

Historical Thinking Skills and Early America's Founding Documents

Unit #1



Students apply skills by utilizing a variety of resources to construct theses and support or refute contentions made by others. Alternative explanations of historical events are analyzed and questions of historical inevitability are explored. Some documents in American history have considerable importance for the development of the nation. Students use historical thinking to examine key documents which form the basis for the United States of America.

State Standards:

1. The use of primary and secondary sources of information includes an examination of the credibility of each source.
2. Historians develop theses and use evidence to support or refute positions.
3. Historians analyze cause, effect, sequence and correlation in historical events, including multiple causations and long- and short-term causal relations.
4. The Declaration of Independence elaborates on the rights and role of the people in building the foundations of the American nation through the principles of unalienable rights and consent of the people.
5. The Northwest Ordinance elaborates on the rights and role of the people in building the foundations of the American nation through its establishment of natural rights and setting up educational institutions.
6. The U.S. Constitution established the foundations of the American nation and the relationship between the people and their government.
7. The debate presented by the Federalist and Anti-Federalist Papers over protections for individuals and limits on government power resulted in the Bill of Rights. The Bill of Rights provides constitutional protections for individual liberties and limits on governmental power.

Objectives:

- Analyze and evaluate the credibility of primary and secondary sources.
- Develop a thesis and use evidence to support or refute a position.
- Identify examples of multiple long- and short-term causal relationships with respect to historical events. Analyze the relationship between historical events taking into consideration cause, effect, sequence, and correlation.
- Explain the unalienable rights found in the Declaration of Independence as they apply to individual rights, marginalized groups, and the changing role of government.
- Explain the precedents for governing the United States that were established by the Northwest Ordinance.
- Explain how the U.S. Constitution establishes a limited government that protects the rights of the people.
- Compare the arguments of the Federalists and Anti-Federalists. Explain how the Federalist and Anti-Federalist debates led to the adoption of the Bill of Rights.