

Teaching American History  
A More Perfect Union  
Final Curriculum Project  
Peter S. Panchy

This course has inspired me to do a better job of teaching the concept of the creation of democratic government and the struggle and conflict this process involved for the new United States.

The goal is to improve and enrich the study of the development and meaning of the United States Constitution for my tenth grade AP and Honors students currently using Mary Beth Norton et al.'s A People and a Nation. After this year's experience I hope to adapt and adopt its use for all US I students including those College Preparatory students using The Americans. As always, the issue becomes, where from the existing curriculum to excise current content to provide the time for the new, in-depth study. I have yet to figure this out; however, I believe it is warranted.

I intend to strengthen the concept of the creation of government by including some brief selections from Locke's 'Two Treatises on Government' and also an excerpt (pp.5-27) from the Introduction of Staloff's Hamilton, Adams, Jefferson. We will have a thorough discussion of the notion of trading liberty for law and government.

I have included copies of the Captain Preston case handouts because I not only use these materials for their excellent content but also to help train the students to read court information, analyze it and form their own conclusions. This will be needed when we work with the Landmark cases later. Prior to undertaking the study of the Constitution, I have included materials from our course that I believe will enhance the students understanding, namely Adam's 'Thoughts on Government' and Madison's 'Deficiencies of the Confederation'.

The students will have read and discussed the Constitution before we watch 'Empire of Reason' to introduce the ratification process. I am hoping to find an alternative since this has seemed less effective over the last few years. I will also utilize materials from our course to elucidate the Massachusetts ratification process. I then plan to intersperse readings from Federalist and Anti-Federalist with excerpts from Professor Thomas L. Pangle's lectures (University of Texas at Austin). After briefly examining their different republican visions, I hope to focus on the Bill of Rights and how well it responded to Anti-Federalist discontent.

Next, I intend to focus on the First and Fourth amendments and their application in selected Supreme Court cases. The Landmark site is excellent as it offers three reading levels so that study is not limited to AP or Honors courses. The process I use is to provide the students with the factual background summaries of the cases for fourth amendment to read as homework. In class the next day, they are to function as the court,

identifying key issues and ultimately reaching a decision on the cases. That night they read the actual decision excerpts and read the first amendment cases for discussion. This has been extremely successful in the past, especially regarding how rights may be interpreted differently in a school environment.

Finally, I will provide small groups (2-3 students) with the current day case packet and they will read all but have responsibility for researching two or three cases in depth and making a class presentation on each. They will have written summaries to discuss with the class including questions for discussion. I expect a thorough discussion of the Patriot Act as a reaction to 9/11 and the dilemma of trading liberty for "safety" or defense.

If time allows and I hope it does, I will conclude with readings on the amendments from Linda R. Monk's The Words We Live By as a comprehensive summarizer.

## Chapter Four: American Society Transformed, 1720-1770

Day 12

Norton pp. 87-99

Day 13

Norton pp. 99-105

Bailey pp. 92-93, 96-97

Day 14

'Two Treatises on Government', J. Locke (excerpts)

Enlightenment excerpts, D. Staloff

Day 15

Norton pp. 105-113

**Key Discussion Topics:** Non-English immigrants to the colonies; Continuing colonial evolution and colonial society; Enlightenment thought and the creation of government; the back country; Colonial assemblies; First Great Awakening.

## Chapter Five: Severing the Bonds of Empire, 1754-1777

Day 16

Norton pp. 115-123

Day 17

Norton pp. 123-130

Handout: Colonial Trade Regulations

Day 18

Norton pp. 130-139

Day 19

Project: The Trial of Captain Preston

Read Key Evidence Handout

Day 20

Bailey pp. 133-140

Oates pp. 90-100

**Key Discussion Topics:** Relations between Europeans and Native Americans; Albany Congress; causes and consequences of the French and Indian (Seven Years) War; Changes in the views of British Americans and the "mother country"; New British legislation and colonial resistance.

## Chapter Six: A Revolution, Indeed, 1774-1783

Day 21

Norton pp. 141-146

'Loyalist' Handout

Day 22

Norton pp. 146-154

Day 23

'Thoughts on Government' John Adams

Day 24

Bailey pp. 144-147,154-160

Day 25

Norton pp. 154-163

**Key Discussion Topics:** First Continental Congress debate;  
Colonial resistance and the transformation toward independence;  
Disposition of all social groups; British and American Revolutionary War  
tactics; Significance of the Treaty of Paris on all involved participants.

## **Chapter Seven: Forging a National Republic 1776-1789**

Day 26

Norton pp. 165-174

Day 27

Constitution of Massachusetts

Day 28

Norton pp. 174-182

'Northwest Ordinances'

Day 29

Norton pp. 182-191

'Deficiencies of the Confederation', James Madison

Day 30

Bailey pp. 168-172

Oates pp. 90-100

Day 31

Norton pp. A46- A57

Constitution Handout

Days 32-40

View 'Empire of Reason' or PBS Special

Massachusetts Ratification Materials

Constitutional Debate Materials: Listen to Professor Thomas L.

Pangle: Excerpts from: The Great Debate (The Teaching

Company) Lectures 2, 3 12 (excerpts)

'Federalist Papers' #9, 10, 14 and 84

Selected letters from Cato (#15) Federal Farmer (#7 and 16) and

Brutus (#2); Virginia Declaration of Rights

Review and evaluate success of Anti-Federalists ideas in the Bill of  
Rights

Focus upon meaning of First and Fourth Amendments  
Bill of Rights Landmark Supreme Court Cases:  
Tinker v. Des Moines, Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier, Texas v. Johnson  
Mapp v. Ohio, New Jersey v. T.L.O.  
First and Fourth amendment cases today:  
Small groups investigate cases and report (Handout)

Day 41

Bailey pp. 191-203  
Hamilton vs. Jefferson handout

Day 42

Oates pp. 116-142

**Key Discussion Topics:** Varieties of republicanism; Revolutionary ideology and theories of government in practice (state constitutions); the Articles of Confederation; Constitutional Convention; Principles of the Constitution; Ratification struggle.

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Document Listing  
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The curriculum unit documents are listed below. I am making further excerpting decisions as I adjust to class ability levels and also plan to utilize small group jigsaw readings and shared summaries of the Federalist/Anti-Federalist materials. Anyone who would like further information and/or feedback on implantation thus far should communicate with me. I would be most happy to share additional information.

1. Background of the Enlightenment Handout: Hamilton, Adams, Jefferson, Staloff, Darren pp.5-28
2. 'Two Treatises on Government' (excerpts), Locke, John  
Modern History Sourcebook (fordham.edu)
3. The Trial of Captain Preston: Key Evidence and the Summation of John Adams  
(law.umkc.edu)
4. 'Thoughts on Government', Adams, John (liberty1.org)
5. 'Deficiencies of the Confederation', Madison, James (press-pubs.uchicago.edu)
6. Constitution of Massachusetts, (nhinet.org)
7. Massachusetts Convention Elections, (Course Sourcebook photocopy)
8. 'The Great Debate', Pangle, Thomas L. (excerpts from Teaching Company Course Outline)
9. Federalist Papers # 9, 10, 14, and 84 (foundingfathers.info/federalistpapers)
10. Letters from the Federal Farmer #7, Brutus #2, (oll.libertyfund.org)
11. Cato's Letters #15 (constitution.org)
12. Virginia Declaration of Rights, (constitution.org/bcp/virg)
13. Landmark Supreme Court Cases: Tinker v. Des Moines, Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier, Texas v. Johnson, Mapp v. Ohio, New Jersey v. T. L. O., (landmarkcases.org)
14. Various First and fourth Amendment cases today, ( abanet.org, lawprofessorstypepad.com, nytimes.com,etc.)
15. The Words We Live By, Monk, Linda pp.127-150,157-163

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