

Unit 2: Protest, Liberty, and Justice

8th Grade Social Studies

18 Class Meetings

** Honors **

Revised Feb 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.

EU 4: Local Connecticut history is more complex, significant, and culturally relevant than most students are aware of.

- ISAAC honors students will participate in CT History Day and will compete with other 8th graders in Connecticut on a research project, presentation and regional competition that highlights the annual theme.

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Standards

Connecticut Elementary and Secondary Social Studies Standards:

- **8.His.4.a:** Analyze factors that influenced perspectives about national identity both during and because 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.1.a:** 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 (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.

Common Core State Standards:

National History Day (NHD) is a half-year curriculum program for students in grades 6-12. Its methodology includes extensive primary and secondary research into a topic of choice related to an annual theme. Teachers guide students through a project-based learning experience, which pulls together Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts, especially the appendix outlined as Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects, in a meaningful and coherent fashion. National History Day is unique in the sense that it requires both informative and argumentative writing of students who conduct research based on their own questions and interests as they relate to the NHD theme. Annually, students may enter their research project into a national competition that begins at the regional or state level. Please follow the below link for associated standards and description.

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<https://www.nhd.org/sites/default/files/NHD-and-Common-Core-Final.pdf>

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.
 - Which Americans were intentionally left out of the Bill of Rights?
4. ***Frontiers in History: People, places, and ideas can all be frontiers. This year’s theme considers questions of time and place, cause and effect, change over time, and impact and significance.***
 - Students select topics in history where a frontier has been crossed. Once a frontier is crossed, history changes. In addition to geography, frontiers encompass topics in the history of science, art, technology, medicine, religion, politics, social change, or the military.
 - They will be given one full class period every other week to work on this year-long project.

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, 1st/2nd Continental Congress, Lexington/Concord, Paul Revere, Benedict Arnold, compromise, precedent.

Interdisciplinary Connection:

- Language Arts – reading informational text

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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 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?*

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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
- Revision worksheets
- Homework
- Performance Task
- Literacy Scoring Guide
- AIMS Web

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:

- PEAR Edulastic Vocab Quiz - EU 1
- PEAR Edulastic Unit 1 Test – EU3
- Performance Task – Fishbowl Debate – “Patriot v. Loyalist” (Accountable Talk Rubric) – EU2
- Book Discussion and supporting essay. (*Chains* by Laurie Halse Anderson)

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 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

- Declaration of Independence written by Thomas Jefferson
- <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>
- ICivics
- Excerpt from the Broadway play *Hamilton*
- Revision worksheets
- *Chains* by Laurie Halse Anderson
- <https://www.nhd.org/>
- <https://www.historydayct.org/>

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