

**TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT**

***Are you a Federalist or a Democratic-Republican (and how large should the federal government be)?***

***From Kevin Mariano***

Grade – 10, 11, 12

Length of class period – One hour for the lesson, or one class period; more time for the essay (mandatory/optional/extra credit)

Inquiry –

1. Explain some of the fundamental differences between the Federalists and the Democratic-Republicans?
2. Which ideology does the student/class most align themselves with?
3. How large should the federal government be? How much of a role should the federal government play today?

Objectives

1. Students will analyze, compare, and contrast the opinions of Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson using primary sources
2. Students will debate the various angles of the Federalist and Democratic-Republican ideologies

Materials

- Hamilton v. Jefferson worksheet
- Teacher notes worksheet

Activities

Before you begin: make a chart on the board like the following:

Issue Number	Hamilton (Federalist)	Jefferson (Democratic-Republican)
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

Have one student count the class's votes by round. Explain to the class that this is a college level assignment and that it will be difficult to understand.

If the students get too loud or lose their focus because they cannot understand the material, simply get their attention by role playing Hamilton. "That is what I am trying to say! You, who want to rule the government, cannot even understand these sentences! How will you possibly determine foreign policy with France if you cannot understand this? Know your role, farmer!" The students may get excited to defend themselves and this can be a clever way to keep their interest.

1. Begin the class by discussing age appropriate issues that concern our government and our way of life. For example, on the topic of Energy, if we drill for oil on our own borders, we could bring much needed jobs to our country. However, the environment may be impacted with the threat of a spill, and, if gasoline were cheaper, would demand increase therefore Americans would pollute the air since they will drive more frequently?
2. Explain that adults have to determine the costs and the benefits of issues, and also that at the end of the day, we are Americans hoping to improve our country, like Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson.
3. Physically move the students' perspective: Allow the students to change their seat or move their desk location to offer them a different visual perspective. Students will welcome the opportunity to move around and it can keep the lesson "fresh."
4. The teacher reads and describes the topics, one at a time, described on the "Student Worksheet" . The teacher dramatically reads each statement, asks what the students think it means, and can use the teacher notes to help clarify. The students will need help to understand some of the concepts.
5. Have students choose Hamilton or Jefferson and write a few sentences on the line provided. Your vote counter student can count the votes (raise hand) and fill in the chart on the board.
6. After all five issues are discussed, have each student determine which leader they most thought like. Write the results on the board. How did the student compare to the whole class?
7. As an Exit Ticket, the student should answer the final question: "So, overall, which man had a better policy regarding the role of the government: Hamilton or Jefferson?" Students should explain at least three reasons why they chose that man.

- 7a. (Optional essay or extra credit) Write an essay (2-3 pages) answering which man had a better policy regarding the role of the government: Hamilton or Jefferson? Be sure to utilize the primary sources.
8. Closing - Lead a discussion/debate about the differences/similarities/major issues in the news today regarding the political parties and their view points on topics. What are the most important issues today? What are the most popular? How might Hamilton or Jefferson react to the issues today?

#### Assessment

1. Exit Ticket - see above
2. Essay (optional)
3. Debate

#### Connecticut Framework Performance Standards –

- 1.9.44 - Analyze the tension between the need for national security and protecting Individual rights

## ***Are you a Federalist or a Democratic-Republican (and how large should the federal government be)?***

Classroom Teacher Helping Notes to help clarify each statement: Teacher notes/summaries are **BOLDED**. These are only the opinions of the lesson creator and can be adjusted as you deem necessary.

### 1. ISSUE: View on the general public

[Hamilton]: "Has it not. . . invariably been found that momentary passions, and immediate interests, have a more active and imperious control over human conduct than general or remote considerations of policy, utility and justice?" – Hamilton, Federalist #6 [**“Common People are generally dumb/ignorant because they allow emotions to get in the way. They make spur the moment decisions and let those dictate, rather than policy, justice, and order. How many of you students have acted irrationally or had at least one outburst, tantrum, or snarky comment today?”**]

[Jefferson]: "I am persuaded myself that the good sense of the people will always be found to be the best army. . . . They may be led astray for a moment, but will soon correct themselves." – Jefferson, to Edward Carrington, 1787 [**“Even if common people make poor decisions from time to time, they will generally recover and they mean well.”**]

### 2. ISSUE: How to govern people:

[Hamilton]: “In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men the great difficulty lies in this: You must first enable the government to control the governed, and in the next place, oblige [force] it to control itself.” – Hamilton, *The Federalist*, 1788 [**“The government must first be established and make sure that it is fair and that it can govern itself. A firm government that is established will bring order.”**]

[Jefferson]: “What more is necessary to make us a happy and prosperous people? . . . a wise and frugal government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another, which shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from labor the bread it has earned. . . I would rather be exposed to the inconveniences attending too much liberty than those attending too small a degree of it.” – Thomas Jefferson [**“People need freedom, choices, and room to improve, and people should not pay too much money to their government.”**]

### 3. ISSUE: Who has the power: the federal government or the people?

[Hamilton]: “A government ought to contain in itself every power requisite to the full accomplishment of the objects committed to its care, and to the complete execution of the trusts for which it is responsible, free from every other control but a regard to the public good and to the sense of the people.”- Hamilton, Federalist #31 [**“The government needs to be**

**complete, unbreakable, established, functional, and needs to run efficiently. It must also keep the regard for the general public in mind.”]**

[Jefferson]: ““We established however some, although not all its [self-government] important principles. The constitutions of most of our States assert, that all power is inherent in the people; that they may exercise it by themselves, in all cases to which they think themselves competent, as in electing their functionaries executive and legislative, and deciding by a jury of themselves... that it is their right and duty to be at all times armed. - Thomas Jefferson  
**["People should essentially self govern. Government is there to keep the peace. There should be power to all landowners, including the ability to own arms.”]**

4. ISSUE: The power of the Constitution: Should there be a liberal or strict interpretation of the Constitution?

[Hamilton]: “The powers contained in a constitution... ought to be construed liberally in advancement of the public good.” – Hamilton [**“Federalists wanted a liberal interpretation of the Constitution. At what point would personal rights be included (remember the Bill of Rights was ratified four years after the Constitution). Does guaranteeing specific rights open a can of worms? What other issues should be included and who gets to decide which issues are included? Federalists wants the loose interpretation so that they could tweak the law to benefit the upper class and wealthy as necessary.”]**

[Jefferson]: “I consider the foundation of the Constitution as laid on this ground – that all powers not delegated [given] to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states, or to the people.” – Jefferson [**“Democratic-Republicans wanted a stricter interpretation of the Constitution because set rules cannot be changed, interfered with, or necessarily help the upper class. The rules should ultimately fall upon the states and the people, not the federal government.”]**

5. ISSUE: Division of power among the people: Who is more important to maintaining a steady government?

[Hamilton]: “All communities divide themselves into the few and the many. The first are the rich and well born; the other, the mass of people... The people are turbulent and changing; they seldom judge or determine right. Give therefore to the first class a ... permanent share in the government... they therefore will ever maintain good government.” – Hamilton [**“The lower class is turbulent, wavers, radical, and always changing, therefore, they have no solid or relevant opinions. The upper class is smarter in general, more educated, is able to make decisions and understand the consequences of those decisions.”]**

[Jefferson]: “The small landowners are the most precious part of the state.” – Jefferson [**“The landowners are the foundation of this nation. We must not allow the upper class rule the lower class. The upper class is dependent on the lower class.”]**

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