: Vintage Books, 1997.

Taylor-Butler, Christine. *The Bill of Rights*. New York: Children's Press Scholastic, 2008.

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Curriculum Unit Title

We the People are Looking for Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness

Author

Kathleen G. Gormley

KEY LEARNING, ENDURING UNDERSTANDING, ETC.

Students will be able to use primary documents and relate it to their own lives, specifically using the Declaration of Independence and US Constitution. Students will be able to create a personal constitution and justify the rights and responsibilities they have included.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION(S) for the UNIT

What do you do when you see an unknown word? How can I use context clues to help me understand the text? What is a right? What is a responsibility? What is a privilege? How are these concepts alike and different? How can you define Liberty? Why do we vote? What responsibility do we have to vote? How do we decide the best choice?

CONCEPT A

CONCEPT B

CONCEPT C

Vocabulary Instruction for Declaration of Independence and Constitution

Defining rights, responsibilities, and privileges

Drafting a classroom Constitution

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS A

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS B

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS C

What do you do when you see an unknown word? How can I use context clues to help me understand the text?

What is a right? What is a responsibility? What is a privilege? How are these concepts alike and different?

Why do we vote? What responsibility do we have to vote? How do we decide the best choice?

VOCABULARY A

VOCABULARY B

VOCABULARY C

dissolve, entitle, declare, impel, separation, self-evident, endowed, unalienable, pursuit, deriving, abolish, union, establish, insure, domestic, tranquility, promote, welfare, posterity, ordain

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/MATERIAL/TEXT/FILM/RESOURCES

Declaration of Independence, US Constitution School House Rock Titles: "Fireworks", "No More Kings"; "The Shot Heard Round the World"; "Preamble".

¹ (Declaration of Independence n.d.)

² (America n.d.)

³ (Hammett 2006)