

You Want a Revolution, I Want a Revelation!

Rethinking the Words of the Declaration of Independence

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Grade Level	8th Grade	**Time Frame**	1-2 class period(s)
Subject	Social Studies	**Duration**	100 minutes
Course	U.S. History		

Essential Question

How has the meaning of major ideas from the Declaration of Independence changed over time? Must groups achieve social, political, and economic rights to achieve equality?

Summary

Students, working in groups, use a "paired-text" strategy to analyze letters between Abigail and John Adams and the song "The Schuyler Sisters." Students create a "third text" by creating a hypothetical conversation between Abigail Adams and Angelica Schuyler regarding political and social issues facing women in colonial America. To conclude, students will think about their third text within the context of the Declaration of Independence to discuss contradictions between the major ideas in the declaration and practices of American society both historically and currently. This lesson includes optional modifications for distance learning. Resources for use in Google Classroom are included.

Snapshot

Engage

Students listen to the song "The Schuyler Sisters" while filling out an I Think, I Wonder chart.

Explore

Working in collaborative groups, students will analyze two texts using a "paired text" strategy.

Explain

Students share out their responses for Text 1 and Text 2 and, lastly, their response to the two texts together regarding political and social issues facing women in colonial America.

Extend

Student groups will reflect on phrases in the Declaration of Independence such as "all men are created equal" and generate questions based on new knowledge from the paired texts.

Evaluate

Student responses to "justify it" statements will serve as an evaluation.

Standards

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Reading (6-12)

CLR301: Locate simple details at the sentence and paragraph level in somewhat challenging passages
IDT301: Identify a clear central idea in straightforward paragraphs in somewhat challenging literary narratives
REL301: Identify clear comparative relationships between main characters in somewhat challenging literary narratives
WME301: Analyze how the choice of a specific word or phrase shapes meaning or tone in somewhat challenging passages when the effect is simple
ARG301: Analyze how one or more sentences in somewhat challenging passages offer reasons for or support a claim when the relationship is simple
SYN301: Make straightforward comparisons between two passages

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Writing (6-12)

I&A 201: Understanding the task and writing with purpose. A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: -Generate a thesis that is unclear or not entirely related to the given issue -Respond weakly to other perspectives on the issue
D&S 301: Building and strengthening the argument. A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: -Make use of mostly relevant reasoning and examples to support the thesis and arrive at a general or simplistic understanding of the issue -Offer a rationale that largely clarifies the argument -Provide elaboration of ideas and analysis that is somewhat repetitive or imprecise
ORG 201: A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: -Group ideas with little consistency or clarity -Use misleading and poorly formed transitions
ORG 202: A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: - Provide a minimal organizational structure in which some ideas are grouped locally

Oklahoma Academic Standards (Social Studies Practices (8th Grade))

8.1.6: Examine the central ideas expressed in the Declaration of Independence, drafted by Thomas Jefferson and adopted July 4, 1776, and their intellectual origins including:
8.1.6A: John Locke's theory on natural and unalienable rights, including life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness
8.1.6B: the ideals of equality for all individuals, including the impact of the First Great Awakening.
8.1.6C: the purpose of government as a social contract requiring the consent of the governed
8.2.2: Evaluate the motivations and points of view of various populations to remain loyal to Britain, join the patriot cause, or choose neutrality, including:
8.2.2C: women and their political status

Attachments

- You Want a Revolution, I Want a Revelation! Teacher Slides.pptx
- You want a revolution I want a revelation - Spanish.docx
- You want a revolution I want a revelation - Spanish.pdf
- You want a revolution I want a revelation.docx
- You want a revolution I want a revelation.pdf

Materials

- Link to "The Schuyler Sisters" YouTube video
- Internet access (to play video)
- You Want a Revolution, I Want a Revelation handout (attached)
- Sticky notes

Engage

Beginning with slide 3, before the song is played, the teacher will ask students to create an I Notice, I Wonder chart in their notebooks. Next, give students the "You Want a Revolution, I Want a Revelation!" handout. Students will use this handout to follow along with the lyrics as "The Schuyler Sisters" from the musical Hamilton plays. On slide 4, access the song through YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S0CEpopRyXc

Teachers' Note: Instructional Strategy Context

After the I Notice, I Wonder chart has been created, ask students to note anything they notice or wonder as the song is playing. Remind students to think about the song in the context of the Revolutionary War and the principles of government found in the Declaration of Independence.

After students have listened to the song, put them in groups of two to four to share what they wrote in the I Notice, I Wonder chart (in the next exercise, they will be in groups of four, so that may influence how many students you group together in this activity). Together, student groups need to decide on one "I notice" and one "I wonder" to share with the class.

Teacher's Note: Connecting Concepts

Depending on what students share out, try to connect student responses to major ideas in the Declaration of Independence that have been previously discussed, such as equality, inalienable rights, consent of the governed, social contract, and ability to change or overthrow the government when it fails to protect the rights of the people.

Once student groups have shared out, move to slide 5 and share the lesson's essential questions with students explaining that throughout the lesson they will be exploring how the meaning of the major ideas in the Declaration of Independence has changed over time and whether groups must achieve political, social, and economic rights to achieve equality.

Next, introduce the class to the paired-text activity. They will be doing this activity to begin thinking about how ideas in the Declaration of Independence have been interpreted over time by different groups of people and the implications of these interpretations.

Optional Modification For Distance Learning

Consider creating multiple copies of the attached "You Want a Revolution, I Want a Revelation!" handout using Google Docs. Assign three students to each copy of the "You Want a Revolution, I Want a Revelation!" handout and have them collaborate virtually. Students can add notes to the document and collaborate as a group using the "chat" feature in the document. You may also consider making this activity a discussion board post to which your students can respond directly. For the I Notice, I Wonder activity, you can add an extra page to the "You Want a Revolution, I Want a Revelation!" handout. This modification covers the Engage, Explore, and Explain sections of this lesson. Download all attachments to use this lesson in Google Classroom.

Explore

Students should now be put in collaborative groups of four. Once in these groups, direct students to the "You Want a Revolution, I Want a Revelation!" handout. Explain to students that they are going to work together to analyze two texts that have been paired to broaden their thinking about the ideas in the Declaration of Independence and how these ideas have been interpreted. This part of the lesson is an adaptation of the Paired Text H-Chart strategy and the New York Times Paired Text strategy.

Move to slide 6 to introduce Text 1—a series of letters between Abigail and John Adams. Students should read the letters together.

Next, students will work together to answer question one: Based on Text 1, create a summary statement that describes the general point that Abigail is trying to make to her husband, John. Identify and explain two words or phrases from the text to serve as evidence to support your response. Once student groups have finished, have small groups elect a group speaker and share out their answers to the first question.

Teacher's Note: Providing Background

If students have not been previously introduced to Abigail and John Adams, provide a bit of background to give context to the letters.

Possible Student Responses

An example summary statement: Abigail is saying that, in the new government that will be created, women should have more rights and be equal to men. They might cite the following lines from the text as evidence: "remember the ladies," we [women] will not hold ourselves to bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation," and/or "whilst you are proclaiming peace and goodwill to men, [freeing] all nations, you insist upon retaining an absolute power over your wives."

When students have finished discussing the first text, move to slide 7 ask student groups to move to text 2—lyrics from the song "The Schuyler Sisters" that they listened to at the beginning of class.

After reviewing these lyrics as a group, students will create a response to question two on the handout: Based on the lyrics above, create a summary statement that describes the general point that Angelica is making in "The Schuyler Sisters." Identify and explain two words or phrases from the text to serve as evidence to support your response.

Once students groups have finished, have small groups elect a different speaker to share out their answers to the second question.

Teacher's Note: More Information About Angelica Schuyler

If students have not been previously introduced to Angelica Schuyler, provide a bit of background to give context to what her character expresses in the song. If you would like to provide background for the entire song, the official Hamilton website uses links in the lyrics to provide historical details for most lines of the song. The lyrics page can be found at the following URL: http://atlanticrecords.com/HamiltonMusic/ This song can't be directly linked, so to find it, look under Act 1, five songs in.

Possible Student Responses

An example summary statement: Angelica says that women should be included in the political and social life of the new country. They might cite the following lines from the text as evidence: "I've been reading 'Common Sense' by Thomas Paine, so men say that I'm intense or I'm insane," "You want a revolution, I want a revelation," and/or "I'm 'a compel him to include women in the sequel!"

Teacher's Note: "chunking" The Lesson

You can decide how to chunk this portion of the lesson. Additionally, student groups could look at both text one and text two before coming back together as a whole group to discuss.

Explain

Next, move to slide 8 and direct students, still working in their student groups, to the "Two Texts Together" section of the handout on the last page. Explain to students that they will be taking the knowledge they have gained from both texts to create a "third text" which, in this lesson, will be a short hypothetical conversation between Abigail Adams and Angelica Schuyler about political and social issues facing women in colonial America. Students should reference evidence from each text in the conversation they create. Once student groups have finished their conversations, two people from each group, one playing Angelica and one playing Abigail, will share out with the whole class.

After all of the conversations have been shared move to slide 9 and ask students to summarize, as a whole class, what political and social issues were mentioned in the conversations. You can make this list on the board. Slide 10 has possible student responses that you can share with the class once they have shared all of their ideas.

Possible Student Responses

Students might mention social and political issues facing women such as: not being able to vote, not having access to education, not having representation or opportunity to serve in the government, being seen as less than men, women having opinions about political issues being deemed inappropriate/not-their-place, etc.

Extend

Move to slide 11 and ask students to consider: "Based on your knowledge of the Declaration of Independence, what questions do these texts raise for you, especially considering phrases like 'all men are created equal,' all people are 'endowed with certain inalienable rights,' governments derive their power from the 'consent of the governed,' and are to 'protect these rights,' etc?"

Each group should generate at least two questions. While students generate their questions, make a chart on the board (or on a large sheet of paper that can be hung up) titled "Questions the Texts Raise about the Declaration of Independence." Have student groups write their questions on a Post-it (one question per Post-it). When student groups present their questions, have them put their Post-it on the class chart.

At this point, facilitate a discussion based on student questions to, ultimately, make the point that there are contradictions in the words of the Declaration of Independence and the practices of American society in 1776 and give examples.

Possible Student Responses

Why does the Declaration of Independence say we are all created equal, but women were treated as inferior to men? If the colonists were rebelling against Great Britain because they didn't have representation in the government, why are colonial men denying these same rights to women (and others)? You could also ask students if women were the only group of people being denied political, social, and economic rights in American society at the time of the revolution. Students could then make connections to the denied rights of free and enslaved Blacks, Native Americans, poor, etc.

Move to slide 12 to further extend the conversation to consider the following: How do we interpret the words of the Declaration of Independence now? Have interpretations of these words changed over time? Are there still contradictions between these words/ideas that are foundational for our nation and the realities of American society today? Examples?

Optional Modifications For Distance Learning

To modify the above activity for online or distance learning, consider assigning different Google Docs to small groups of students and asking them to collaborate virtually. Students can add notes to the document and collaborate as a group using the "chat" feature in the document. You may also consider making this activity a discussion board post to which your students can respond directly. Download all attachments to use this lesson in Google Classroom.

Evaluate

The next activity will use a modified version of the Justified True or False strategy to evaluate student learning. To begin, move to slide 13, give students the following statements:

1. The words and ideas in the Declaration of Independence were interpreted in the same way in 1776 as they are today.
2. The practices of American society contradicted the ideas in the Declaration of Independence in 1776, but those ideas are completely realized today.

Ask students to work individually to first decide whether each statement is true or false and then justify their answers with three or four sentences citing evidence from the lesson to support their reasoning. Once they've completed this, have students share out and/or collect student responses to evaluate understanding.

Students will most likely say statement one is false and might mention that, in 1776, most founders and the larger society had a narrow interpretation of who was included in the Declaration of Independence (e.g., only land-owning, typically wealthy, white men), whereas today, we have a more broad interpretation of this document. Students will most likely say statement two is false as well, noting that there were contradictions between the words in the "Declaration of Independence" and practices in colonial society in 1776 (e.g., exclusion of women, people of color, and the poor from political, social, and economic equality) and that while we have made progress in redressing these issues, there is still work to be done.

Optional Modification For Distance Learning

For online or distance learning you can either distribute the questions in a digital document or create a discussion board post for students to respond to. Students' responses can function as assessments for this lesson. Download all attachments to use this lesson in Google Classroom.

Resources

- Adams, A., & Adams, J. (1776). The Adams papers: Digital editions (Volume 1). http://www.masshist.org/publications/apde2/volume-toc?series=afc&vol=1
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Google Classroom. Tech Tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/628
- K20 Center. (n.d.). I Notice, I Wonder. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/180
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Justified True or False. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/174
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Paired Texts H-Chart. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/132
- Miranda, L. -M. (2015). The Schuyler sisters [Liner notes]. Atlantic Records. http://atlanticrecords.com/HamiltonMusic/
- Renée Elise Goldsberry - Topic. (2015). The Schuyler sisters. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xZdrzOdd8Kw
- New York Times Paired Text Handout: https://static01.nyt.com/images/blogs/learning/pdf/2013/13-1553_K12_CompareText_LearnNet_RP3-f.pdf