

Jefferson and the Declaration of Independence — For ELD Students

General

Grade Level

High School

Author Info

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Duration

1 class period

Objectives

Overview

Using a powerpoint lecture with language sheltering techniques, students learn about Enlightenment thinkers' beliefs that inspired the Declaration of Independence, analyze the Declaration's most famous part (in its original wording), and explain how it shows its Enlightenment influences.

Prior Knowledge

Students should have already learned about the causes of the Revolution. It is best if they have already read the handout "The Life of Thomas Jefferson" biography for ELD students section on Jefferson and the Declaration of Independence (preferably as homework the night before).

State Standards

CA Skill Standards for Social Studies:

Historical Interpretation

1. Students show the connections, causal and otherwise, between particular historical events and larger social, economic, and political trends and developments.

CA Content Standards for American History:

11.1 Students analyze the significant events in the founding of the nation and its attempts to realize the philosophy of government described in the Declaration of Independence.

11.1.1 Describe the Enlightenment and the rise of democratic ideas as the context in which the nation was founded.

11.1.2 Analyze the ideological origins of the American Revolution, the Founding Fathers' philosophy of divinely bestowed unalienable natural rights, the debates on the drafting and ratification of the Constitution, and the addition of the Bill of Rights.

Common Core Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies:

1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text

Objectives/Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to articulate Lockean philosophies, the principles behind the Declaration of Independence, and how they are connected.

Additional Learning Outcomes

Students will demonstrate a very clear meaning of the section of the Declaration beginning with "We hold these truths" through the right to create a new government by both drawing and writing its meaning in their own words.

Procedures

1. *5 minutes*

Warm Up:

Have students write, draw, or discuss (in pairs) their answer to the following question:

What rights do you think every human being has just by being human?

2. *2 minutes*

Transition:

Hand out worksheet "Jefferson and the Declaration of Independence". Instruct students to follow along with the powerpoint lecture on the worksheet.

3. *40 minutes*

Lecture & Activity:

Present the powerpoint lecture, stopping to allow students to note Enlightenment philosophers' ideas from the slide.

****Note:** Vocabulary words are underlined and an animated definition comes up when clicked.

****Note:** Make sure you project this onto a white board.

When you get to the famous quote, read it slowly. Have students raise their hand right when you say a word they do not yet know. Stop and discuss the meaning of the word, underlining and providing a synonym on the board. Encourage them to do the same on their worksheets as you proceed through the excerpt.

Pause for 5 minutes to allow students to draw the meaning of the quote and write it in their own words. Have a few students share out to check for understanding.

Next, provide students time to connect the quote to 6 of Locke's ideas (about 5 minutes). Then continue with the powerpoint, revealing the 6 places that Jefferson uses Lockean ideals in arguing for the right to rebel.

Finish up the powerpoint.

4. *10 minutes*

Summation Activity:

Have students write, draw, or discuss (in pairs) their answer to the following question:

What was Jefferson's reason for using Locke's ideas?

Conduct a larger discussion about the question after students discuss it in pairs. Be sure to bring them to the understanding that Locke was British and the basis for their civil war, and as such it was a powerful argument to present the King.

Related Assets

Handouts and Downloads

- [Jefferson Biography for ELD Students](#)
- [Jefferson and the Declaration of Independence for ELD Students](#)
- [The Declaration of Independence for ELD Students](#)

Technology Needs

Computer with projector to display a powerpoint file

Assessment

Possible assessment items include:

- having students memorize "We hold these truths ... pursuit of happiness"
- a short answer item asking students how and why Jefferson used Locke's philosophies in the Declaration
- a short answer item asking students what the quote means in their own words

The logo for The Jefferson Monticello, featuring the name "The Jefferson" in a cursive script above the word "MONTICELLO" in a bold, sans-serif font.