



INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 196  
**EASTVIEW HIGH SCHOOL**  
6200 - 140<sup>th</sup> Street West  
Apple Valley, MN 55124-6912  
Phone: (612) 431-8900  
FAX: (612) 431-8911

**Tenth Grade  
Sample Assignment  
Advanced Placement United States History- Honors American Literature**

**EASTVIEW HONORS CHARACTER STATEMENT**

An Honors/AP student exemplifies the following characteristics necessary to achieve success:

- academic initiative and enthusiasm
- self-motivation and an independent work ethic
- high standard of honesty and reliability
- strong study skills

This course is a year-long interdisciplinary team-taught course that will fulfill your graduation requirements for tenth grade English-Language Arts and Social Studies. This college level course will help prepare students to take the AP US History Exam in May. Successful scores on the exam may earn college credit, waiver of certain college requirements, placement in college honors programs, etc.

In order to ensure appropriate placement into this AP course, interested students may complete this sample assignment. The purpose of the essay is to ensure all potential AP students have *reviewed a college textbook* and are able to comprehend and respond to the text. Before writing the essay, the student should complete the textbook reading (attached, "The Age of Jefferson"), take notes, and write a rough draft.

Please respond to the following statement in a 500 word essay. The essay should be word processed.

Describe Thomas Jefferson's style of the presidency as you discuss two significant events which occurred during Jefferson's administration. Be sure to explain why these events are significant and how Jefferson's style is evident in these events.

## THE AGE OF JEFFERSON

Although basically a dispassionate man, Thomas Jefferson aroused deep emotions in others. His admirers saw him as a vigilant defender of popular liberty, an aristocrat who trusted the people. His detractors, pointing to his doubts about some Christian doctrines and to his early defense of the French Revolution, portrayed him as an infidel and a frenzied radical. Jefferson had so many facets that it was hard not to misunderstand him. Trained in law, he spent much of his prepresidential life in public office—as governor of Virginia, secretary of state under Washington, and vice president under John Adams. His interests included the violin, architecture, languages, and science. He designed his own mansion, Monticello, in Virginia; studied Latin, Greek, French, Italian, Anglo-Saxon, and several Native American languages; and served for nearly twenty years as president of the American Philosophical Society, the nation's first and foremost scientific organization. He viewed himself as a stronger friend of equality than either Washington or Adams; yet he owned more than two hundred slaves.

History convinced Jefferson that republics collapsed from within, not from without. Hostile neighbors notwithstanding, the real threat to freedom was posed by governments that progressively undermined popular liberty. Taxes, standing armies, and corrupt officials had made governments the masters, rather than the servants, of the people. Anyone who doubted this lesson of history needed only to look at the French Revolution; Jefferson had greeted it with hope and then watched in dismay as Napoleon Bonaparte assumed despotic power in 1799.

To prevent the United States from sinking into tyranny, Jefferson advocated that state governments retain considerable authority. He reasoned that in a vast republic marked by strong local attachments, state

governments were more immediately responsive to the popular will than was the government in Washington. He also believed that popular liberty required popular virtue. For republican theorists like Jefferson, virtue consisted of a disposition to place the public good ahead of one's private interests and to exercise vigilance to keep governments from growing out of control. To Jefferson, the most vigilant and virtuous people were educated farmers, who were accustomed to act and think with sturdy independence. The least vigilant were the inhabitants of cities. Jefferson regarded cities as breeding grounds for mobs and as menaces to liberty. When the people "get piled upon one another in large cities, as in Europe," he wrote, "they will become corrupt as in Europe."

Despite his deep philosophical beliefs, Jefferson was not impractical. Of all the charges leveled at him by contemporaries, the most inaccurate was that he was a dreamy philosopher incapable of governing. "What is practicable," he wrote, "must often control pure theory." He studied science not because he liked to ponder abstract puzzles but because he believed that every scientific advance would increase human happiness. All true knowledge was useful knowledge. This practical cast of mind revealed itself both in his inventions—he designed an improved plow and a gadget for duplicating letters—and in his presidential agenda.

### *Jefferson's "Revolution"*

Jefferson described his election as a revolution, but the revolution he sought was to restore the country to the liberty and tranquillity it had known before Alexander Hamilton's economic program and John Adams's Alien and Sedition Acts: to reverse the drift into despotism that he had detected during the 1790s.

One alarm-

ing sign of this drift was the growth of the national debt by \$10 million under the Federalists. Jefferson and his secretary of the treasury, the Swiss-born Albert Gallatin, objected to the debt on both political and economic grounds. Hamilton had argued that by giving creditors a financial stake in the health of the federal government, a national debt would strengthen that government. Jefferson and Gallatin disagreed. Merely to pay the interest on the debt, there would have to be taxes, which Jefferson and Gallatin opposed for many of the same reasons that they opposed the debt. Taxes would suck money from industrious farmers, the backbone of the Republic, and put it in the hands of wealthy creditors, parasites who lived off interest payments. Increased tax revenues might also tempt the government to create a standing army, always a threat to liberty.

Jefferson and Gallatin induced Congress to repeal most internal taxes, and they slashed expenditures by closing some embassies overseas and reducing the army. The navy was a different matter. In 1801 Jefferson ordered a naval squadron into action in the Mediterranean against the so-called Tripolitan (or Barbary) pirates of North Africa. For centuries, the Muslim rulers of Tripoli, Morocco, Tunis, and Algiers had solved their own budgetary problems by engaging in piracy and extorting tribute in exchange for protection; seamen whom they captured were held for ransom or sold into slavery. Most European powers handed over the fees demanded, but Jefferson calculated that going to war would be cheaper than paying high tribute to maintain peace. Although suffering its share of reverses during the ensuing fighting, the United States did not come away empty-handed. In 1805 it was able to conclude a peace treaty with Tripoli for roughly half the price that it had been paying annually for protection.

Jefferson was not a pacifist and would continue to use the navy to gain respect for the American flag, but he and Gallatin placed economy ahead of military preparedness. Gallatin calculated that the nation could be freed of debt in sixteen years if administrations held the

line on expenditures. In Europe, the Peace of Amiens (1802) brought a temporary halt to the hostilities between Britain and France that had threatened American shipping in the 1790s, and buoyed Jefferson's confidence that minimal military preparedness was a sound policy. The Peace of Amiens, he wrote, "removes the only danger we have to fear. We can now proceed without risks in demolishing useless structures of expense, lightening the burdens of our constituents, and fortifying the principles of free government." This may have been wishful thinking, but it rested on a sound economic calculation, for the vast territory of the United States could never be secured from attack without astronomical expense.

## *Jefferson and the Judiciary*

In his inaugural address, Jefferson reminded Americans that their agreements were more basic than their disagreements. "We have called by different name brothers of the same principle," he proclaimed. "We are all republicans; we are all federalists." He was enough of a realist to know that the political conflict would not evaporate, but he sincerely hoped to allay fear of the Republican party and to draw moderate Federalists over to his side. There was a chance of success. He and John Adams had once been friends. The two shared many views, and each was suspicious of Hamilton. But the eventual reconciliation between Adams and Jefferson (they renewed their friendship after Jefferson's presidency), and more generally between Federalists and Republicans, would not occur during Jefferson's administration, largely because of bitter feelings over the composition and control of the judiciary.

In theory, Jefferson believed that talent and virtue rather than political affiliation were the primary qualifications for judgeships. In theory, Federalists believed the same, but they rarely had detected either talent or virtue among Republicans, and in 1800 not a single Republican sat on the federal judiciary. For Republicans, the crowning blow was the Federalist-sponsored Judiciary Act, passed on February 27, 1801. On the surface, this law had a nonpartisan purpose. By creating sixteen new federal judgeships, the act promised to relieve Supreme Court justices of the burden of riding far from Washington to hear cases. But the act contained several features that struck Jefferson as objectionable, including a provision to reduce the number of justices on the Supreme Court from six to five. This provision threatened both to strip Jefferson of his first opportunity to appoint a justice and to perpetuate Federalist domination of the judiciary.

Recalling the federal courts' zealotry in enforcing the Alien and Sedition Acts, and dismayed by the absence of Republicans on the federal judiciary, Jefferson saw in the Judiciary Act of 1801 a confirmation of his fears that the Federalists were retreating into the judiciary as a stronghold, "and from that battery all the works of Republicanism are to be beaten down and erased." Any lingering doubts Jefferson might have had about Federalist intentions were swept away by the actions of outgoing president John Adams during his last days in office. Between December 12, 1800, the day on which Adams's defeat in the election became clear, and March 4, 1801, the date of Jefferson's inauguration, Adams appointed several last-minute, or "midnight," judges. All federal judges appointed by Adams under provisions of the Judiciary Act were prominent Federalists. Some had been defeated for office during the election of 1800. One had captained a loyalist regiment during the Revolution, and three were brothers or brothers-in-law of John Marshall, the Federalist chief justice who was also the reputed author of the Judiciary Act of 1801.

Some radical Jeffersonians believed that judges should be elected, but Jefferson himself had no quarrel with the practice of appointing judges to serve during "good behavior" (normally for life); indeed, he thought that an independent judiciary was vital to the success of republican government. But the Federalists seemed to be turning the judiciary into an arm of their party, and in defiance of the popular will. Ironically, it was not the midnight appointments that Adams actually made but one that he left unfinished that stiffened Jefferson's resolve to seek repeal of the Judiciary Act. On his last day in office, Adams appointed an obscure Federalist, William Marbury, as justice of the peace in the District of Columbia but then failed to deliver Marbury's commission before midnight. With Jefferson in office, the new secretary of state, James Madison, refused to release the commission. Marbury petitioned the Supreme Court for a writ of mandamus,\* ordering Madison to make the delivery. Chief Justice Marshall then called on Madison to show cause why he should not be compelled to hand over the commission. Although the Supreme Court did not decide the case of *Marbury v. Madison* until 1803, Jefferson detected in Marshall's maneuvers the early signs of still another Federalist scheme to use the judiciary to advance partisan interests, and in 1802 he won congressional repeal of the Judiciary Act. The Federalists were in despair. The Constitution, moaned Federalist senator Gouverneur Morris, "is dead. It is dead."

As John Marshall would soon demonstrate, however, the Federalist judiciary was alive and brimming with energy. Like Jefferson, Marshall was a Virginian, but he was the son of an ordinary farmer, not an aristocrat. Marshall's service in the Continental Army during the Revolution had instilled in him (as in Alexander Hamilton) a burning attachment to the Union rather than to any state, and in the 1790s he had embraced the Federalist party. In 1803 Marshall's long-awaited decision in *Marbury v. Madison* came down. From the perspective of constitutional history, Marshall's decision would have immense significance, for in it he declared an act of Congress unconstitutional. Specifically, he denied Marbury's petition for a writ of mandamus (to force Madison to deliver his commission) on grounds that Congress had exceeded its constitutional authority when, in the Judiciary Act of 1789, it had granted the Court the authority to issue such a writ. This was the first time the Court declared an act of Congress unconstitutional. It would not do so again until 1857, but the justices had set an important precedent.

Marshall's decision, however, had a different significance for Jefferson. Along with most mainstream Republicans, Jefferson thought that the courts did have a right to engage in judicial review (that is, to declare legislative acts unconstitutional). As far as judicial review went, Jefferson merely held that courts had no *exclusive* right of review; other branches of the government should also have the right to review the constitutionality of measures before them. Since Marshall's decision in *Marbury* did not assert that courts alone could declare laws unconstitutional, Jefferson

had no quarrel with the principle of judicial review as Marshall advanced it. What infuriated Jefferson was that Marshall used part of his decision to lecture Madison on his moral duty (as opposed to his legal obligation) to have delivered the commission to Marbury. This gratuitous lecture—really a lecture to Jefferson as Madison's superior—struck Jefferson as another example of Federalist partisanship with respect to the judiciary.

While the *Marbury* decision was brewing, the Republicans had already taken the offensive against the judiciary by moving to impeach (charge with wrongdoing) two Federalist judges, John Pickering of the New Hampshire District Court and Samuel Chase of the U.S. Supreme Court. The particulars of the two cases differed. Pickering was an insane alcoholic who behaved in a bizarre manner in court. In one case, he decided against the prosecution before hearing any of its witnesses and then taunted the district attorney that even if he could present forty thousand witnesses, "they will not alter the decree." Chase, a notoriously partisan Federalist, had rigorously enforced the Sedition Act of 1798 and had jailed several Republican editors, including one whom Jefferson had befriended. To Republicans, Chase was the devil incarnate; all of them knew that Chase's name formed the correct ending of a popular ditty:

*Cursed of thy father, scum of all that's base,  
Thy sight is odious, and thy name is . . .*

\*Mandamus: an order from a higher court commanding that a specified action be taken.

Despite these differing details, the two cases raised the same issue. The Constitution provided that federal judges could be removed solely by impeachment, which could be considered only in cases of "Treason, Bribery and other high Crimes and Misdemeanors." Was impeachment an appropriate way to get rid of judges who were insane or excessively partisan? Despite misgivings among Federalists and some Republicans about charging an obviously insane man with crimes and misdemeanors, the Senate voted to convict Pickering on March 12, 1804. That same day, the House of Representatives voted to indict Chase. John Randolph, one of Jefferson's supporters in Congress, so completely botched the prosecution of Chase that he failed to obtain the necessary two-thirds majority for conviction on any of the charges. But even if Randolph had done a competent job, Chase might still have gained acquittal, because moderate Republicans were coming to doubt whether im-

peachment was a solution to the issue of judicial partisanship.

Chase's acquittal ended Jefferson's skirmishes with the judiciary. Although his radical followers continued to attack the principles of judicial review and an appointed judiciary as undemocratic, Jefferson objected to neither. He merely challenged Federalist use of judicial power for political goals. Yet there was always a gray area between law and politics. Federalists did not necessarily see a conflict between protecting the Constitution and advancing their party's cause. Nor did they use their control of the federal judiciary to undo Jefferson's "revolution" of 1800. The Marshall court, for example, upheld the constitutionality of the repeal of the Judiciary Act of 1801. For his part, Jefferson never proposed to impeach Marshall. In supporting the impeachments of Pickering and Chase, Jefferson was trying to make the judiciary more responsive to the popular will by challenging a pair of judges whose behavior had been outrageous. No other federal judge would be impeached for more than fifty years.

### *The Louisiana Purchase*

Jefferson's goal of avoiding foreign entanglements would remain beyond reach as long as European powers had large landholdings in North America. In 1800 Spain, a weak and declining power, controlled East and West Florida as well as the vast Louisiana Territory. The latter alone was equal in size to the United States at that time. In the Treaty of San Ildefonso (October 1, 1800), Spain ceded the Louisiana Territory to France, which was fast emerging under Napoleon Bonaparte as the world's foremost military power. It took six months for news of the treaty to reach Jefferson and Madison but only a few minutes for them to grasp its significance.

Jefferson had long dreamed of an "empire of liberty" extending across North America and even into South America, an empire to be gained not by military conquest but by the inevitable expansion of the free and virtuous American people. An enfeebled Spain constituted no real obstacle to this expansion. As long as Louisiana had belonged to Spain, time was on the side of the United States. But Bonaparte's capacity for mischief was boundless. What if Bonaparte and the British reached an agreement that gave England a free hand in the Mediterranean and France a license to ex-

pand into North America? Then the United States would be sandwiched between the British in Canada and the French in Louisiana. What if Britain refused to cooperate with France? In that case, Britain might use its naval power to seize Louisiana before the French took control, thereby trapping the United States between British forces in the South and West as well as in the North and West.

Although Americans feared these two possibilities, Bonaparte actually had a different goal. During the 1790s he had dreamed of a French empire in the Middle East, but his defeat by the British fleet at the Battle of the Nile in 1798 had blasted this dream. Now Bonaparte devised a plan for a new French empire, this one bordering the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico. The fulcrum of the empire was to be the Caribbean island of Santo Domingo (today comprising Haiti and the Dominican Republic). He wanted to use Louisiana not as a base from which to threaten the United States but as a breadbasket for an essentially Caribbean empire. His immediate task was to subdue Santo Domingo, where a bloody slave revolution in the 1790s had resulted by 1800 in the takeover of the government by the black statesman Toussaint L'Ouverture (see Chapter 7). Bonaparte dispatched an army to reassert French control and to reestablish slavery, but yellow fever and fierce resistance on the part of former slaves combined to destroy the army.

As a slaveholder himself, Jefferson tacitly approved Bonaparte's attempted reconquest of Santo Domingo; as a nationalist, he continued to fear a French presence in Louisiana. This fear intensified in October 1802, when the Spanish colonial administrator in New Orleans issued an order prohibiting the deposit of American produce in New Orleans for transshipment to foreign lands. Because American farmers west of the Appalachians depended on New Orleans as a port for the cash crops that they shipped down the Mississippi River, the order was a major provocation to Americans. The order had in fact originated in Spain, but most Americans assumed that it had come from Bonaparte, who, although he now owned Louisiana, had not yet taken possession of it. An alarmed Jefferson wrote to a friend that "the day that France takes possession of N. Orleans . . . we must marry ourselves to the British fleet and nation."

The combination of France's failure to subdue Santo Domingo and the termination of American rights

to deposit produce in New Orleans stimulated two crucial decisions, one by Jefferson and the other by Bonaparte, that ultimately resulted in the United States' purchase of Louisiana. First, Jefferson nominated James Monroe and Robert R. Livingston to negotiate with France for the purchase of New Orleans and as much of the Floridas as possible. (Because West Florida had repeatedly changed hands between France, Britain, and Spain, no one was sure who owned it.) Meanwhile, Bonaparte, mindful of his military failure in Santo Domingo and of American opposition to French control of Louisiana, had concluded that his projected Caribbean empire was not worth the cost. In addition,

he planned to recommence the war in Europe and needed cash. Accordingly, he decided to sell *all* of Louisiana. After some haggling between the American commissioners and Bonaparte's minister, Talleyrand, a price of \$15 million was settled upon. (One-fourth of the total represented an agreement by the United States to pay French debts owed to American citizens.) For this sum the United States gained an immense, uncharted territory west of the Mississippi River. No one knew its exact size; Talleyrand merely observed that the bargain was noble. But the purchase virtually doubled the area of the United States at a cost, omitting interest, of 13½¢ an acre.

Because Jefferson's commissioners had exceeded their instructions, however, the president had doubts about the constitutionality of the purchase. No provision of the Constitution explicitly gave the government authority to acquire new territory or to incorporate it into the Union. Jefferson therefore drafted a constitutional amendment that authorized the acquisition of territory and prohibited the American settlement of Louisiana for an indefinite period. Fearing that an immediate and headlong rush to settle the area would lead to the destruction of the Native Americans and to an orgy of land speculation, Jefferson wanted to control development so that Americans could advance "compactly as we multiply." Few Republicans, however, shared Jefferson's constitutional reservations, and the president himself soon began to worry that ratification of an amendment would take too long and that Bonaparte might in the meantime change his mind about selling Louisiana. Consequently, he quietly dropped the amendment and submitted the treaty to the Senate, where it was quickly ratified.

It is easy to make too much of Jefferson's dilemma over Louisiana. He was wedded to strict construction of the Constitution, believing that the Constitution should be interpreted according to its letter. But he was also committed to the principle of establishing an "empire of liberty." Doubling the size of the Republic would guarantee land for American farmers, the backbone of the Republic and the true guardians of liberty. Like the principle of states' rights to which Jefferson also subscribed, strict construction was not an end in itself but a means to promote republican liberty. If that end could be achieved by some way other than strict construction, so be it. In addition, Jefferson was alert to practical considerations. Most Federalists opposed the Louisiana Purchase on the grounds that it would decrease the relative importance of their strongholds on the eastern seaboard. As the leader of the Republican party, Jefferson saw no reason to hand the Federalists an issue by dallying over ratification of the treaty.