

Thomas Jefferson Lesson Plan
National Endowment for the Humanities
Boston University
July 8- 26, 2013

Title: Jefferson as President: Did he stay committed to his beliefs?

Description: This unit is aimed at having students gain knowledge from primary and secondary sources about our third president, Thomas Jefferson. Much attention is given to Jefferson as author of the Declaration of Independence, leader of the Jeffersonian Republicans, and great political thinker, but the same attention is not always paid to his presidency, with the exception of the Louisiana Purchase. These lessons attempt to merge these different aspects of Jefferson's life by comparing Jefferson's ideas and political beliefs with the actions of his presidency. Before the National Endowment for the Humanities Institute on Thomas Jefferson, I would not have felt completely comfortable in discussing the various political beliefs of Thomas Jefferson, that are not found in the Declaration of Independence. The Institute has provided me with the knowledge to confidently teach my students about Jefferson's beliefs and to compare and contrast them with the events of his presidency.

Description of Students and Setting: This lesson is designed for a college preparatory, United States History I high school class. This lesson could also be modified for lower and more advanced levels of students. Class periods are approximately 55 minutes in length.

Purpose:

The purpose of this series of lessons is to have students use quotes from primary sources by Thomas Jefferson to examine the beliefs of Jefferson in reference to the role that government should play in the lives of American citizens. Students will then examine the events of Jefferson's presidency and compare and contrast them against Jefferson's ideas about government. As a formative assessment, students will answer the essential question of whether or not Jefferson remained true to his ideas of limited government throughout his presidency. As one of American's founding father's and first presidents it is important to examine the precedents and foundations that Jefferson set forth as both a political thinker and president. Additionally, the question of what role the government should play in Americans' lives has not only been a constant debate throughout history, but is still discussed and argued about today. [\[This series of lessons\]](#) includes a mix of primary and secondary sources for students to examine as [expected](#) with Common Core Standards.

Note:

This lesson is designed to examine the political philosophy of Jefferson, his commitment to that philosophy, and a brief overview of major events during his presidency. Depending on the time allotted to spend on the presidency of Jefferson, the teacher may want to add in their own mini and more detailed lessons on the various events of Jefferson's presidency such as the Louisiana Purchase or the Embargo of 1807. Such lessons could be included in between days 1 & 2 or after the conclusion of day 3.

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Standards:

MA. USI.3 Explain the influence and ideas of the Declaration of Independence and the political philosophy of Thomas Jefferson. (H, C)

MA. USI.9 Explain the reasons for the passage of the Bill of Rights. (H, C)

A. the influence of the British concept of limited government

B. the particular ways in which the Bill of Rights protects basic freedoms, restricts government power, and ensures rights to persons accused of crimes

MA. USI.15 Explain the varying roles and responsibilities of federal, state, and local governments in the United States. (H, C)

MA. USI.22 Summarize the major policies and political developments that took place during the presidencies of George Washington (1789–1797), John Adams (1797–1801), and Thomas Jefferson (1801–1809). (H, C)

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines *faction* in *Federalist* No. 10).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.5 Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.8 Evaluate an author’s premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.9 Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.10 By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Lesson 1: (One class period)

Objectives:

Students will be able to explain and analyze quotes from Thomas Jefferson at various points in his life.

Students will be able to summarize key Jefferson ideas on politics,

Students will be able to explain Jefferson’s views on the proper role of government.

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Students will be able to prove their claims with specific evidence from primary sources.

Instructional Resources:

- Quotes & Student Work Packet
- Overhead projector

Instructional Process:

1. Anticipatory Set: The teacher will present the two sides of the debate on the proper role of government that is present in politics today. For example, (and depending on the level and development of the students) the teacher could ask the students if it is right for the government to be involved in healthcare, or to regulate the size of soft drinks in order to combat obesity. The teacher will then explain that over the next few lessons, the class will take a look at Thomas Jefferson's beliefs on the role of government and his actions as president.
 - a. Modification: For more advanced students, teacher could lead a discussion around the news article: "Debate over government's role fizzes around soda ban" found on POLITICO.com at the url address of:
<http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0612/77405.html>
2. Teacher will hand out the Quote/Student Work Packet.
3. Teacher will explain to students that they are going to examine Thomas Jefferson's ideas about government by looking at various Jefferson quotes.
4. Teacher will explain that after they look at the first quote together, they will be split up into partners or groups of three (teacher discretion) to examine the Jefferson quotes.
 - a. Modification: Depending on the level and ability of the students in the class, the teacher may decide the make-up of the partners or groups or the teacher could have the students count off.
5. Teacher will model how he/she would examine a quote by Thomas Jefferson. Teacher will have students fill in their packets as he/she explains his/her metacognition and the meaning of the quote.
6. Teacher will ask the students to attempt to complete one quote on their own, and review the quote together as a class.
 - a. Modification: Depending on the level and ability of the students, the teacher may want to model completing a few of the quotes.
7. Teacher will direct students to find their partner/groups and begin.
8. Once the students have examined all of the quotes, and filled in their packets, the teacher will call the class back together and review/discuss the different quotes. Students will make corrections to their packet as needed.
9. Students will then answer the overview question found at the end of the help packet using at least two details from the quotes. Students may finish their paragraphs for homework if needed.

Lesson 2: (Two class periods)

Objectives:

Students will be able to summarize major events from Jefferson's presidency.
 Students will be able to explain whether events during Jefferson's presidency exemplify a limited or expanded role of government.

Instructional Resources:

- Secondary source readings from US History in Context (or other available secondary source) The website can be found at: http://www.gale.cengage.com/InContext/hist_us.htm (it does require a log in).
- Events of Jefferson's Presidency Chart
- Large Paper
- Markers, Rulers, etc.

Instructional Process:

1. Teacher will divide the students into groups.
2. Each group will be given a secondary source reading on an event from Thomas Jefferson's presidency.
 - a. Secondary Sources:
 1. Presidency/Federal Government: "Thomas Jefferson." *Presidential Administration Profiles for Students*. Ed. Kelle S. Sisung and Gerda-Ann Raffaele. Detroit: Gale Group, 2003. *U.S. History In Context*. Web. 5 Aug. 2013.
 Document URL http://ic.galegroup.com/ic/uhic/ReferenceDetailsPage/ReferenceDetailsWindow?query=&prodId=UHIC&displayGroupName=Reference&limiter=&source=&disableHighlighting=false&displayGroups=&sortBy=&search_within_results=&action=2&catId=&activityType=&documentId=GALE%7CEJ2304100021&userGroupName=m1n_n_chelhigh&jsid=e75cae1561da26f237cba7d57f537201
 2. Barbary Pirates: Kenny, Jack. "Bane of the Barbary pirates: during America's early years, Muslim pirates from the Barbary Coast demanded tribute in order to let U.S. ships pass unmolested. The tribute was a source of contention in America." *The New American* 6 June 2011: 35+. *U.S. History In Context*. Web. 5 Aug. 2013. Document URL http://ic.galegroup.com/ic/uhic/MagazinesDetailsPage/MagazinesDetailsWindow?query=&prodId=UHIC&displayGroupName=Magazines&limiter=&source=&disableHighlighting=false&displayGroups=&sortBy=&search_within_results=&action=2&catId=&activityType=&documentId=GALE%7CA258767684&userGroupName=m1n_n_chelhigh&jsid=5a6777c37d73579bbb8657a48439cf8d
 3. Louisiana Purchase "Louisiana Purchase." *Gale Encyclopedia of U.S. Economic History*. Ed. Thomas Carson and Mary Bonk. Detroit: Gale, 1999. *U.S. History In Context*. Web. 5 Aug. 2013. Document URL http://ic.galegroup.com/ic/uhic/ReferenceDetailsPage/ReferenceDetailsWindow?query=&prodId=UHIC&displayGroupName=Reference&limiter=&source=&disableHighlighting=false&displayGroups=&sortBy=&search_within_results=&action=2&ca
 4. Leopard v. Chesapeake **Source Citation** "Establishing a Democratic

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Republic." *War of 1812*. Detroit: UXL, 2002. 9-27. *U.S. History In Context*. Web. 5 Aug. 2013. Document
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4. **Embargo Act of 1807** Source Citation Pacholl, Keith. "Embargo Act." *Dictionary of American History*. Ed. Stanley I. Kutler. 3rd ed. Vol. 3. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2003. 192-193. *U.S. History In Context*. Web. 5 Aug. 2013. Document
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3. Teacher will explain to each group that they will be asked to read the source and create an informative poster on the event. The posters will then be used in order to fill in a chart about the events of Jefferson's presidency.
4. Teacher will walk around room while students are reading their sources, ask clarifying questions, and ensure that the students have an understanding of their event.
5. When all groups have completed their posters they will post them around the room.
6. The teacher will re-divide the groups to ensure that each group has one member from each of the first set of groups.
7. The groups travel around the room in a clockwise motion directed by teacher to remain at the poster until directed to move. At each poster, the student who was in the group that designed the poster explains the event to the group.
8. When all groups have visited all posters, the teacher will call the students back to their seats.
9. Teacher will review each event filling in a chart that is on the board.

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Lesson 3:

Objectives:

Students will be able to answer the essential question of "Did Jefferson remain committed to his belief in a limited role of government in the lives of Americans?"

Students will be able to outline an essay response using a graphic organizer.

a. Modification: Depending on the teacher's desire, the teacher may have the students write the essay.

Students will be able to write a thesis statement.

Students will be able to defend their thesis statement using historical facts.

Instructional Resources:

- Writing Template
- Quote Packet
- Event Chart
- Overhead projector

Procedure:

1. Teacher will briefly review the main conclusions that the class discussed during the Jefferson quote activity.
2. Teacher will briefly review the main events of the Jefferson's presidency that the class discussed during the poster activity.
3. Teacher will briefly review the graphic organizer that students will use.
4. Together as a class, the students will come up with thesis statements and intro paragraphs.
5. Teacher will instruct students to complete their graphic organizers using their quote packet and event chart.
6. Teacher will walk around the classroom and check in with students while they work.
 - a. Modifications: Teacher may decide to have the students work on their outlines with partners or to have students write the full essay. The teacher may also decide to have the students work on one graphic organizer together as a class.