

## **States and Nations: The Journey after a Revolution**

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### **Rationale**

In a recent Time Magazine interview Henry Kissinger was asked if he “felt optimistic about the Arab Spring”.<sup>1</sup> Kissinger views it as a tremendous historical event but does not necessarily think it is a democratic revolution. Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria, and Yemen are nations emerging from years of autocratic rule. The battle cry of these revolutionaries was one of relief from military and autocratic dictatorships. Their citizens desire a government closer to what we as Americans know as a democracy. Whether or not they evolve into democracies could take years. Years? The Charlotte Mecklenburg pacing guide for eighth grade Social Studies gives teachers about ten weeks to cover the founding of the colonies, Revolution, failure of the Articles of Confederation, and the final grinding out of a workable Constitution. A hundred and eighty years explained away in just ten weeks. How long will it take for the revolutionaries of the Arab Spring?

I teach eighth grade NC/US History at Bailey Middle School in Cornelius, NC. My class load this year is 170 students who are divided into an A/B day schedule or one half of the students every other day. Our curriculum is undergoing changes but eighth grade will suffer the least of those changes in middle school. What drew me to this particular seminar were the series of events occurring in North Africa and the Mid East starting in January of 2011. The Arab Spring or Jasmine Revolution offers me a unique opportunity to study nation building almost in its infancy. Ten weeks of our curriculum focus on the United States’ journey from founding to ratification of a viable Constitution. The American experience of 1765-1787 could be repeating itself across the North African and Middle Eastern nations today. In teaching the American experience of the Revolutionary War my students can watch what happened in our past during the 18<sup>th</sup> century unfold into the events of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. “How is learning history going to be relevant in my life today and tomorrow?” is one of the most commonly asked questions by my thirteen year olds. The answer is found in our past and that the past is playing out right in front of them.

As I watch history unfold in North Africa and the Middle East since January, I am keenly aware that the events are very much a teachable moment. Although the nations involved in revolution are actually part of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum, what is happening is a mirror image of what occurred here in the United States in the mid to late 18<sup>th</sup> century. To answer the question of how history is relevant to the students, they can watch the events of today and imagine what it might have been like for the Americans to throw off the yoke of British oppression. The struggle for independence from Britain created a struggle for a national identity. Once independence was won demands were made upon the government under the Articles of Confederation for major reforms, especially in the area of the weak central government. The rise of internal rebellions such as the Whiskey Rebellion and Shay’s Rebellion, economic instability and dislocation would add tremendously to the volatility and threaten the downfall of the newly created nation. In October of 2011, Tunisia voted for an assembly to draft a constitution and shape a new government. This small nation is leading the way to democracy in the Arab world. Will Egypt, Libya and hopefully Syria and Yemen follow suit and manage to redirect their internal volatility within their nations to create a new, viable and

ongoing democracy? Or will their grief over years of denied political freedom overwhelm them and return them to the status of squabbling states? Can their sense of nationalism steer them away from becoming overly reactionary and move in a direction of reconciliation with their past and also moving forward to correct the wrongs that brought them to this revolutionary state?

## **Background**

Nationalism is a term coined by Johann Herder in the late 1770's. The moment it occurred may be difficult to pinpoint but most see it as a development related to the revolutions in America and France in the late 1700's. As the modern nation-states were created so was a desire for popular sovereignty. The rise of modern languages and communication of these languages also acted as a push factor. "Print language is what invents nationalism, not a particular language,"<sup>2</sup> argues Benedict Anderson. These nations arise out of specific moments. The citizens of these newly formed nations desired equal and shared political rights. In nations founded on democratic principles, the nation is not based on a common ethnic ancestry, "but a political entity whose identity is identity is not ethnicity."<sup>3</sup> The kind of nationalism the United States has aimed for is a kind "compatible with liberal values of freedom, tolerance, equality, and individual rights."<sup>4</sup> Continued success of a nation is allowing the national identity to give individuals a meaningful and autonomous life.<sup>5</sup> We need a national identity to function properly.

Many forms of nationalism exist and students are aware of these in middle school. Some of the Arab Spring nations may be emerging from decades of these forms of extreme nationalism. Some nationalists exclude certain ethnic groups. They may define their particular form of nationalism in terms of ethnicities, culture or religion.<sup>6</sup> Socialist nationalism utilizes left wing politics: Castroism and Sinn Fein's Irish Republicanism would be examples of this. Forms of authoritarian ultra nationalism (Hitler) look to the expulsion of certain ethnic groups, "imagined" enemies, creation of the idealized race, ethnic cleansing, extremist police activity, and tight control over press, business and religion. Tunisia, Egypt and Syria know well the impact of Facebook, Twitter and other forms of communication. Imagine the fate of Franco's revolution in the 1930's had Twitter been in place! Another form of nationalism would be the anti-colonial movements in Asia and Africa after World War II. Gandhi transformed India. Ahmed Ben Bella became Algeria's first leader after the disastrous French/ Algerian War. These will be covered throughout the year.

One of the first issues I need to address with my students is the types of government, or state institutions that exist in practice. We specifically focus on Britain, the early North American colonies, the US upon ratification of the Constitution and governments today. Keeping the last three hundred years in mind I think the following are suitable for a quick discussion and clarification:

**Democracy** (rule by people): Direct (Switzerland), Presidential Democracy (US), and Parliamentary Democracy (UK).

**Autocracy** (rule by one) Dictatorship (North Korea), Monarchy (Absolute – Louis XIV and Saudi Arabia and Constitutional UK), Police States (1930's Germany and South Africa), Totalitarian Democracy (dictatorship of the proletariat USSR).

**Theocracy** (rule by religious elite) Iran and Afghanistan under the Taliban

**Anarchy** (absence of organized government) Somalia and Ukraine early 1920's

These governments offer “options” for us, and for the new states of the Jasmine Revolution nations. Obviously, some of the options chosen by Hitler, Franco, Stalin, Gaddafi, Kim Jung II, and Assad did not or are not functioning. Power is tempting and corruptive. The ultimate goal for a government should be one that allows all of its members an opportunity to freely participate in a democratic selection process. Too many revolutions over the past 300 years have sought the participation of all the members of society but in the end have not included those members (USSR, Iran, Myanmar). Exclusive power such as that which Gaddafi used has failed. Governments which utilize shared power with its citizens are what nations like Tunisia are reaching for. Democracy makes public officials more accountable.<sup>7</sup> Those who are in power know that the citizens are keeping a watchful eye. Tunisia's challenge is also to blend democracy with religion. Improving the government as to the rights of women by giving them an opportunity to reject the veil, for example, also has to handle the economy, education and infrastructure. The Tunisians often look at Turkey as a role model, a secular democracy now governed by a party with an Islamic identity.

Libya and Egypt have a long journey towards bringing their citizens the right that the revolutions started. Egypt's interim military rulers have balked at adopting many of the election procedures that enabled Tunisia's election to proceed smoothly. The interim military have not agreed to give up the army's power over the next Parliament or planned Constitutional panel.<sup>8</sup> Will that government swing back on the pendulum towards more controlled tactics or allow for an opportunity to move towards the liberal ideals? Will Egypt's revolution for democracy come to fruition?

In the 1600's the government of the colonies varied. Massachusetts and Plymouth had many characteristics of Protestant theocracies, a government whose officials were looked upon by others as “divinely” guided. The divinely guided were often religiously intolerant, which benefited Connecticut and Rhode Island as the less intolerant members of Plymouth fled there to establish their own religious havens. Once Charles II was restored, colonial governing changed. He wanted a much closer supervision of the colonies with a mind to enforcing economic control over all their activities. The Navigation Acts and similar laws were passed, but colonists for the most part ignored them. England did little to catch the law breakers. A hundred years later, things would change. Salutary neglect would no longer be practiced by England.

Population in the colonies rose rapidly. By 1650 Virginia had 15,000 souls. New England's population, in part a result of the Great Migration, soared to 10,000 Puritans in 1634. Others arrived in waves. Between 1612 and 1775 50,000 British convicts were shipped to the 13 colonies. Indentured servants, eager for a free voyage, second chance and free land, came by the thousands. Two-thirds of all Virginian immigrants were indentured servants. With the colonization of Georgia in 1732 by debtor's prison releases, the 13 colonies were complete in their establishment and well on their way to the journey that would bring them eventual independence. By 1770 the American colonies had a total population of 2.5 million (not counting Native Americans). One third of those people were English. Approximately one in five was enslaved.

Virginia's colonists governed through an elected House of Burgesses as early as 1619. Although more “democratic” than the Plymouth community, voting and office holding was limited to white Christian males, who owned property and paid taxes, and ultimate authority still lay with a governor appointed by the King. Women, Native Americans and African Americans (free and slave

alike) did not receive that right until late 19<sup>th</sup> century. And even after voting rights were guaranteed in the Constitution they were not always enforced by the government.

British rule became tighter fisted as the French and Indian War approached. Colonial governors were little more than the King's mouth piece. A colonial assembly could pass all the laws it wanted but once set on the governor's desk it could be vetoed. Power struggles between colonial assemblies and the King's representatives were not unusual in colonies across the board. North Carolina's Regulator movement sought to end unfair tax practices passed by the governor. Little was accomplished tax wise but it was one more step towards the movement for independence.

As we moved closer to the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Britain resolved to tighten control once and for all. A variety of taxes and economic laws were passed to make sure that the wealth of the colonies would finally flow into the treasure chests of the British government. A lengthy war with the French "impoverished" the British and the Crown claimed these funds were necessary to restore Britain's wealth. Taxes on sugar, tea, wine, and legal documents were levied. Colonists boycotted the taxed products, British workers suffered, Parliament repealed the taxes, but issued new ones - and the process went around and around. A century and half of salutary neglect ruined England's chances of collecting those taxes. Salutary neglect would become one of the major reasons for the coming Revolution. Refusal to represent the American colonials in the British Parliament further angered the colonials. British citizens had the Magna Carta, the Glorious Revolution and the English Bill of Rights on their side. These were laws guaranteeing certain rights to all English citizens. Were the Americans not also citizens of Britain? According to George the III we were mongrels and not full blooded citizens!

As Benedict Anderson writes not even the highest level colonials in Latin Americas could actually be a part of the mother country's national government. As colonialism and imperialism flourish across the world in the 1800's-1950, this same scene was repeated again and again. The colonials across America, Africa and Asia brought tremendous wealth and power to their mother countries, but their ownership in their home nation's democracies was never realized.

The Declaration of Independence became a statement of principles, not just a document to sever our relationship with Britain. However, it did not create a government framework, so no one knew how policies would be administered. The Declaration did set out our natural rights as citizens. It also was a contract with the people that would eventually form the basis for a constitutional government.

The second issue I want to address with my students is how we came through the Revolution and formed the new nation. Religious and political persecution, the desire for riches and free land brought many British to the 13 colonies. For Britain herself, the newly settled colonies would provide not only an outlet for the burgeoning surplus population but also a tremendous source of raw materials for those rapidly expanding industries and a market for its manufactured goods. All this would be spurred on by the early stages of the Industrial Revolution.

The early colonists established their own governments, Britain a far away but lurking shadow, not realizing how its policy of salutary neglect would impact it in the next century. Lack of tolerance in the Massachusetts Bay Colony would lead to the colonization of Rhode Island and Connecticut and the establishment of the first Jewish settlements in the English new world.

The Articles of Confederation served us well during the Revolution itself. With the guidance of the First and Second Continental Congresses and the able leadership of men like Washington, Franklin and Adams the United States is born. But the next question to answer will be is the US able to keep its hard won independence? The Articles were weak. The national government could not tax, had no executive, and needed too many of the new states to ratify new laws; they were fast creating a sense of anarchy in the new country. The states had all the powers. It was as though there were 13 separate governments instead of one. No revenue was forthcoming. And if it was, each state had either a different currency or assigned a different value to the money. We could negotiate treaties but all treaties had to be ratified by each of the state – an unlikely prospect. Instability, weakness and dissension were the words of the day. Washington’s alarm was heard throughout the new nation. “There are combustibles in every state which might spark a fire.”<sup>9</sup>

The government could not govern effectively because of the general lack of power to force states to honor all the new national obligations. Economic credibility was a serious problem. The new government owed \$42 million (40 billion today). These mistakes led us to our second and stronger Constitution.

In May of 1787, representatives from 12 of the 13 states met in Philadelphia to discuss ways in which the Articles of Confederation could be improved. Rhode Island boycotted fearing that an overhaul of the Articles would work against the tiny state. The primary goal at this convention was to create a Constitution with a strong with a strong elected government that would be responsive to the will of the American people. The idea of popular sovereignty in this republic was a very new and important ingredient in the US. The Constitution would establish the US as a constitutional republic and a representative democracy. The majority rule “would be tempered by minority rights protected by law.”<sup>10</sup> The Constitution would set up a government that is controlled by a system of checks and balances. American citizens are subject to three levels of government – federal, state and local. Our executive and legislative officials are elected by a plurality vote of the citizens. Separation of powers is achieved by dividing our legislative, executive and judicial branches. The structure and responsibilities of the federal government and its relationship with each individual state is set up under the Constitution.

The Constitution was ratified after several contentious compromises. The argument of small and big states was resolved by the Great Compromise. Every state was to have equal numbers in the Senate and the House would be based on a state’s population. Slavery would prove to be the most difficult issue to resolve. Here we the people in the Constitution’s Preamble went awry. States would be allowed to set their own rules as to suffrage so the Constitution was written without any mention of property requirements.

Section 9 of the Constitution allowed the continued migration of slaves, there defining slaves as persons and not property. This provided for a long-term power to flow to states with a growing population and away from those with a declining population. This would create a census count every ten years. The House would be representing people, the count to include free citizens and other persons. According to the Constitution, “To the whole number of men and women, free and indentured would be added three-fifths the number of other persons,” meaning property-less slaves and taxed Indian farming families. The Article also prevented any amendments or legislation changing the provision regarding slave importation until 1808, giving the US another 20 years to resolve this issue. In this the Constitution was an improvement over the Articles. As soon as the ratification process began, so did the abolitionist argument.<sup>11</sup> At the same moment, “it (3/5<sup>th</sup>) is

opposed for being promotive and destructive of slavery".<sup>12</sup> But this contradiction was never peaceably resolved, and ultimately contributed to the Civil War some 70 years later.

The Northern states viewing of the 3/5<sup>th</sup> Compromise was that if the South saw their slaves as property and the Southern states were allowed to count their slaves as property as part of the census then why couldn't the North be allowed to count their property in cattle as part of their census. The 3/5<sup>th</sup> Compromise gave an even boundary between the two wherein both accepted the Constitution and both had equal representation.<sup>13</sup> During the heat of the Abolitionist movement in the 1830's-1850's many denounced the Constitution because it protected slavery. Newspaper editor William Lloyd Garrison stated that the Constitution was a "covenant with death and an agreement with Hell".<sup>14</sup> Although additional amendments to the Constitution provided suffrage and citizenship in the 1870's it was not until the 1960's that this was truly realized.

The Constitution drew more of its ideas from England's Magna Carta and Bill of Rights and the writings of men like John Locke and Montesquieu. It was the English Bill of Rights which would provide the next round of fractious arguments. The general feeling of the convention's delegates was that since each state had its own bill of rights, a federal bill of rights was not necessary. But there were certain rights so important that the Constitution would include. These were the prohibition against habeas corpus and the prohibition of bills of attainder and ex post facto laws. To George Mason this was not enough. He would move for the whole Constitution to be prefaced by a Bill of Rights. At the moment, there seemed to be little support for this proposal. The delegates and worked for months to hammer out the Constitution. It would be a matter of more than just a few days to debate an additional Bill. It might also undo what had been so carefully crafted together.

In the end, George Mason and Elbridge Gerry would be proved right. The Constitution was sent out to be ratified. Two political parties emerged, the Federalists (strong central government) and the Anti-Federalists (stronger state government). The issue of a lack of Bill of Rights became a major point of contention, raised again and again by the Anti-Feds. Mason's desire for the rights of the individuals to be spelled out more specifically became a rallying point for the Anti-Feds. Sentiment changed across the 13 states. Congress must act to draft a Bill of Rights to protect the individual rights of our citizens. In December of 1791, a Bill of Rights would be added to the Constitution, placing some of the strongest protections of individual rights since into force on a national scale. By the late 20<sup>th</sup> century there would be an additional 17 amendments added to the original 10 set out by the Bill of Rights. There have been over 10,000 attempts to create additional amendments but only 27 succeeded!

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the Supreme Court struck down unconstitutional state laws limiting what type of work contract a woman could make. The Constitution was criticized as being too inflexible because it "put the government at the beck and call of big business".<sup>15</sup> And again enforcement of rights for women and minorities would take additional amendments.

What are the chances of Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Syria, and Yemen arriving at a true democracy? Tunisia is on its way. Will it be derailed? Our journey to becoming a nation did not happen overnight, neither will theirs. Our ratification process could have come to a halt had a Bill of Rights not been adopted. Arguments over the issue of slavery led to a compromise and then another revolution 70 years later. Women were not granted the right to vote until 1920. In Tunisia women received the right to vote in 1957. Despite the misgivings of liberals in Tunisia over the strong Islamist showing in elections, "the civility and enthusiasm of Tunisia's voters seem to augur well

for the fledgling democracy there.”<sup>16</sup> This should provide hope for the other Arab nations infected by this year long anti-authoritarian bug. Most of the other Arab nations have suffered more severe symptoms, from Libya’s civil war to the deadly oppression happening in Syria and Yemen to the rancorous muddle in Egypt. <sup>17</sup> Egypt’s army generals are not moving quickly and could be in power for another year.

I believe once the students understand a little more about our colonization, government types, role of salutary neglect in becoming independent, and the writing and ratification of the Constitution they will be able to appreciate the relevancy of history. They are armed with information that will enable them to see the events in North Africa and the Middle East as relevant and relatable to their personal lives and their future as viable and politically conscionable beings.

### **Strategies and Activities**

I teach US/NC history all year. I will start in early September with the colonies being settled, reasons for settlement, mercantilism, salutary neglect, French and Indian War, Revolutionary War and then finally into the Articles of Confederation through the ratification of the Constitution. This will take approximately nine weeks on the A/B (every other) day schedule. Class periods are roughly 75 to 85 minutes in length. Social studies in Charlotte Mecklenburg schools are usually of a heterogeneous mix. However, due to tracking in Standard Plus Math/Algebra and Standard Plus Language Arts/Honors my classes become ability level tracked. We do have a high amount of Honors students on our 6 person team. My first block A/B day classes are  $\frac{3}{4}$  Honors, my 3<sup>rd</sup> block A/B day is fully Honors and my 4<sup>th</sup> block A/B day classes are primarily Standard Plus level students with many 504’s, Individual Education Plans, OHI, Autistic and Asperger’s students. The lessons I do with this unit will be modified and differentiated, depending on the class and the individual needs of the students.

Most of the 170 students I have each year have spent their sixth and seventh grade years here at Bailey. I have worked with their teachers throughout the past five years doing a variety of activities and vertical teaming. We know what the kids have learned from the previous year and what to expect the following year. The incoming eighth graders have not had US/NC History since fourth and fifth grades. They come to eighth grade with a bit of a gap. Younger grades do not have as much time in their curriculum for social studies and they are often lacking in details. I am sure the 11<sup>th</sup> grade teachers say the same of us! However, to be fair, some of this is a maturity issue. Covering the Constitution in eighth grade is not as detailed as the 10<sup>th</sup> grade Civics and 11<sup>th</sup> grade US History classes due to the age. An 11<sup>th</sup> grader is a lot closer to voting than a 13 year old and the meaning of the vote has more importance to an 11<sup>th</sup> grader than it might an eighth or fifth grader. There is a text book but it is small and I have other resources such as Joy Hakim’s *The Story of Us*, *History Alive*, *Ordinary Americans*, and *MindSparks* to utilize as supplements.

There is a heavy emphasis on persuasive and argumentative writing and we have just instituted the common core program. I am a big fan of interdisciplinary work. My students will read at least two novels outside of class with projects attached. This year I will do *My Brother Sam is Dead* and *Night*. Both of my team’s Language Art’s teachers will do two novels, *The Land* and *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*. My subject is not EOG (End of Grade) tested like the other subjects but we do have formatives (a test with material not necessarily taught yet) three times a year. This was started for us this year. Eighth grade is also a Gateway year, meaning a student may

be retained if they have not passed all the core classes, Health and PE and one other elective. EOG test scores also play into the Gateway year. Any reading, writing, math and science I can do in addition to my subject are considered necessary.

This particular unit is long and I will be doing more activities than what you see here. The lessons are in order, except for the assignment of the novel. Although many of the lessons build upon each other it is possible to do just one or two, depending on time and grade level. Most of the activities provided here are also geared towards the American Revolution, Articles of Confederation, Constitutional Convention and ratification of the Constitution. All this will be interspersed with events from the Arab Spring.

The strategies I will utilize include:

- KWL charts
- Jigsaw
- Venn diagram
- TABB (Thing, Action, Barrier, Benefit)
- Learning logs
- Carousel brainstorming
- Take 5
- Creating a character story
- Those are some pretty strong words
- Think pair share
- Leaders of the world
- Bill of Rights
- Novel study
- Concept maps
- Determining cause and effect
- Tiered graphic organizers

Students are also held accountable for the upkeep of their interactive notebooks. Much of the work will either be done in the notebook or placed in the notebook after evaluation. It is an easy way for my students to organize their information, chart their progress and keep up their evaluation of a long term subject Colonization to Ratification of the Constitution.

### **Activities**

Activity one: three days. Needed items: KWL, determine cause and effect, think pair share, and concept map. Students will create a KWL chart that they will use over the length of Colonial set-up. They will brainstorm what they know/remember from fourth/fifth grades in their discussion about the founding of the 13 colonies. They will chart what they want to know. Reasons for migration will be completed on a cause and effect chart. Students will work together in Think Pair Share groups to complete cause and effect charts. There will be one group of two people each for the 13 colonies. The two will address reasons for leaving Europe, effects of emigration on European nations and effects of immigration on the New World – i.e. land, water, Native Americans. The two will discuss their idea then each group will share with the other 12 colonies. One partner will



present the reasons for leaving Europe and the impact upon those left behind. The other partner presents the New World arivees. The third activity is completed by a larger think pair share group. I will place them into groups according to their colonial regions – New England, Middle Atlantic and Southern. The students will work on a migration concept map. The six to eight students map out migration in terms of cultural reasons (push pull factors, religious persecution, a second chance in life, free land, conversion of Native Americans), barriers (economic, cultural and physical) and effects/changes (on those left behind, the land, diseases introduced to the Native Americans, assimilation and acculturation). They share with the class. This can take up to three days. Background information on reasons for migration will be given through lecture, discussion, text, and video. The final activity is viewing segments of PBS *Colonial House* (2004). Episodes to consider are Harsh Reality, Punishment, Hard Work and Daily Grind, The Reckoning, Harvest, Women’s Work and the Finale. Video segments are about 45 minutes total and can be viewed by any grade level. Students can then complete their KWL charts.

Activity two: two days, novel four weeks. Needed items: novel, large paper. I will be assigning the novel *My Brother Sam is Dead* to students. The lexile score is 5.8 but I have found that most teachers in this area reserve it for eighth grade. It fits perfectly with the Revolutionary War curriculum. Students will read the novel independently. I will supply a vocab list for each chapter. The novel is usually assigned about five weeks into the school year and I expect them to complete it by late October. I assign a project called a SNAIL. The best description of this is a folded booklet with 12 sections to it. By the time students are learning about the Revolutionary War they will be ready to begin the project. Prior information provided: mercantilism, Magna Carta, English Bill of Rights, salutary neglect, war and expansion with the French in 1754, and the steady rise of protests in reaction to English taxation without representation in Parliament. Out of the 12 sections to be addressed in the project the most important ones (in relation to becoming a nation) are:

- Sequence of events which led to the American Revolution listed and explained (Salutary neglect, French and Indian War, no taxation without representation)
- Explain the meaning of loyalty and how families, friendships and colonial/mother country are affected when the citizens allegiances conflict.
- Detail the types of man v man conflict showcased in the novel. For example, Mr. Meeker v Sam, Sam the Patriot v Loyalist neighbors and English rule, brother Tim v loyalist fathers and Patriot brother.
- Students have to explain what Tim means by his brother, Sam, wanting to be part of something “big”. The larger picture is how the Revolution pits members of families against each other once that family member picks the opposing side. Another big picture idea is the “child” colonies going up against “mamma” England. If we are considered English citizens then why were we not accorded the same rights as the English back home? Why does Sam think it is so important to support this Revolution, risking his relationship with his family, neighbors and British Colonial authority? Is supporting the Revolution worth losing your life?
- The final question posed to students is: 50 years later Tim looks back at the Revolution and the loss of his father and brother. He thinks that there might have been another way to achieve the same end: freedom. Could we have become a nation without fighting against England?

Activity three: one to two days. Items needed: Learning logs. Students will create small learning logs on the idea of what a revolution is. This gives them an opportunity to compare and contrast our Revolution to that of England's Glorious Revolution (1688), France (1789), Russia (1917), and Tunisia and Libya (2011). We discussed the "bloodless" revolution deposing King James II in England. We will look at France's long Revolution due to the effects it had on the US for almost 20 years. Russia is interesting because these kids grew up not knowing what the USSR is. But they are seeing the effects of Marx's grand vision which started in 1917 and fell shortly before their birth. Afghanistan gained our support against the Russians in the 1980's and yet we are fighting the very same people today we supported less than 30 years ago.

- Students will be in six groups: America, England, France, Russia, Libya and Tunisia.
- They will write about the event from the point of view of a person involved in the event. I will supply names and they have computers in the room to do the research. Students will focus on the who, what, where, when, why, how and what if of the situation.
- Students write a conversation between themselves and a historical person (James II, Louis the XIV, Robespierre, Marx, Lenin, Czar Alexander, Ghaddafi and Ben Ali), focusing on details of the event.
- Students examine events and speculate about long-term effects resulting from these revolutions.
- Students select political cartoons from a variety of website that I will provide and identify the issue. They will analyze the political cartoon's message. I have already working with them in examining historic political cartoons (symbolism, exaggeration, distortion, stereotypes, caricature, humor, and irony). I encourage the use of archival materials and foreign sources.

Activity four: one class. Items needed TABB and KWL forms. This activity will deal with the Articles of Confederation. Students will set up another KWL chart in their interactive notebook. It focuses on our understanding that the Articles would soon run aground thus leading us to the next step in the formation of a viable government. Students can then utilize their TABB forms. Questions to be answered:

- T What is the most important THING you learned about the Articles?
- A What ACTION do you think needs to be taken?
- B What BARRIER might stand in the way of Americans taking action and tossing out the Articles?
- B What would be the results, rewards and BENEFITS the Americans will receive by taking action and creating a new constitution?

Activity five: two days. Items needed Venn diagram. Before we learn about the Constitution I want to pre-assess what students know about the different forms of government. I like the jigsaw method.

- Divide students into four or five groups consisting of four to five students per group: Democracy, Autocracy, Theocracy and Anarchy
- Appoint one from each group as leader
- Divide the lesson into five parts:
  1. Define the type of government
  2. Name several nations which belong or have belonged to that type

3. Pros and cons of that government
  4. Compare/contrast to US via Venn diagram
  5. Why/how does it or does it not work.
- Students will use the computers to complete their role
  - Give them a chance to read their material and make sure they understand it
  - Form expert groups by having one student from each group join others assigned to the same segment and give students in these expert groups an opportunity to discuss main points and develop a presentation
  - Back to original groups
  - Ask each student to present their segment to the groups. Encourage questioning and clarification
  - As a teacher, I would check on groups and remind leaders what their goals are
  - Give a small quiz as to the types of government, countries aligned with that philosophy and how successful those nations have been

Activity six: one day. Carousel brainstorming or Take Five. What do we want from a new constitution? This will provide scaffolding for new information to be learned or existing information to be reviewed through movement, conversation and reflection.

- Divide class into four groups and assign each group a different color marker. They will put their responses on chart paper posted around the room.
- Give them two to three minutes to discuss what worked and did not work with the Articles. Then write that down. Repeat the same procedure for what a new constitution should have.
- Rotate them to the next station where they can read and question what others have written about their same topic. Discuss within group. Add any new info or questions they may have about the other group's ideas.
- Continue until each group has had the opportunity to write, think, discuss, and visit each other's groups.
- Wrap up the brainstorming by having a discussion about the Articles strengths and weaknesses and what a new constitution should contain
- Students should organize the info from this session by using a graphic organizer, writing a summary and recording useful info.

This activity can also utilize the Take Five format. Small groups share the responses about the problems with the Articles and needs for a new constitution. They begin to look for similarities and come to a consensus on the top five ideas. They prioritize, post on chart and share with other groups. And finally, after noting similarities and differences, students can compile a list of major findings.

Activity seven: one to two days. This activity will focus on the compromises created in order to bring about a new constitution. Students will do a character story. Students will address the VA Plan, NJ Plan, Great Compromise, and 3/5thCompromise. They will be in groups consisting of five to six students.

- On the board write: What is a compromise? What does compromising accomplish? What, if anything, is wrong with compromising?

- Class brainstorms about what it can accomplish and what is wrong with it. Using examples of compromising at home will steer them in the right direction. Encourage them to look at both sides carefully and see the question from a point of view different than the one they might hold.
- Have students volunteer and create an outcome different than what happened i.e. Great Compromise. What if we only had a unicameral legislature? What would happen if the 3/5<sup>th</sup> compromise never went thru?
- Develop the work individually after the brainstorming session. Answer the “What if”.
- Each person will recount their story; the class gets to ask questions, with the storyteller staying in the role of the character who, for example, refused to accept the 3/5<sup>th</sup> Compromise. This is an opportunity for students to discover more about the compromises and how delegates to the Convention might have felt.

Activity eight: one to two days. This activity is called “Those are some pretty strong words” and will be used to interpret the 27 amendments. This can be done in groups. I will have given students an amendment sheet which takes the 27 and divided them into categories: Personal freedoms, fair legal treatment, reserved powers, elections and conditions of office, social and economic changes, and voting rights. We discussed the amendments and the process to amend the Constitution. We also examined issues some of the amendments brought about and how those issues were resolved, often by additional laws (*Plessy v Ferguson*, *Dred Scott*, *Miranda*, Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act of the 1960’s).

- Mix up the kids with an interest survey (done at start of year) results. Kids broken into tactile (silent role play), visual (diagrams, drawings) and auditory (rap) groups.
- Divide the amendments into three groups of nine amendments each.
- Students will create one of the three (according to their interest survey results): a tableau or frozen picture of their amendments, a drawing or visual aid of their amendments and the last group will create a rap song to illustrate their amendments
- Give the groups about 10 minutes to create their plan. Have the three groups share their creation. Once completed allow for the other groups to question. Questions to consider: What is the title of the amendment? What happened to get this amendment pushed through? Was the amendment actually enforced? Do you think there were other laws necessary to enforce this amendment?
- Ask students for viable new amendments. Remind them that there have been over 10,000 proposals! Voting at a younger age? Allowing a national vote before the United States goes to war? Some proposed: Forbid public drunkenness, forbidding religious leaders from holding any public office, make marriage between races illegal, and making divorce illegal.

Activity nine: one day. Leaders of the world. <sup>18</sup> Provide list of names, computer and a super Venn diagram (has four intersecting circles). This is a tiered activity. Students will have a variety of recent world leaders and work individually to compare and contrast the leaders. Discussion can take place as to how the characteristics of these leaders impacted the world’s history.

- Students can choose from Stalin, Hitler, Assad, Mao, FDR, Napoleon, T Roosevelt, Margaret Thatcher, Indira Gandhi, Castro, Ahmadinejad, Mubarak, Franco, Mussolini, and Clinton or G.W. Bush.
- Internet access is available in the class. Provide a world leader rubric

- Briefly discuss leaders. Who do they know/remember?
- How can these rulers be grouped? Male/female? War leaders? Government types – democracy, autocracy, theocracy? Using the Venn, illustrate by using two of the circles and contrast the two, then expand to three and then four leaders.
- Follow directions on the activity sheet.
- Distribute World Leaders Comparison sheets. Above –grade- level students receive the “triangle, squares for on-grade-level and circles go to below-grade-level and ESL
- Discuss what traits do the leaders share, what traits seem to be unique to certain leaders, how do these shared/unique traits help or hurt the leaders, how did these leaders control and motivate their nations, and finally, how the world might be different had certain leaders not held these positions.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>Luscombe, Belinda. "10 Questions." *time*, June 6, 2011

<sup>2</sup>Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso, 1991

<sup>3</sup>Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso, 1991

<sup>4</sup>Tamir, Yael. *Liberal Nationalism*. Princeton: Princeton Press, 1993

<sup>5</sup>Kymlicka, Will. *Multicultural Citizenship: A liberal theory of minority rights*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995

<sup>6</sup>Smith, Anthony. *National Identity*. Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1993

<sup>7</sup>Kirkpatrick, David. "Tunisians Vote in a Milestone of Arab Change." *New York Times*, October 11, 1923

<sup>8</sup>Kirkpatrick, David. "Tunisians Vote in a Milestone of Arab Change." *New York Times*, October 11, 1923

<sup>9</sup>Flexner, James Thomas . *George Washington and the New Nation 1783-1793*. NY: Little, Brown, 1970.

<sup>10</sup>Kirkpatrick, David. "Tunisians Vote in a Milestone of Arab Change." *New York Times*, October 11, 1923.

<sup>11</sup>Maier, Pauline. *Ratification: The People Debate the Constitution, 1787-1788*. NY: Simon and Schuster, 2010.

<sup>12</sup>Hofstadter, Richard. *Great Issues in American History*. NY: Vintage, 1959

<sup>13</sup>Hickey, Stephen. "Summercore." Summercore. <http://www.teachingcompany.com>

<sup>14</sup>Paluden, Philip Shaw. *A Covenant with Death: The Constitution, Law and Equality in the Civil War Era*. Chicago: University of Illinois, 1975.

<sup>15</sup>Philips, Michal J. "Preface." In *The Lochner Court, Myth and Reality*. Westport, CN: Praeger, 2001. Preface

<sup>16</sup>The Economist. "The Next Step." Tunisia's election. [www.economist.com/newsbook/2011/tunisia-election](http://www.economist.com/newsbook/2011/tunisia-election) (accessed November 1, 2011).

<sup>17</sup>The Economist. "The Next Step." Tunisia's election. [www.economist.com/newsbook/2011/tunisia-election](http://www.economist.com/newsbook/2011/tunisia-election) (accessed November 1, 2011).

<sup>18</sup>Conklin, Wendy. *Differentiation Strategies for Social Studies*. Huntington Beach: Shell Education/McREL, 2004.

### **Annotated Bibliography**

*Colonial House*. Dir. Nicolas Brown. Perf. Jonathon Allen, Julia Friese, Carolyn Heinz. PBS, 2004. DVD. Absolutely wonderful. Colonial settlement from first footsteps on Maine soil as 1628 immigrants to the modern day final stop at a grocery store after 4 ½ months of isolation on their recreated New England colony. So much to choose from for every grade level. Highlights: reasons for immigration, separation of church and state, theocracy, survival of the fittest, mingling with ancestors of Passamaquoddy original inhabitants, medicine, lack of food, making money for the joint stock company etc.

Conklin, Wendy. *Differentiation Strategies for Social Studies*. Huntington Beach: Shell Education/McREL, 2004. Print. Many activities for all grade levels of Social Studies.

"Learn About the United States (U.S.) Constitution & More | Constitution Facts." *Learn About the United States (U.S.) Constitution & More | Constitution Facts*. N.p., n.d. Web. 20 Oct. 2011. <<http://www.constitutionfacts.com>>. Lots of wonderful facts about the Declaration, Articles of Confederation, Constitution, Bill of Rights and Supreme Court. Crossword puzzles for all levels, same for word finds.

Collier, James, and Christopher Collier. *My Brother Sam is Dead*. NY: Four Winds, 1974. Print. Great Revolutionary War era middle school novel.

Jeff, Shoeless, and Scott Free. "Bill of Rights Rap." *smartsongs.org*. N.p., n.d. Web. 12 Oct. 2010. <[www.smartsongs.org](http://www.smartsongs.org)>. The Bill of Rights/First ten amendments rap is great. The duo has several more on YouTube including three branches of government, political parties, capitols, presidents etc.

