

# COMMON SENSE: DEMOCRACY IN PRINT

*What are the similarities in the way messages in the media shift public opinion today?*

## SUMMARY:

Thomas Paine's pamphlet, *Common Sense* greatly influenced many Americans, (including delegates to the Continental Congress), and how they began favoring independence from Great Britain for the first time.

The distribution of the pamphlet, *Common Sense*, written by Thomas Paine, in January 1776 was a successful campaign for promoting the reasons for American independence at a time when the general public and members of the Continental Congress; many of whom were moving in that direction already, needed encouragement to get behind the idea.

## KEY QUESTION:

*Common Sense* proved that political works could be effective in shifting public opinion. Think about how messages in the media are designed to connect with us today. Are there any similarities?

## PERIOD:

Development of U.S. Constitutional Democracy (1650- 1783)

## THEMES:

War of Independence, Founding Fathers

## KEY VOCABULARY:

Democracy, political ad, empire, colony, pamphlet, independence, rebellion



## BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

### ARTICLES

[American Revolution begins at Battle of Lexington](#)

[Plain Truth](#)

[Common Sense](#)

### PRIMARY SOURCES

[Common Sense](#)

[John Adams reflects on Common Sense](#)

### BIOGRAPHY

[Thomas Paine](#)

# COMMON SENSE: DEMOCRACY IN PRINT



AMERICAN  
BATTLEFIELD  
TRUST



What are the similarities in the way messages in the media shift public opinion today?

## DISCUSSION SPARKS:

- Did you know that the 1776 version of a public service announcement was the creation of a pamphlet? It was Thomas Paine, who wrote the first-ever pamphlet that advocated for American Independence, entitled Common Sense.
- The Olive Branch Petition of 1775 was written to King George III by the Continental Congress to petition him to intervene against Parliament's aggressive taxes. Though the King was behind all of Parliament's decisions, the delegates to Congress purposely directed their grievances at Parliament - and not the King - in order to show their commitment to remain loyal to the monarch.
- What are the ways in which you try to convince others to take your side? Do you express your opinion on social media by posting videos, or engaging in online dialogue? Well if you lived in 1776 you may have written a pamphlet. In fact, that's just what Founding Father Thomas Paine did. He wrote the first-ever pamphlet to advocate for American Independence and he named it Common Sense.

## ACTIVITY: ALTERNATIVE TITLES

*In this activity, students will digest the story of Thomas Paine's Common Sense pamphlet and create alternative titles for the video that will give the audience an idea about the content.*

## STEPS

1. After watching, discuss with the class what are the main themes and list out keywords they identified from the video onto the board (e.g. independence, rebellion, empire, pamphlet).
2. Brainstorm in groups or pairs what alternative titles could summarize the key message from the story, by using the keywords previously listed.
3. Students write down three, alternative titles varying in length (limited to 4, 8 and 12 words).

*\*This is just one example activity you can use in class. Go to our website's resource page to find other activity ideas.*

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE RESOURCES](#)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Why did Thomas Paine believe it was necessary for America to break away from Britain?
- Why and how was his message delivered through the pamphlet?
- What effects did his pamphlet have on the American people?
- What would a pamphlet look like today?
- Can you think of any other examples of revolutionary messages that you've seen?

# ALTERNATIVE TITLES

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Alternative Title 1 (max. 4 words)

Alternative Title 2 (max. 8 words)

Alternative Title 3 (max. 12 words)



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# ALTERNATIVE TITLES

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Alternative Title 1 (max. 4 words)

Alternative Title 2 (max. 8 words)

Alternative Title 3 (max. 12 words)

# COMMON SENSE: DEMOCRACY IN PRINT



AMERICAN  
BATTLEFIELD  
TRUST



*What are the similarities in the way messages in the media shift public opinion today?*

## OTHER VIDEOS IN THIS SERIES

The United Colonies of America

The Bill of Rights: What is it and  
What Rights does it Guarantee?

The US Constitution

The Ten Crucial Days that Changed  
the American Revolutionary War

Language of the Revolution

America's First President: Setting  
Precedents

The Citizen Soldier

The Supreme Court: Gatekeeper of  
the Constitution

The Declaration of Independence

All Men are Created Equal? The  
Founding Father's Views on Slavery

The Continental Congress

The Articles of Confederation

America's Two-Party System

Wartime Elections

# THE UNITED COLONIES OF AMERICA

*How did the regional identity of each colony help to shape the modern US states we know today?*

## SUMMARY:

The idea of what an 'American' meant in the eighteenth century was evolving due to regional differences and developments that culminated in its use being adopted on the eve of the American Revolution.

## KEY QUESTION:

How do you think the regional identity of each colony helped to shape the modern US states we know today?

## PERIOD:

Development of U.S. Constitutional Democracy (1650- 1783)

## THEMES:

War of Independence, Founding Fathers

## KEY VOCABULARY:

Colonist, revolution, puritans, settlers, Slaves, diversity, acceptance



## BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

### PRIMARY SOURCES

[A Declaration by Representatives of the United Colonies of North-America](#)

[Massachusetts Circular Letter to the Colonial Legislatures: February 11, 1768](#)

### ARTICLES

[Life in Colonial America Prior to the Revolutionary War](#)

[Virginia Company](#)

[Mayflower Compact of 1620](#)

[Albany Plan of 1754](#)

# THE UNITED COLONIES OF AMERICA



AMERICAN  
BATTLEFIELD  
TRUST



How did the regional identity of each colony help to shape the modern US states we know today?

## DISCUSSION SPARKS:

- Did you know that the song Yankee Doodle Dandy was originally conceived to insult Americans? It was then repurposed by Americans to show defiance to the British monarchy.
- The concept of 'American' was evolving in the eighteenth century. Most colonists identified themselves by where they lived, i.e. "from Boston" or "from Massachusetts", similar to how people identify today.
- The word American was often used as a derogatory term by Londoners against colonists, who were viewed as second-class and not 'real' British subjects. The term 'Yankee' is another example of a word used to put down colonists that also was reused by colonists as a way to show defiance against British authority.
- \*American colonies definition - The American colonies were the British colonies that were established in the 17th and 18th centuries and now form part of eastern United States.

## ACTIVITY: BEFORE & AFTER

In this activity, students reflect on their existing knowledge of what it means to be "truly American".  
(See graphic organizer on the next page).

### STEPS

1. Before watching the video, discuss in pairs, groups, or the whole class the question: 'What makes us American?'
2. Students then write down three to five statements that define what makes them American.
3. After watching the video, take a few examples from the students' "Before" statements and discuss to what extent they agree or disagree. Suggest ways they can elaborate or correct those statements based on what they had learned from the video. Students then write down their amended statements in the "After" column.

*\*This is just one example activity you can use in class. Go to our website's resource page to find other activity ideas.*

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE RESOURCES](#)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Consider how diverse the colonies were in the eighteenth century. How did these influence feelings towards British taxation in the 1760s and ultimately calls for independence in the 1770s?
- How did citizens from mainland Britain generally view colonists?
- How did this factor into developments in the 1760s?

# BEFORE & AFTER

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

## Before

write down 5 claims or assumptions about this topic

1

2

3

4

5

## After

correct any claims or assumptions, if any

1

2

3

4

5



# BEFORE & AFTER

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

## Before

write down 5 claims or assumptions about this topic

1

2

3

4

5

## After

correct any claims or assumptions, if any

1

2

3

4

5

# THE UNITED COLONIES OF AMERICA



AMERICAN  
BATTLEFIELD  
TRUST



*How did the regional identity of each colony help to shape the modern US states we know today?*

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# THE BILL OF RIGHTS



AMERICAN  
BATTLEFIELD  
TRUST



Without the Bill of Rights, how do you think the US would be different today?

## SUMMARY:

The idea of what an 'American' meant in the eighteenth century was evolving due to regional differences and developments that culminated in its use being adopted on the eve of the American Revolution.

## KEY QUESTION:

Without the Bill of Rights, how do you think the US would be different today?

## PERIOD:

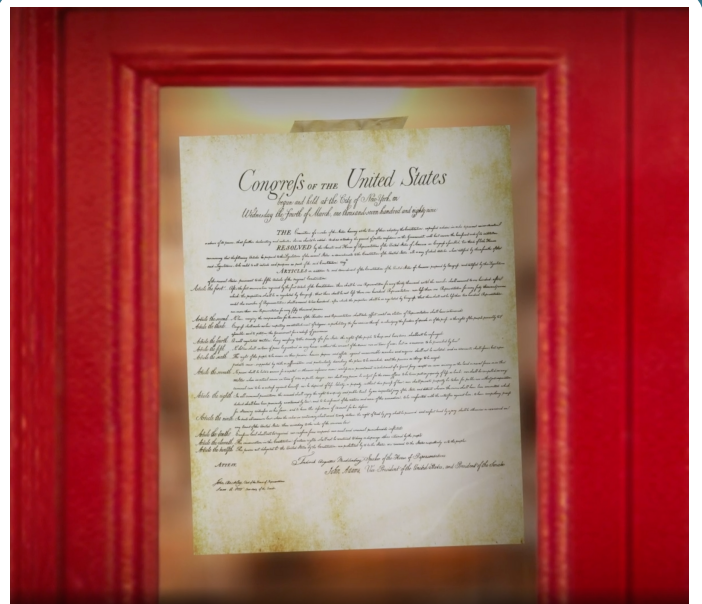
Development of U.S. Constitutional Democracy (1650- 1783)

## THEMES:

War of Independence, Founding Fathers

## KEY VOCABULARY:

Constitution, amendment, federalist, ratify, compromise, government, civil rights, freedom, liberty



## BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

### PRIMARY SOURCES

[Bill of Rights \(Bill of Rights Institute\)](#)

[The Constitution](#)

### ARTICLES

[Bill of Rights](#)

### BIOGRAPHY

[James Madison](#)

# THE BILL OF RIGHTS



Without the Bill of Rights, how do you think the US would be different today?

## DISCUSSION SPARKS:

- Did you know that James Madison single-handedly wrote the Bill of Rights by using the recommendations of state committees? Some suggestions were not used while others that became amendments to the Constitution were deemed unnecessary and a waste of time by many delegates.
- The Magna Carta, British common law, and the 'unwritten' British constitution all influenced how Americans viewed the concept of guaranteed rights to citizens.
- Civil liberties are individual rights, protected by law that the government cannot interfere with.
- The Bill of Rights included: free speech, a free press, the right to religious worship, to assemble peacefully in protest, to petition the government, the right to bear arms, that government has to possess a warrant to conduct a search, the right to a fair trial in the judicial system, and the right of each state to retain constitutional authority in some matters.
- Can you imagine the United States without a Bill of Rights, and without freedom of speech, worship, assembly and more?
- Disagreements about what James Madison meant when he wrote down the amendments as they're worded have led to numerous court battles to determine what limits can be placed on a citizen's guaranteed rights.

## ACTIVITY: VIDEO SUMMARY

In this activity, students will summarise what The Bill of Rights stands for and what it guarantees.

## STEPS

1. Before watching, show the Video Summary chart on the board and go through each section, prompting students for details they should be looking out for.
2. While watching, students can make notes on a separate piece of paper / notebook.
3. After watching, allow students plenty of time to complete the summary chart. Rewatch the video once more to allow students to fill in any remaining gaps.

*\*This is just one example activity you can use in class. Go to our website's resource page to find other activity ideas.*

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE RESOURCES](#)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What was the main disagreement between Federalists and Anti-Federalists?  
Why did they disagree?
- What does it mean to find compromise? Can you think of any other examples?
- Why is it so important to guarantee the rights of its people?  
What would the world around you look like if those rights did not exist?
- Which of the rights do you think are the most important?  
Which ones have a direct influence on your life?
- If there were to be another amendment to the Constitution, are there any other rights that should be included?

# VIDEO SUMMARY



This video is about ...

I noticed ...

I wonder ...

I was surprised by ...

It reminded me of ...

The most interesting thing was ...

A connection I made:

# THE BILL OF RIGHTS



*Without the Bill of Rights, how do you think the US would be different today?*

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# THE TEN CRUCIAL DAYS



AMERICAN  
BATTLEFIELD  
TRUST

UN TOLD

*How might your life be different today if Washington had failed?*

## SUMMARY:

The critical period at the end of December 1776 brought forth actions by the Continental Army that would save the American Revolution from defeat.

## KEY QUESTION:

How might your life be different today if Washington had failed?

## PERIOD:

Development of U.S. Constitutional Democracy (1650- 1783)

## THEMES:

War of Independence, Founding Fathers

## KEY VOCABULARY:

Garrison, continental army, patriot, enlistment conditions, independence



## BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

### Articles

- [Ten Crucial Days](#)
- [Ten Crucial Days: Princeton](#)
- [Ten Crucial Days: The Path to Trenton](#)
- [Ten Crucial Days: A Second Success at Trenton](#)
- [Black Valor at Princeton](#)
- [10 Facts: Battle of Princeton](#)
- [Marines at the Battle of Princeton](#)
- [The Battle of Second Trenton](#)

### BIOGRAPHY

- [George Washington](#)
- [Charles Cornwallis](#)

# THE TEN CRUCIAL DAYS



How might your life be different today if Washington had failed?

## DISCUSSION SPARKS:

- Did you know that after a series of dramatic defeats, the Continental Army under General George Washington had dwindled to about 3,000 soldiers?
- The British Army assumed that Americans were beaten. They positioned a series of garrisons across New Jersey, placing the respected Hessian forces in command at Trenton.
- At the time, soldiers enlisted in the army for a few months or until the end of a single year of service. Most of the Continental Army's enlistments expired on January 1. The victorious, Continental Army gave an adrenaline boost to American independence and convinced many that the Declaration of Independence was worth fighting for.
- Overseas, news of the victories helped solidify impressions that the Americans were serious about achieving independence.

## ACTIVITY: SEQUENCING

*In this activity, students pay close attention to the sequence of events that led up to the Ten Crucial Days, by putting segments of the story in chronological order.*

### STEPS

1. Distribute paper slip cutouts that have been pre-filled with the key events that took place during the Ten Crucial Days. One set per pair or groups of three.
2. Before watching, read out the events together in class and allow students to attempt putting them into a logical order.
3. After watching, ask students to reorder the events into chronological order based on what they saw in the video.

*\*This is just one example activity you can use in class. Go to our website's resource page to find other activity ideas.*

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE RESOURCES](#)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- George Washington delivered an impassioned speech before his troops that convinced them to remain with him for a further, three weeks into January 1777. What do you think he said?
- If you were one of the soldiers, what would have motivated you to stay on?
- What were the implications of snatching this vital victory from the jaws of defeat?
- Why do you believe Washington chose 'victory or death' as the watch-words for the attack?
- Why was this such a pivotal point in American independence history?

# SEQUENCING

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_



# THE TEN CRUCIAL DAYS

How might your life be different today if Washington had failed?



AMERICAN  
BATTLEFIELD  
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UNTOLD

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# THE US CONSTITUTION

How would you improve the US Constitution?



## SUMMARY:

The Constitution was created in order to establish a new, federal system of government that could function in unison with the individual, state governments.

## KEY QUESTION:

How would you improve the US Constitution?

## PERIOD:

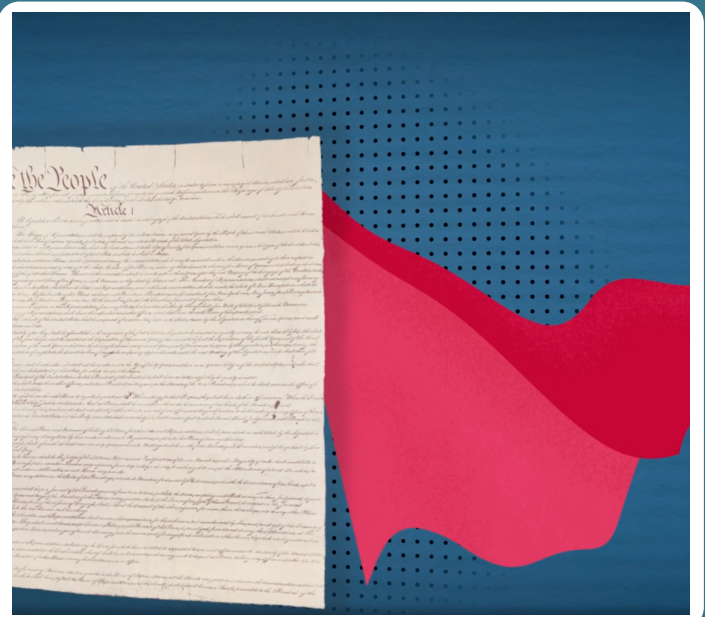
Development of U.S. Constitutional Democracy (1650- 1783)

## THEMES:

War of Independence, Founding Fathers

## KEY VOCABULARY:

Constitution, Constitutional Convention, debt, legislative power, branches, Federalist, autonomy, congress



## BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

### Primary Source

[The Constitution of the United States](#)

### Source

[The Interactive Constitution](#)

### Article

[From Declaration to Constitution](#)

### BIOGRAPHY

[James Madison](#)

# THE US CONSTITUTION

How would you improve the US Constitution?



## DISCUSSION SPARKS:

- Did you know why there is a rising sun carved into the headstock of George Washington's chair? Benjamin Franklin observed George Washington seated in a chair with an ornamental sun carved into the headstock. Pondering if the sun represented a "rising sun" or a "setting sun," Franklin settled on a "rising sun," symbolizing that the United States is a country on the 'rise' through ratifying the Constitution alongside Washington presiding as its leader.
- The United States was heavily in debt after the American Revolution and the existing, national government was unable to pay it off. In 1786, Shays' Rebellion further showed the inability of the national government to respond to crises.
- Among the people calling for changes were George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and Gouverneur Morris. A convention was scheduled in May 1787 at the Pennsylvania State House in Philadelphia. The proceedings were kept secret from the public.
- The Constitutional Convention was not sanctioned by Congress; it was technically illegal. Having George Washington sit as president of the delegation gave it legitimacy.

## ACTIVITY: BACKGAMMON

*In this activity, students will reflect on their existing knowledge of the Constitution and its origins, whilst using the video to fill in any gaps. (See graphic organizer on the next page)*

## STEPS

1. Before watching, write The Constitution on the board and ask students if they know where it originated from. Share the collective knowledge on the topic and make notes on the board.
2. Introduce the Backgammon graphic organizer and go through each of the five sections. Students work in small groups to try and answer the questions, then share them with the whole class.
3. Whilst watching, students consider any gaps or misconceptions they may have noted on the Backgammon board.
4. After watching, students elaborate or correct on what they had already written based on what they learned from the video.

*\*This is just one example activity you can use in class. Go to our website's resource page to find other activity ideas.*

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE RESOURCES](#)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- The Framers deliberately created a system of checks and balances that would slow the levers of power. Why do you believe this was a critical feature of the Constitution?
- The Constitution did protect the institution of slavery, such as with the 3/5 clause for representation in the states. Do you agree or disagree with their decision to establish a national government over legally challenging slavery?
- What might have happened if abolition was a primary goal in 1787?
- Are there any parts of the Constitution that you think needs to be amended?

*What are all the parts of this topic? How do the parts interact?*

**Parts**

**Truth**

*What do people believe about this topic?*

**Me**

*How are you related to this topic?*

**Time**

*How has this topic changed over time?*

**Perspectives**

*What are the different viewpoints about this topic?*

# THE US CONSTITUTION

How would you improve the US Constitution?



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# LANGUAGE OF THE REVOLUTION



How do you think the use of language contributes to ideas of American identity and independence?

## SUMMARY:

Many terms and words used during the American Revolution have either disappeared from everyday use or continue to be used in the mainstream culture without knowing of their origin.

## KEY QUESTION:

How do you think the use of language contributes to ideas of American identity and independence?

## PERIOD:

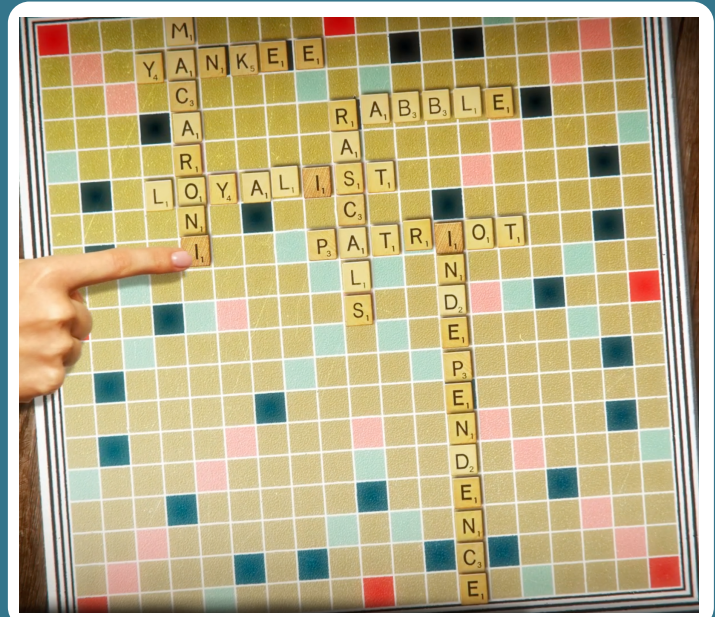
Development of U.S. Constitutional Democracy (1650- 1783)

## THEMES:

War of Independence, Founding Fathers

## KEY VOCABULARY:

Hipster, macaroni, Join or Die, loyalists, rabble, rascal, Yankee, to tar and feather, lexicon



## BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

### Source

[The Macaroni in 'Yankee Doodle' Is Not What You Think](#)

[A Guide to Eighteenth-Century English Vocabulary](#)

# LANGUAGE OF THE REVOLUTION



How do you think the use of language contributes to ideas of American identity and independence?

## DISCUSSION SPARKS:

- Did you know? A Macaroni used famously in Yankee Doodle - refers to a person who intentionally dressed provocatively to gain cultural status or approval; it was the 18th-century's version of a hipster.
- There are many words that we no longer use, language evolves, that sometimes makes the studying of History very hard. What something meant in 1700 might not be the same today. Are there any words that your parents, teachers, or grandparents use that you don't use today?
- Natural rights were specific rights that were believed to be inalienable, meaning they came from God and a government could not restrict them whatsoever. Thomas Jefferson's phrasing of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness", in the Declaration of Independence is an example.
- Patriot was used to describing Americans who favored independence. The British referred to them as rebels.

## ACTIVITY: TRUE OR FALSE

*In this activity, students will develop an interest and curiosity for the role of language in politics. They will try to assess if certain vocabulary or catchphrases existed back in the 18th century. By justifying their answer, students will develop a deeper understanding of meaning behind the words.*

### STEPS

1. Before watching, write out five to ten words/catchphrases on the board, half of which existed in the 18th century and the other half did not. (e.g. hipsters were simply drinkers who carried hip flasks with them, Macaroni is a person who intentionally dressed provocatively to gain cultural status or approval.)
2. Students discuss in pairs or groups to decide which ones are true (existed in the 18th century) and which ones are false (did not exist in the 18th century). Ask students to try and justify their decision.
3. Discuss as a whole class their answers and justifications, then watch the video to find out if they were correct.

*\*This is just one example activity you can use in class. Go to our website's resource page to find other activity ideas.*

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE RESOURCES](#)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Why do you believe the British viewed American colonists as second-class citizens?
- Why and how does one embrace an insult by wearing it with pride? Do you know any other examples?
- Do you know any current, politically-related terms or slang words? Do you know where they originated from?
- How do you think the use of language contributes to ideas of American identity and independence?

# LANGUAGE OF THE REVOLUTION



*How do you think the use of language contributes to ideas of American identity and independence?*

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# AMERICA'S FIRST PRESIDENT



AMERICAN  
BATTLEFIELD  
TRUST



*In what ways was it crucial for the country that George Washington served as the first president?*

## SUMMARY:

Many terms and words used during the American Revolution have either disappeared from everyday use or continue in the mainstream culture without knowing of their origin.

## KEY QUESTION:

In what ways was it crucial for the country that George Washington served as the first president?

## PERIOD:

Development of U.S. Constitutional Democracy (1650- 1783)

## THEMES:

War of Independence, Founding Fathers

## KEY VOCABULARY:

Precedent, Commander-in-Chief, plantation, Constitutional Convention, federal government, cabinet, taxation, diplomat, Capitol, term



## BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

### Biography

[George Washington](#)



# AMERICA'S FIRST PRESIDENT



AMERICAN  
BATTLEFIELD  
TRUST



*In what ways was it crucial for the country that George Washington served as the first president?*

## DISCUSSION SPARKS:

- Did you know that in 1790, George Washington came down sick with influenza? It nearly killed him. Abigail Adams wrote that if he were to die, the new federal government might have died with him.
- Washington did not want the presidency. Having been the victorious general in the American Revolution, he was more content with remaining retired at his plantation at Mount Vernon. However, no single American held the public's trust as he did. Washington was convinced by his friends and colleagues to accept the presidency by unanimous vote.
- Originally, Washington hoped to step down after a few months of helping guide the new federal government. He again hoped to walk away after a single term but was once again persuaded to stay a second term (he again was unanimously elected) to ensure the stability of national affairs.
- Washington's choice for members of his administrations' cabinet was modeled after his 'military family' of trusted advisors during the war. He nominated federal judges to serve in districts throughout the country.

## ACTIVITY: KWL

*In this activity, students will recall their prior knowledge about George Washington and stimulate their curiosity to know more about America's first president.*

## STEPS

1. Write George Washington on the board or show the video thumbnail image. As a whole class, brainstorm what they know about him and note them down on the board.
2. In small groups or pairs, students should come up with things they don't know and would like to know about him, then share with the whole class.
3. Students make notes on the KWL chart of what they know and want to know. After watching, students note at least one new thing they learned about George Washington
4. Finally, students share their discoveries together in groups or to the whole class.

*\*This is just one example activity you can use in class. Go to our website's resource page to find other activity ideas.*

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE RESOURCES](#)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- How crucial was it for the country that George Washington served as the first president?
- What are some of the precedents that are evident in the current and more recent presidents of the US?
- Why is the image of the presidency so important? Why do you think George Washington preferred a more humble title, "Mr. President and nothing more"?
- If you were the president, would you change any of the precedents set by George Washington? Which ones, or why not?

# KWL

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>I KNOW</b> that...	<b>I WANT TO KNOW</b> about...	<b>I LEARNED</b> that...



# KWL

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>I KNOW</b> that...	<b>I WANT TO KNOW</b> about...	<b>I LEARNED</b> that...

# AMERICA'S FIRST PRESIDENT



*In what ways was it crucial for the country that George Washington served as the first president?*

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# THE SUPREME COURT



*Why do you think Supreme Court decisions create such emotional responses in American citizens?*

## **SUMMARY:**

The Judicial Branch has become a crucial decider in cases involving civil rights in American society.

## **KEY QUESTION:**

Why do you think Supreme Court decisions create such emotional responses in American citizens?

## **PERIOD:**

Development of U.S. Constitutional Democracy (1650- 1783)

## **THEMES:**

War of Independence, Founding Fathers

## **KEY VOCABULARY:**

Judicial Branch, Supreme Court, Chief Justice, President-elect, rulings, deadlock



## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

### **Source**

Article III of the Constitution: Judicial Branch

### **Biographies**

John Adams

John Marshall

# THE SUPREME COURT



Why do you think Supreme Court decisions create such emotional responses in American citizens?

## DISCUSSION SPARKS:

- Did you know? Before departing the presidency, John Adams nominated John Marshall to become Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in 1801. This last-minute appointment upset many, including incoming President-elect Thomas Jefferson, who despised Marshall.
- Article III of the Constitution establishes the Third Branch of the federal government: the Judicial Branch. It created the Supreme Court and the several, inferior courts that serve local regions. Originally, it had the least responsibilities among the three branches.
- The number of justices has changed throughout the centuries. Originally there were six, then five. In 1937, President Franklin Roosevelt tried to 'pack the court' by expanding it to fifteen justices who were political allies, but this attempt failed. Today, we have nine justices: one chief justice and eight associate justices, creating an odd number of judges to avoid split decisions.

## ACTIVITY: 3,2,1

*In this activity, students summarize important and interesting facts they've learned about the Supreme Court, whilst developing their curiosity for the topic.*

## STEPS

1. Before watching, instruct students to look out for three, key facts that they learn from the video and note them down in the first column after watching.
2. Before watching for a second time, ask students to look out for two details they found interesting and note them down in the second column after watching.
3. Allow students to think of one question they would like to ask about the Supreme Court and discuss the question together as a whole class.

*\*This is just one example activity you can use in class. Go to our website's resource page to find other activity ideas.*

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE RESOURCES](#)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Why do you believe Supreme Court decisions create such emotional responses by American citizens? Is this healthy for a democracy?
- Can you think of any examples where the judicial ruling has direct influence on your life?

# 3, 2, 1

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

**3** write down three things you learnt

1

2

3

**2** write down two things you found interesting

1

2

**1** write down one question you still have

1



# 3, 2, 1

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

**3** write down three things you learnt

1

2

3

**2** write down two things you found interesting

1

2

**1** write down one question you still have

1

# THE SUPREME COURT



*Why do you think Supreme Court decisions create such emotional responses in American citizens?*

## OTHER VIDEOS IN THIS SERIES

The Bill of Rights

The United Colonies of America

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The Declaration of Independence

All Men are Created Equal? The Founding Father's Views on Slavery

The Continental Congress

The Articles of Confederation

America's Two-Party System

Wartime Elections

# ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL?



Some historians have claimed that the Civil War was inevitable. What do you think?

## SUMMARY:

Though disagreements have arisen over whether slavery should co-exist in the new United States, the principles of the American Revolution gave legitimacy to its opposition.

## KEY QUESTION:

Some historians have claimed that the Civil War was inevitable. What do you think?

## PERIOD:

Development of U.S. Constitutional Democracy (1650- 1783)

## THEMES:

War of Independence, Founding Fathers

## KEY VOCABULARY:

Slavery, African-American, Civil War, Equality, Constitutional Convention, denounce



## BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

### Articles

[African American Service during the Revolution](#)  
[Fighting For Freedom: African Americans Choose Sides](#)  
[African Americans in America's Wars](#)  
[African Americans in the Armed Forces Timeline](#)  
[African Americans and the Early War Effort](#)  
[African Americans in Civil War History](#)  
[Help Tell African American Stories of Valor](#)

### Biographies

[George Washington](#)

[Alexander Hamilton](#)

[Marquis de Lafayette](#)



# ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL?



Some historians have claimed that the Civil War was inevitable. What do you think?

## DISCUSSION SPARKS:

- Did you know? At the beginning of the American Revolution, slavery was prominent in every state but was primarily used in the South for financial gain. The possibility of ending slavery emerged in religious circles, most notably the Quakers of Pennsylvania.
- Both the British and Continental armies exploited this issue during the war, with the British offering freedom to escaped, enslaved people who would fight for them, and Americans enlisting mostly, free African-Americans until the war's end.
- The principles of the American Revolution and the words "all men are created equal" in the Declaration of Independence inspired a brief moment in the 1780s that swept through the United States where many plantation owners freed enslaved people. Many felt slavery was incompatible with what the war had won.
- Abolitionist groups flourished, particularly in Philadelphia. The poetry of Phillis Wheatley and businessmen like James Forten provided a visible presence of successful, African-Americans.

## ACTIVITY: POINTS OF VIEW

*In this activity, students will analyze different perspectives on slavery during American Revolution.*

### STEPS

1. Before watching, decide who may have opposing views on slavery during the American Revolution and list them on the board.
2. After watching, students reflect on their own perspective of slavery during the 18th century and summarize it in their circle. They also can choose two opposing characters (e.g. George Washington and Southern plantation owners) and note down their views in the appropriate circles.
3. Watch the video again, then discuss what compromise they reached (e.g. to preserve the Union of the States) and note this onto the overlapping parts of the circles.
4. Discuss and emphasize to students the importance of analyzing a situation from different perspectives. Even though we all know that slavery was wrong, it is worth considering why some may have opposed its abolition.

*\*This is just one example activity you can use in class. Go to our website's resource page to find other activity ideas.*

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE RESOURCES](#)

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

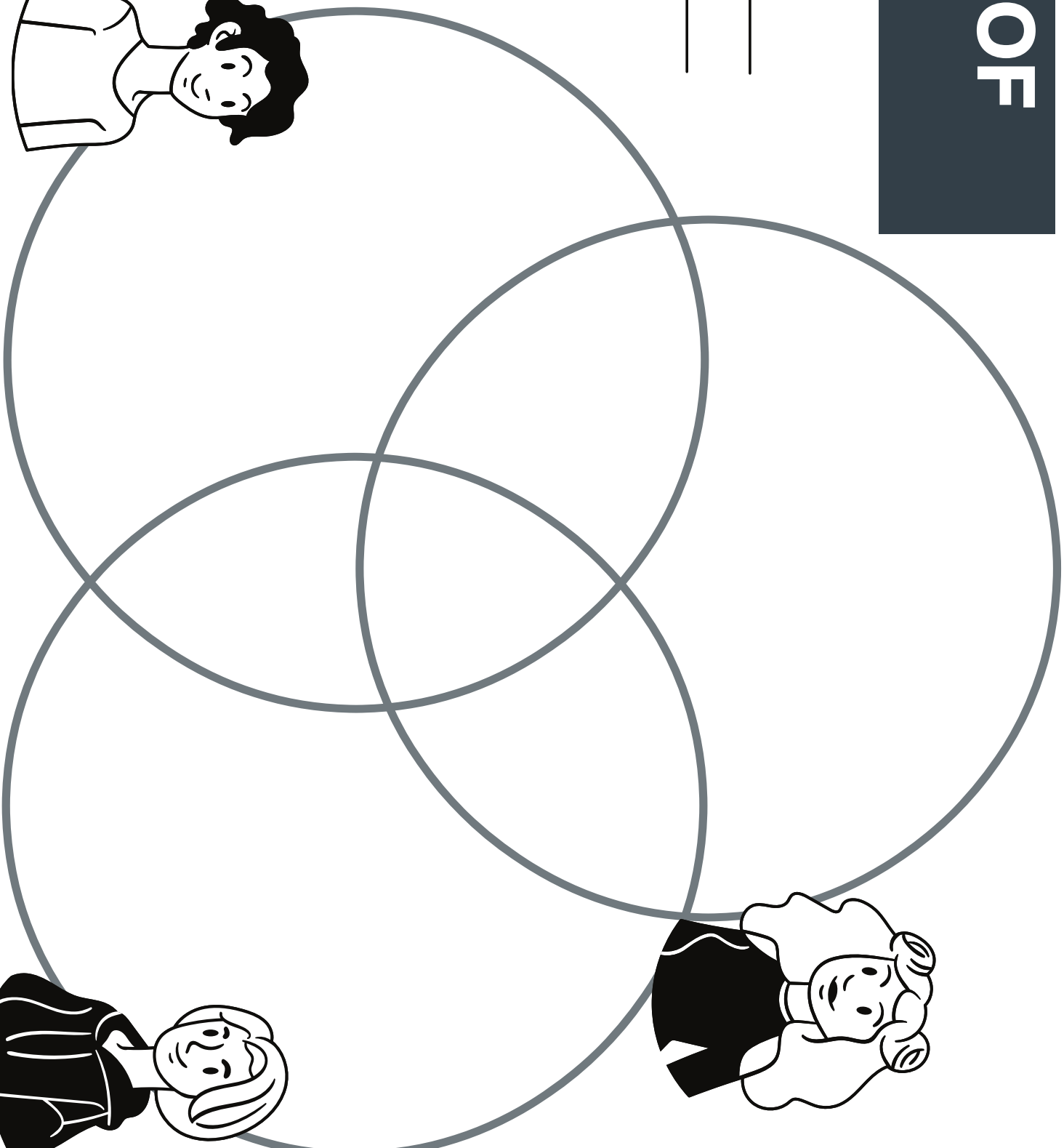
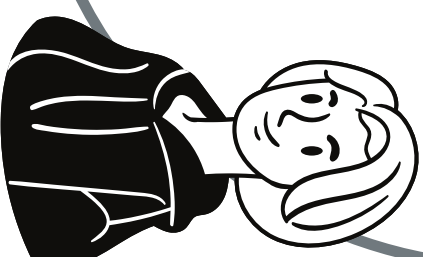
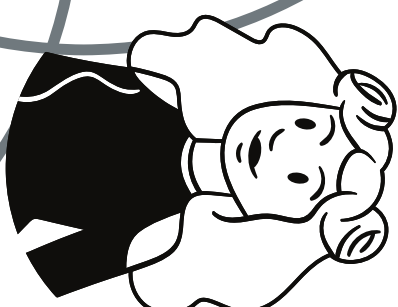
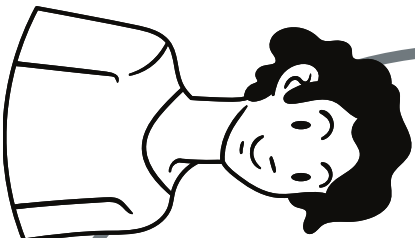
- Consider the situation in the 1780s. What might have happened if George Washington publicly denounced slavery?
- Some historians have claimed the Civil War was inevitable. What do they mean?
- Even though it is enshrined in the Constitution that all men (and women) are created equal, is that actually the case today? Explain your reasoning.

# POINTS OF VIEW

Topic:

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# ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL?



*Some historians have claimed that the Civil War was inevitable. What do you think?*

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Wartime Elections

# THE CITIZEN SOLDIER



*How does their legacy live on in the tradition of US volunteerism?*

## SUMMARY:

The citizen soldier in North America was inspired by the belief in localism and that a citizen's duty to defend their property was temporary or until the threat was defeated.

## KEY QUESTION:

How does their legacy live on in the tradition of US volunteerism?

## PERIOD:

Development of U.S. Constitutional Democracy (1650- 1783)

## THEMES:

War of Independence, Founding Fathers

## KEY VOCABULARY:

Citizen soldier, volunteer, duty, enlistment, Continental Army, localism



## BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

### Articles

[Joseph Plumb Martin - Voice of the Common American Soldier](#)

[America's Citizen Soldiers - A Short History of the Militia in the United States](#)

[The Citizen Soldier](#)

[Continental Army.](#)

# THE CITIZEN SOLDIER



How does their legacy live on in the tradition of US volunteerism?

## DISCUSSION SPARKS:

- Did you know that the Citizen Soldiers became known as 'minutemen' for their rapid response? Our country's Founding Samaritans; who risked their life to assure its freedom and protection.
- The citizen soldier has been a staple in some civilizations for thousands of years. Most notable are the city-states of Ancient Greece, whose farmers would also serve as soldiers to defend their property from foreign invasions.
- These military actions were temporary, and enforcement of service was usually one of honor and self-preservation that reflected a sense of localism and community.
- During the French and Indian War, British policy allowed colonists to form militias and serve side-by-side with the British Army. This created a sense of equality that would be challenged by British taxation against the colonies after the war.

## ACTIVITY: FAREWELL LETTER

*In this activity, students will try to grasp the concept of Citizen Soldiers and the sense of duty that motivated them by writing it in the form of a letter to their family within the 18th century.*

### STEPS

1. After watching, brainstorm as a class who Citizen Soldiers were and what motivated them to fight for their country. Note down ideas on the board.
2. Students imagine themselves as Citizen Soldiers during that period. Discuss in pairs why they would want to join the Continental Army and fight for independence from the British. Making notes as they discuss.
3. Students write a farewell letter to their family informing them of their decision to join the Continental Army, explaining their motives and how they feel about their sense of duty.

*\*This is just one example activity you can use in class. Go to our website's resource page to find other activity ideas.*

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE RESOURCES](#)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Consider the British Army's presence in America. Were the fears of a standing army justified?
- What does a sense of duty mean to you?
- Would you consider participating as a Citizen Soldier today? Why so, or why not?

# THE CITIZEN SOLDIER



How does their legacy live on in the tradition of US volunteerism?

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