

## Unit 2: Protest, Liberty, and Justice

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies

18 Class Meetings

*Revised January 2026*

#### Essential Questions

- What conditions led colonists to declare independence from Great Britain?
- How were the Founding Fathers able to succeed in the creation of a new nation?
- Does the new U.S. Constitution represent and serve all people?

#### Enduring Understandings with Unit Goals

**EU 1:** The American colonists' breakup with the British Empire in 1776 wasn't a sudden, impetuous act. Instead, the banding together of the 13 colonies was the culmination of a series of events, which had begun more than a decade earlier.

- Examine primary sources to identify the events that led to changing opinions regarding loyalty to England.
- Separate the economic and ideological tensions that many of the colonists were feeling prior to the Revolution.

**EU 2:** The Founding Fathers were not unified in thought, purpose and ideals; yet were able to succeed in defeating the most powerful nation in the world.

- Compare the perspectives of the more radical voices in the cause for freedom prior to revolution to the more prudent views of reconciling with Great Britain.
- Assess the Continental Army's actions in battle and determine if George Washington was a great leader, military genius, or simply the beneficiary of good fortune.

**EU 3:** The new U.S. Constitution was in response to the much weaker Articles of Confederation, in which the Federal government had little to power to serve its citizens.

- Compare and contrast the differences between Articles of Confederation and the U.S. Constitution, specifically the Bill of Rights.
- Determine if the original text was more inclusive or exclusionary for its citizenry.

#### Standards

##### CT Social Studies Frameworks Standards:

- **8.His.4.a:** Analyze factors that influenced perspectives about national identity both during and as a result of the American Revolution (e.g., social contract, individual liberties, tyranny, economic and political sovereignty, citizenship).
- **8.His.10.a:** Describe how individual and group perspectives of the American Revolution are documented in historical records while identifying representation of marginalized voices.
- **8.Inq.1a:** Explain how compelling and supporting questions represent key ideas in the study of United States history.
- **8.Inq.3.c:** Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of views represented in the sources.
- **8.Inq.4.a:** Construct arguments using evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging the strengths and limitations of the arguments.
- **8.Civ.8.b:** Analyze how ideas and principles about citizenship and access to political power expressed in founding documents influenced social and political systems in the early republic

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- (e.g., Bill of Rights, Declaration of Independence, Three-Fifths Clause, Electoral College).
- **8.His.16.a:** Evaluate the US Constitution and Bill of Rights to determine if the goals of the American Revolution, as stated in the Declaration of Independence, were realized.

#### **Common Core State Standards:**

- **RH.6-8.2:** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- **RH.6-8.4:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- **W.8.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
- **W.8.5:** With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
- **WHST.6-8.4:** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **WHST.6-8.5:** With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

### ISAAC Vision of the Graduate Competencies

**Competency 1:** Write effectively for a variety of purposes.

**Competency 2:** Speak to diverse audiences in an accountable manner.

**Competency 3:** Develop the behaviors needed to interact and contribute with others on a team.

**Competency 4:** Analyze and solve problems independently and collaboratively.

**Competency 5:** Be responsible, creative, and empathetic members of the community.

### Unit Content Overview

1. ***“When in the course of human events ...” – Thomas Jefferson***
  - Conditions in the American colonies post the French and Indian War are explored.
  - What causes a person to revolt?
  - The importance of the Declaration of Independence is discussed.
2. ***“We must all hang together, or, most assuredly, we shall all hang separately.”- Ben Franklin***
  - How did representatives from 13 different colonies agree to vote for independence.
  - What compromises were made to secure independence?
  - Major battles and primary actors of the Revolutionary War are examined.
3. ***“Tis one. We have become a nation.” – Benjamin Rush***
  - The Federal government must be strong but also recognize the individual states.
  - The U.S. Constitution guarantees us all basic rights.

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- Which Americans were intentionally left out of the Bill of Rights?

#### **Vocabulary:**

- Colonial regions and economics, French and Indian War, Treaty of Paris, Sons of Liberty, Boston Massacre, Crispus Attucks, Tyranny, Patriot, Loyalist, Boston Tea Party, Intolerable Acts, 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Continental Congress, Lexington/Concord, Paul Revere, Benedict Arnold, compromise, precedent.

#### **Interdisciplinary Connection:**

- Language Arts – reading informational texts

### **Daily Learning Objectives with TWPS**

#### **Students will be able to...**

- Explore how Europe's wars, particularly the French and Indian War, caused tension and distrust in the American colonies. \*\*
  - *What do you think of when I say British? Was it that bad to be an English colony?*
- Examine primary sources to identify the events that led to changing opinions regarding loyalty to England. \*
  - *Why do we read primary sources? Are they reliable?*
- Separate the economic and ideological tensions that many of the colonists were feeling prior to the Revolution. \*
  - *How bad would it have to get in a country for you to start a revolution? Give at least two examples.*
- Compare the perspectives of the more radical voices in the cause for freedom prior to revolution to the more prudent views of reconciling with Great Britain. \*\*
  - *Can you think of a "Radical" person from U.S. history? What makes them so radical?*
- Interpret the purpose of government by using the Declaration of Independence. Was it a radical document? \*\*
  - *What do you think the main motivation and point was in signing the Declaration of Independence on July 4th, 1776?*
- Critique the popular phrase "the shot heard 'round the world" when describing the American war for independence. \*\*
  - *Given what you just learned about the American Revolution from America: The Story of Us, what do you think was the greatest challenge facing the Patriots in their struggle for independence from Great Britain (England)?*
- Assess the Continental Army's actions in battle and determine if George Washington was a great leader, military genius, or simply the beneficiary of good fortune. \*\*
  - *How many battles do you think George Washington won vs. loss?*
- Compare and contrast the differences between Articles of Confederation and the U.S Constitution, specifically the Bill of Rights. \*
  - *How do you convince very different people to put aside their own needs for the greater needs of the country?*
- Determine if the original text of the Constitution was more inclusive or exclusionary for its

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citizenry. \*

- *Who do you believe the new U.S. Constitution was written for? Was it for ALL Americans? Why do think so?*
- Examine why compromises were made in the creation of a new nation, particularly with regard to Native Americans and African slaves. \*\*
  - *Please name something that you have compromised in the past to get what you want?*

### **Instructional Strategies/Differentiated Instruction**

- Whole group instruction
- Guided notes
- Paragraph frames and sentence starters
- Student-led instruction
- Teacher modeling
- Written feedback
- Think-pair-share and small-group discussions
- Graphic organizers
- Cornell notes
- Accountable talk
- Homework
- Word walls with visuals
- Anchor charts
- Small group instruction
- Conferencing
- Text and video chunking with guiding questions
- Close reading with text-dependent questions
- Modified Assessments

### **Differentiated Instruction for English Learners**

- TWPS (Think, write, pair, share)
- Pre-reading strategies
- Culturally responsive teaching
- Guided Notes / Cornell Notes
- Key Vocabulary
- Graphic organizers
- Strategic grouping
- Non-verbal Assessments
- Translated primary source documents

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**Assessments**

**FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:**

- Do Now – CNN10
- TWPS
- Exit Slips
- Accountable Talk Discussions
- Completed guided notes
- Completed graphic organizers
- Fishbowl Debate Planner
- Revision worksheets
- Homework
- Performance Task
- ISAAC Rubrics (Accountable Talk & Literacy)
- AIMS Web

**SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:**

- Pear Assessment Vocab Quiz - EU 1
- Pear Assessment Unit 2 Test – EU3
- Performance Task – Fishbowl Debate – “Patriot v. Loyalist”
- Performance Task – Essay – Patriot or Loyalist – EU2

**Unit Task**

**Unit Task Name:** Which Side are You On? Patriot or Loyalist Essay – EU1, EU2, EU3

**Description:** Students will craft a well-researched and formal three paragraph biographical essay arguing your side of the Patriot & Loyalist debate.

Additionally, students will engage in a Fishbowl Debate using Accountable Talk Rubric to answer the following questions and recognize two different perspectives.

- What are the benefits and virtues of remaining loyal to King George III and staying a colony?
- Can anyone be free without participating in their own government?

Students will prepare for a fishbowl debate and argue from a specific perspective. The class will be broken up into two factions - loyalists and patriots. Additionally, students will complete an argumentative essay on their side of Patriot or Loyalist.

**Evaluation:** Scoring Guide

**Unit Resources**

- Pear Assessment
- Excerpt of Declaration of Independence
- <https://junior.scholastic.com/issues/2021-22/030122/the-road-to-revolution.html#980L>
- Crash Course U.S. Revolution w/ notes <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HIUiSBXQHCw>
- Oversimplified U.S. Revolution <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gzALIXcY4pg>
- U.S. History Notebook
- [Midnight Rider](#)

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- ICivics
- *America: The Story of Us* episode 2
- Excerpt from the Broadway play *Hamilton*
- Revision worksheets