

TAH Teacher Pre-Planning Form

Title: Why did the writers of the Constitution ignore slavery?

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Grade Level: 4-8

Subject: Social Studies/Language Arts

1. TEACHER QUESTION: What question about teaching and learning history (pedagogy) will you investigate through this lesson? How can we stimulate interest in the constitution during Freedom Week? What do we need to do to further enhance historical comprehension skills into this interdisciplinary activity?

2. BACKGROUND QUESTION: What do students currently understand about this topic? What misunderstandings or misconceptions might students have? How does this lesson tie to past learning and how will it connect to future learning? Students have an awareness of the general outline of the Constitution but are unaware of specific details denying rights to all Americans. Through this historical comprehension activity students will gain

knowledge to understand why the issue of slavery was not addressed.

TAH Lesson Plan Form

Historical Thinking Standard/Skill(s):

Standard 2: Historical Comprehension Skills: A. Draw upon data in historical maps B. Draw upon the visual sources C. Appreciate historical perspective.

Lesson Abstract:

This lesson will encompass 3-4 days of instructional activities during celebrate Freedom Week. Students will receive prior practice related to the analysis of visual and written records. The instructor will introduce the lesson with a brief overview of events that led to the Constitutional Convention.

Students will be placed in groups of 3-4 to complete the document analysis activity. Students will have the opportunity to move to various stations where they will read, examine and discuss photographs related to the Constitution. Upon completion of the document analysis questions, students will complete a written response to this prompt: Why did the Constitution allow slavery to continue?

Essential Question:

Why did the Constitution allow slavery to continue?

Objective/Learner Outcome:

Students will analyze a variety of primary source documents related to the Constitution. Upon completing the documents analysis form the students will write a persuasive response.

Academic Vocabulary:

Delegates

Articles of Confederation

Miscegenation

Abolition

3/5 clause

Ratification

Constitution

Declaration of Independence

Thirteenth Amendment

Congress

Activity:

Working in cooperative groups of 3-5, students will have the opportunity to examine a series of primary source documents related to the Constitution. The document analysis will generate questions and discussion related to the concept. Students will share their analysis as a large group and complete the assignment as a written response.

Materials Needed:

Constitutional Convention, Philadelphia, 1787. James Madison's notes:

<http://www.sagehistory.net/constitution/ConstDebate.html> Benjamin Franklin's notes:

<http://bartelby.net/268/8/11.html>

Declaration of Independence, "Original Rough draught," *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*. Vol. 1, 1760-1776. Ed. Julian P. Boyd. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950, pp 243-247). <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/declara/ruffdrft.html>

<http://www.britannica.com/bps/additionalcontent/8/116852/Document-John-Quincy-Adams-Slavery-and-the-Constitution>

<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=2>

Adaptations (grouping for instruction, differentiation, ESE/ESOL Modification):

Students will be placed in heterogeneous groups, where appropriate reading levels with mixed abilities will be taken into account. Vocabulary will be reviewed to check for comprehension concerns prior to the activity.

Assessment:

Written document analysis questions and the written response will be collected and reviewed to check for student learning.

Inter-disciplinary Connections:

Reading and writing across the curriculum

Attachments:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uZfRaWAtBVg>

Too Late to Apologize Video

Document A: Primary Document from the diary of John Quincy Adams. Reflections on conversation with John C. Calhoun on the institution of slavery.

<http://www.britannica.com/bps/additionalcontent/8/116852/Document-John-Quincy-Adams-Slavery-and-the-Constitution>

When I came this day to my office, I found there a note requesting me to call at one o'clock at the President's house. It was then one, and I immediately went over. He expected that the two bills--for the admission of Maine, and to enable Missouri to make a constitution--would have been brought to him for his signature, and he had summoned all the members of the administration to ask their opinions, in writing, to be deposited in the Department of State, upon two questions: (1) whether Congress had a constitutional right to prohibit slavery in a territory; and (2) whether the 8th Section of the Missouri bill (which interdicts slavery *forever* in the territory north of thirty-six and a half latitude) was applicable only to the territorial state, or could extend to it after it should become a state. . . .

After this meeting, I walked home with [Calhoun](#), who said that . . . in the Southern country . . . domestic labor was confined to the blacks; and such was the prejudice that if he, who was the most popular man in his district, were to keep a white servant in his house, his character and reputation would be irretrievably ruined.

Document B: Primary Document from debates during the Constitutional Convention

Constitutional Convention, Philadelphia, 1787. James Madison's notes:
<http://www.sagehistory.net/constitution/ConstDebate.html> Benjamin Franklin's notes:
<http://bartelby.net/268/8/11.html>

Mr. RUTLIDGE: Religion and humanity have nothing to do with this question. The true question at present is whether the Southern states shall or shall not be a part of the Union. If the Northern states think about their interest, they will not oppose the increase of slaves because they will profit by selling the goods that slaves produce.

Mr. ELSEWORTH: Let every state do what it pleases. The morality or wisdom of slavery are decisions belonging to the states themselves. What enriches a part enriches the whole.

Mr. WILLIAMSON: Southern states could not be members of the Union if the slave trade ended. It is wrong to force any thing that is

not absolutely necessary, and which any state must disagree to.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN: I agree to this Constitution with all its faults because I think a federal (national) government necessary for us. When you assemble a large group of men, you will inevitably find that they will disagree with each other about their local interests, and their selfish views. We have to accept some of these disagreements in order to build a national government.

Document C: Thomas Jefferson's Rough Draft on the Declaration of Independence Declaration of Independence, "Original Rough draught," *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*. Vol. 1, 1760-1776. Ed. Julian P. Boyd. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950, pp 243-247). <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/declara/ruffdrft.html>

King George III has waged cruel war against human Nature itself. He has taken away the most sacred rights of Life and Liberty from a distant people who never offended him. He did this by captivating and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere if they did not die a miserable death in their transportation to this new world. These disgraceful practices are the Warfare of the *Christian* King of Great Britain.

He has stopped every attempt to prohibit or to restrain the disgusting business of slavery. He is determined to keep open a market where men are bought and sold.

Guiding

Document D: Declaration of Independence

<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=2>

Transcript of Declaration of Independence (1776)

IN CONGRESS, July 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,

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. Prudence, indeed, will dictate

that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.--Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.