



## **The Building Blocks of Peace: An Examination of the Legislative Process and the Foundational Documents of the United States of America Past and Present**

by Vita Borjas, 2021 CTI Fellow  
West Charlotte High School

This curriculum unit is recommended for:  
American History I, Advanced Placement United States History, U.S. Government;  
grades 9 - 12

**Keywords:** Articles of Confederation, U.S. Constitution, U.S. Government, Peace, Legislation

**Teaching Standards:** See [Appendix 1](#) for teaching standards addressed in this unit. (Insert a hyperlink to Appendix 1 where you've stated your unit's main standards.)

**Synopsis:** Within this unit students will explore the process of creating peace through legislation by examining the history of large-scale government establishment and large-scale government transformation through the creation of and changes made to the U.S. government after The Revolutionary War. Throughout the unit the actual mention of the word "peace" will be used sparingly, with the idea that peace can be created without the word being focused on, given its often ideological connotation that tends to stump students. Instead, the peacemaking process itself is examined through the history of the initial pieces of legislation from the U.S. and emphasis is placed on the legislative process that was implemented for the writing and approval of the original Articles of Confederation, the process of actually implementing The Articles of Confederation into American society, and then the complete overhaul of The Articles of Confederation for successful implementation of the current U.S. Constitution despite fierce political division among the young nation at the time. Students will be examining the causes of extreme political and governmental tensions that were present as the United States was in its infancy, comparing and expanding upon official legislation, and will also be implementing the federal system of checks and balances through a class-wide replication of the federal process of amending the Constitution.

*I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to 60 students in grades 9-12  
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## **The Building Blocks of Peace: An Examination of the Legislative Process and the Foundational Documents of the United States of America Past and Present**

*Vita Borjas*

### **Introduction: Students Want to Increase Peace in the United States of America and They are asking for the Tools to do so**

Teaching American History at West Charlotte High School, where over 95% of our students are a part of a minority group creates a space for an incredible amount of questioning in regards to the subject matter we cover.<sup>1</sup> While students have been exposed to an increasingly diverse curriculum that does not shy away from discussing in detail the horrible aspects of slavery, the Chinese Exclusion Act, Japanese Internment Camps of World War II, and more, students often connect the dots from times past to the current time they live in and raise their hands to question the legitimacy of the responses to those events throughout history.

One particular lesson sticks out in my mind as an example of this. When discussing the Emancipation Proclamation and reviewing the 13th Amendment in its original wording, a student spoke out and said “Slavery didn’t end, the prison system just replaced it.” I had had conversations with many of my students who had expressed issues with the institutions of the past and of the present and numerous times students had asked me in private “why did this happen,” or “what can we even do about it?” While I could always provide an explanation of the historical rationale that was used at the time to justify the atrocities of our nation’s past, the latter question was always something that stuck me and my students squarely with no practical answer that seemed realistic.

In realizing this shortcoming on a 1:1 basis with my students, I decided to bring the question to all of my students, both in class and on reading assignments, as we learned about various topics where wrongs needed to be made right, from the discussion of Native American boarding schools to the case of Emmet Till and the process of desegregation. Student responses to this question, though, revealed two things. Firstly, students understood what they wanted the future to look like in terms of equality for all, and secondly, they had no idea of how to get to that point from where they currently sat due to a lack of understanding of the legal processes that surround making change in the United States. My students are full of wonderful ideas about how to fix the world, but don’t yet have the tools to build the bridge to get to those realities, yet. Even as we discussed Martin Luther King and Malcolm X, students would end up dividing amongst themselves for which philosophy they would stand behind, but arguably the most vital aspect of these two men was not a part focused on within the curriculum: the strategic nature of how they planned to achieve their goals.

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<sup>1</sup> “SchoolDigger West Charlotte High School”

As I began to connect the dots of the curriculum, I realized that for my students, much of their perceived belief about why we learn history is “so we don’t repeat the mistakes of the past,” yet my students compared the historical situations of people like them to that of today and feel a disconnect to what is taught. They understand that much of legislation of the past did not erase a problem but recreated it into different packaging. An example of this that always sticks out to my students very clearly is the explanation of the 13th amendment. Most students understand that the 13th amendment of the U.S. Constitution was created for emancipation, but are shocked to realize that within the very breath that emancipated enslaved persons from chattel slavery, there was an immediacy about creating an exception to the rule of slavery’s full end, hence the legality of forced labor in relation to the prison system.<sup>2</sup> Because of the view of history as a continuation of the same problems rather than a cycle of problems resurfacing after resolutions have been made, I have had to reimagine the way and the reason history is to be taught in my classroom. In my classroom I often emphasize that history is not about understanding how to not repeat the problems of the past, but instead acts as a blueprint for teaching how to change the future to eliminate a problem through peaceful and sustainable means once and for all.

To fully gain this benefit though, the way that history is taught and what is focused on is of vital importance. While the current curriculum includes discussing the creation of government, the dissection and analysis of legal documents, and the overview of many supreme court rulings that have led to change, my students were largely in the dark about how they could also use a system of legislation to create the peace they were envisioning. Analyzing documents about the laws and treaties that are within our history alone is not what will allow for history to be useful, but teaching them how to use these laws and the legislative process to achieve peace through our studies is possible and can help students start to answer the question of “what can we even do,” with thorough plans that work alongside the current legislation and government of the United States of America.

### **Rationale: Teach the Process of Legislative Change through History as a Tool for Students to Create Peace Today**

The possibility of creating peace through legislative or legal changes allows for the teaching of the legislative process within American History I to be valuable to students as soon as they are learning it. Students should learn about the dramatic changes of the U.S. government, specifically the switch from the Articles of Confederation to the current U.S. The Constitution and how it was able to be successfully done in ways that promoted peace and diffused violence. In other words, how were such drastic legal changes of our nations past able to be created and passed all the while there were issues of fierce opposition and political division, especially amongst those who were making these changes? This question is the basis of this unit and must be brought to students continually alongside the examination of the processes of how social, political, and legal challenges were overcome to obtain both the legal changes that were implemented as well as a relative maintenance of stability within the nation in the long-term.

Further topics that will have primary focus will be how the Federal system of Checks and Balances is actively enforced and its limitations, as well as learning how federal amendments

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<sup>2</sup> Danielle E. Jones “The Unknown Legacy of the 13th Amendment”

and bills are passed, and how to increase representation within the republic government of the United States. These topics will be examined not simply through reading the key documents from U.S. history, but also by replicating legal processes within our classroom to demonstrate to students not just the steps that must be taken for peace through legislation to be achieved, but also the level of thinking, examination, planning, and amending that must go into any law for it to be not just successfully passed, but also effective at fulfilling its overall purpose.

A vital part of this unit that will end up acting as the “glue” to facilitate student thinking will be the constant and consistent questioning of the legislation they are creating, amending, and proposing by other students who will actively represent different government structures. Students will have to propose their law alongside evidence of the existence of the problem they are solving as well as evidence that their law actually targets the cause of the issue. They will have their evidence examined for reliability, and will be expected to engage with and respond to constructive criticism and differences of opinion. Overall, the goal of this unit through the aforementioned parts will combine to increase student awareness of the government structures that create and maintain laws, the roles and limitations of their own scope of influence, and also help develop their critical thinking in relation to laws and policy that go beyond superficial claims and individual impact.

### **Background and Educational Setting**

This unit is designed to be used within Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools, but can be implemented beyond the current curriculum and outside of this particular school district in any high school American history class, including American History I and II, Advanced Placement United States History, and also U.S. Government and Civics and Economics. The design of the unit is constructed with the knowledge that standards of various curricula change over time, and with the hopes that what is utilized here will be applicable as standards and curriculum maps for American history adapt and shift as new curriculum maps are published by both CMS and other districts around the country. I want to make sure that this unit is broad enough to fit within every American history class that reviews the nation’s founding, but also specific enough to ensure students are gaining skills in full analysis, application, and adaptation of materials they are reviewing and learning about. This balance is struck by creating a unit that dives deeper into the core of the foundational documents of the United States, like The Articles of Confederation, The U.S. Constitution, and The Bill of Rights while also dissecting the system of checks and balances to better understand government function, which also remains a foundational part of most American history curricula and standards, even with adaptations from year to year.

Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools was founded in 1882 as a segregated school district that would reflect the state of segregation within the city and county limits and would resist desegregation following the 1954 Supreme Court ruling of *Brown vs The Board of Education Topeka, Kansas* which called for an immediate implementation of desegregation efforts within public education.<sup>3</sup> The lack of desegregation efforts would persist until the 1969 ruling of *Swann vs The Charlotte Mecklenburg Board of Education*, a case originally filed in 1965 and later re-opened, that would lead to the bussing system that would successfully but temporarily

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<sup>3</sup> “History of CMS”

desegregate schools within the district.<sup>4</sup> The Swann case, as well as the bussing system that led to desegregation, would be overturned in 2001 with the re-opening of the case by parent Bill Capacchione who sued Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools under the claim that his daughter was denied entry into a magnet school due to her not being Black. The removal of the bussing system was revealed to increase racial inequity within education and also led to an immediate reduction of diversity within schools by over 10% within the first year of the bussing system being removed.<sup>5</sup>

Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools serves approximately 150,000 students through 176 schools and has a demographic breakdown of the district-wide student population being 38% Black students, 24% Hispanic students, 28% white students, 7% Asian students, and 3% of students being a part of two or more races.<sup>6</sup>

The topic of desegregation is one that is discussed often with my students, as West Charlotte High School is the only historically Black high school from Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools that still stands today. During the bussing system, the demographics of students would shift from West Charlotte High School being an all Black school to being a model for desegregation with the ratio reaching 59% Black students to 41% white students. At West Charlotte High School today the student body consists of 1,436 students, where 84% of students are Black, 9% are Hispanic, 4% are Asian, 1% are Native American, 2% are mixed race, and 1% are white (5). Additionally, over 99% of students qualify for free or reduced lunch, and the school has a diversity score, or likelihood that any two students picked randomly from the school population would be of a different ethnic group, of 0.30, which is significantly lower than the state diversity score of 0.68.<sup>7</sup>

## **Teaching Strategies**

### **Make it Relevant**

When students first come into my history class, most view the subject as incredibly outdated, overly nationalistic, and when it comes to my students specifically, they also view it as whitewashed. To start off the year curbing these ideas and expectations from students, I always ask students “why is it important to study history” and most parrot the predictable answer of “to not repeat the same mistakes as the past.” This is where the breakthrough comes in alongside my teaching philosophy, because the answer to this question, in my class at least, is not to prevent the past mistakes from being repeated, but to instead reveal the fact that the problems of the past haven’t gone away and still exist today to be solved. Within the context of history, I tend to draw lines throughout the year that reveal that the major problems of the past that still affect my students, even within the United States alone, of which include slavery, civil rights, gender equality, fair working conditions, and food safety conditions have not been magically solved with a single piece of legislation, but instead have gone on to exist through the creation of new

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<sup>4</sup> “History of CMS”

<sup>5</sup> History of CMS”

<sup>6</sup> Public School Review “Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools School District”

<sup>7</sup> Public School Review “West Charlotte High School”

laws, new names for old terms, and the slow chipping away at any law constituting major change with minor laws that limit the implementation of the major legislation from being fully realized.

With that stated, the lines that are drawn from the problems of the past connect to the lives of my students today in relation to the problems of the now, and the rights of those of the past have similar imbalances as those that are faced today. Keeping that in mind, a key philosophy within my classroom is to keep lessons relevant. Every single event in history, be it from 200 years ago or 2000 has an incredibly similar event that has happened within the lifetime of your students. Pull from those similarities to help students both connect to history from the perspective of someone in the future, but to also ensure that students can learn from the actions people took in the past when in similar circumstances. To be blunt, the blueprint to success in the past can be a starting point for solutions to current similar events, and students want to know the building plans for the success they can create.

### Keep it Real

Specifically, keep it honest and uncomfortable. I say “keep it real” in relation to history, specifically when taught in the classroom, because often as a student myself, I have seen history taught as if it were a piece of fiction, something so long ago that we could possibly not relate to it. This is problematic on the basis of leading students out of relatability to content, but is also often paired with the issue of students learning about history through sides of good versus bad, in terms of people, countries, and politics. As an example, students may be taught to either love or hate figures like Christopher Columbus, Andrew Jackson, or Abraham Lincoln due to the examination of key policies and actions.

While teaching history in this way allows for easier lessons, it leads to a warped view of the reality of the past. In short, students need to be familiar with the uncomfortable truth that those that are deemed good in history, think those like George Washington, have still engaged in what is abhorrent, specifically in the owning of a slave plantation. Likewise, those that have done atrocious things, like Andrew Jackson who illegally ordered the Trail of Tears to be completed after the Supreme Court had deemed it unconstitutional, had also significantly helped the U.S. by completely eliminating the national debt at the time.<sup>8</sup> Understanding a historical figure more completely helps for students to better understand historical figures as humans who have complex decision making capabilities and can be held accountable, but also allows for students to understand that the people who are in the same political positions as the historical figures we study can and do have their balance of “good” and “bad” actions that should be examined by students as they grow older and connect the past to both current times and the future.

### Keep it Simple

With history having a large amount of information to cover, I tend to keep my lessons and assignments more simplistic in order to allow for time to get into more depth. Every lesson I deliver has a reading, lecture, and writing component to ensure all students have different

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<sup>8</sup> Harold Whitman Bradley “Andrew Jackson”

interactions with the material and that all students who chose to study history through different means have the ability to do so in ways that are efficient for them. To be honest, this also helps with me having enough time to give my long-winded explanations.

### Take it Further

As stated, a simpler lesson layout makes it so there is more time to get into more depth with information in the classroom. More so though, it also allows for increased higher-level questioning of students. Specifically, my goal in teaching is to ensure that students are not just learning about history, but also processing it through more than memorization. I want students to scrutinize the past, explore the conflicts we study as well as their causes, and most of all, I want my students to think about the central themes of the topics we study over time, from past to present and with everything in between. As such, I make sure that my students have time to express their historical opinions and to judge the actions of those in the past in ways that connect the content to critical thinking.

Taking this into account, many of my lessons involve a two step process of learning the material we are going over and then analyzing and applying the material immediately after. As such, assessments and grading for my class on non-summative assignments tend to delve much more into the application of material rather than its regurgitation. To ensure that students have an honest understanding of how they will be graded and are able to fully express their honest thoughts, I tell students about and implement a rule of never grading on the opinions they have, but only on the support they provide. To word it differently, I don't care about the perspectives they hold when it comes to grading. However, I do care if they sound educated and have the proper argument proposals in the explanation of their opinion, and the latter is therefore what I grade and correct. This allows for a lot of honest conversations and as a by-product, a lot of learning of content and how to think critically in ways I was only able to explore in a college classroom.

## **Instructional Content and Instructional Implementations**

### The United States of America: A ~~Democracy~~ Republic

Many Americans wrongly believe that the United States is a democracy, but they would be mistaken. With the establishment of the United States resulting from frustrations over a lack of representation, the purposeful lack of individual representation is something that should be noted and emphasized by teachers and students alike. Ultimately, with the United States using a system of elected representatives, the government structure does not fall under the categorization of democracy, but instead under that of a republic. This choice was made deliberately as a way to prevent the poorer, or less educated peoples from being able to have power over the outcome of elections.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Bernard Dobski "America Is a Republic, Not a Democracy"

The unit should open with this concept being the first thing that is gone over, as it introduces the first problem that many people have in relation to our government today, which includes the lack of individual representation in the passing of laws. A fantastic way to open this lesson is through a Do Now in the style of a Think, Pair, Share activity where students have to choose which form of government the United States falls under based on prior knowledge, with both options of a democracy and a republic being listed among other government structures of a teacher's choosing, such as monarchy, oligarchy, or any other. Students must also explain their answer as to why they think the United States operates under the style of government that they selected. Here teachers should prompt students to be specific in their reasoning and to provide a specific example rather than a generalized statement. Many students will not know the differences between a democracy and a republic at the start of this lesson, but likely few will have any knowledge of the U.S. being a republic regardless of this.

For the Think section, students should have about two to three minutes to answer the question "The United States government is a \_\_\_\_." Underneath this question, there should again be four answer choices, two of which include "republic" and "democracy." Underneath this section, there should be a part two of the question that states "please explain your answer choice and provide a specific detail of either U.S. policy or government that supports your answer choice." For the Pair section of this activity, students will be prompted to share with a pre-selected partner or their neighbor for about 2 minutes regarding the answer they chose and their explanations.

During the Share portion of this assignment, students' answers and reasonings will be written on the board. It is likely that many students will have chosen "democracy" as their answer, but regardless, understanding the reason behind student responses is vital to help with correcting the misinformation students may have. To ensure reasoning is discussed, students will be asked follow-up questions such as, how they would currently define the form of government they chose, and where their idea of the U.S. having this form of government came from. After this is gone over, the definitions for all of the forms of governments would be revealed, and then students would be asked the original question once again, and then repeat the think, pair, share process. Again, student responses will be recorded alongside their reasoning. After this second round of questioning, the answer will be revealed and explained. This can be done by the teacher directly, or by having students flip to the section within the textbook that goes over this information to add a final element of suspense to this.

### The Second Continental Congress: Background Knowledge

To understand the foundation of government, it is first important to understand the people who created it. The Second Continental Congress is the group of men that drafted the Olive Branch Petition that proposed a compromise to the British government in the earlier stages of the Revolutionary War, The Declaration of Independence that came after a denial of the Olive Branch Petition was demonstrated through the British blockade on the Atlantic coast, and also the Articles of Confederation.<sup>10</sup> Students should be entering into this unit with an understanding

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<sup>10</sup> "Continental Congress, 1774-1781"



of the role of the Second Continental Congress within both The Revolutionary War along with the documents that have been created and signed by this group prior to The Articles of Confederation as provided in unit 2.

If it is needed, a quick refresher of the Second Continental Congress can be explored through a brief YouTube video.<sup>11</sup> I find having a very quick video recap allows for students to gain a better understanding of the flow of history outside of simply re-presenting old information and allows for a more concrete starting point for this

### The Articles of Confederation

Unit 3 opens after the Revolutionary War and with the Articles of Confederation having just been established as the first binding document determining the process of governance for the United States of America. Ultimately, the Articles of Confederation were the first official government of the newly formed nation and would be created in a way that, in many cases, existed to completely oppose the government organization that existed for colonists under British rule.<sup>12</sup> A key takeaway of The Articles of Confederation for students is that people often are very reactive to what they view as injustice. The United States was formed due to the idea that the British government, the central government specifically had acted unjustly through taxation and implementation of laws onto colonists without representation and also knew that opposition to the British government was fruitless due to the sheer imbalance of power that the central government had over any other smaller legislative bodies. As such, the United States would grow to create almost the exact opposite of this under The Articles of Confederation with state governments having a much larger portion of power in comparison to the national government of the United States.<sup>13</sup>

The major problems that plagued The Articles of Confederation, mainly the lack of a strong central government that could not tax citizens, enforce laws, or control trade alongside 100% agreement between state representatives being needed for any legal changes to take place, would lead the newly created United States being in a state of uncorrectable imbalance where states acted as separate entities that had loose ties to nationhood and very little shared responsibility towards the maintenance of what the Revolutionary War won them.<sup>14</sup>

Throughout the implementation of The Articles of Confederation from 1776-1789, the national government of the United States had no power to tax or therefore, re-pay taxes to the nations that the young nation had received aid from during The Revolutionary War, and as such, the repayment of war debt was left to individual state governments to complete. This extended the issue of a weak central government beyond a national issue into an international issue as well.<sup>15</sup> With the issues understood by those who were state representatives alongside the rest of the (Second) Continental Congress, the focus would shift from implementation of The Articles of

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<sup>11</sup> "The Second Continental Congress | Road to the Revolution"

<sup>12</sup> Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union" (1777)

<sup>13</sup> Penelope Ann Torgenrud "Articles of Confederation | Examination of Current Misconceptions" pp. 30

<sup>14</sup> Penelope Ann Torgenrud

<sup>15</sup> Penelope Ann Torgenrud

Confederation to the changing of and eventual scrapping and rewriting of what would become the U.S. Constitution.

While an abysmal outcome was reached through The Articles of Confederation in terms of its failure, the process of the creation of the document demonstrates the vital nature of correcting what are perceived wrongs within government, as the U.S. would try to correct the misguided ways of British ruling. However, while there is an optimistic side to examining the process of change given that it was the beginning of Americans being able to set up their ideal of law, the reality is that this constitution did not last and was continuously questioned through the entirety of its implementation as well. From here, students and teachers alike should stop and ask the question “Why?” What was it that made The Articles of Confederation fail? Were these failures preventable or foreseeable? While the latter question is largely subjective and historically debated, the reality is that much of the Articles of Confederation was compiled based on idealistic thinking about individuality- and also naivete about what is actually needed to resolve an issue. Specifically, much of the Second Continental Congress loathed the actions and set up of the British government and sought to create a new government that would not fall into the same state of one small group having the bulk of the power. However, they would come to learn through the ineffectiveness of The Articles of Confederation that going from one extreme (a disproportionately strong central government), to another (a disproportionately weak central government) was not the answer.

While this seems highly critical, it is also necessary to consider that The United States did not have any modern democratic or republican societies based on which to build their new government that detested the idea of a strong central government. Regardless, The Articles of Confederation demonstrates the common flaws with the idealization of what the resolution of a problem can look like and furthermore, what idealization and extreme thinking within any problem-solving action can lead to. Through the failure of the document as a workable constitution, it is shown that the idealistic thinking of inverting the British government fully was not going to work as a solution to the problems the United States faced while under British rule.

In order to ensure students understand the Articles of Confederation, the class will first overview the general conflicting sentiments at the time in relation to how the U.S. should establish their new government. While the idea for a republic will have already been established, A key focus for the review of the Articles of Confederation will be federal versus states rights. As students review the Articles of Confederation, they will be asked to highlight laws that demonstrate state control and state’s rights in one color and highlight areas that demonstrate national or central government rights in another color. Students will be expected to do the same to the U.S. Constitution as a way to understand key changes that were made to governance and the conflict between state and federal power.

The reason behind the in-depth review of the Articles of Confederation is mainly because it was the originally established constitution of the United States and would end up having to be completely replaced within a decade of its establishment. The contents of the Articles of Confederation paint a picture for students that reflect the political issues of the time and the original struggles that came with nationhood. The issues facing the 13 colonies upon their

entrance into nationhood would start starkly due to their previous relationships to one another. Specifically, while colonies united in their efforts to defeat England in the Revolutionary War, the colonies had never acted as a fully cohesive unit prior. Due to the establishment of colonies in separation from one another during England's period of colonization, the 13 colonies had established individual economies, cultures, social structures, and ideologies based on both the groups that originally found them, and also the geography and economic possibilities that were afforded to them based on the location of their colony. In short, colonies were individual and separate from one another, and the sudden shift to cooperation beyond warfare was highly controversial both due to the desire to have a nation that wouldn't fail, but also due to fears over creating a strong central government that would remove states rights that the colonies had been establishing before.<sup>16</sup>

Again, in many ways the Articles of Confederation were established with the objection of British politics in mind. Having come out victorious from the Revolutionary war and now having the ability to establish a government that would be entirely separate from the English Crown which ruled with high amounts of central or federal power, the Continental Congress would end up creating a government that was almost opposite in many ways, to the point of inefficiency, to that of England at the time. The ineffectiveness of the Articles of Confederation would be the exact reason for the establishment of many of its laws: the lack of power within the central government.

While students should be focused on the aforementioned points, there should also be discussion of who (which groups) were included and left out of the writing and voting process for the enactment of the Articles of Confederation. If more representation was involved in the creation of the Articles of Confederation would the laws have been different? What was the reasoning behind who was included and who was left out of the writing of the Articles of Confederation? How did the people who were not included in this decision making process respond to the Articles of Confederation? What role did compromise play in both the writing of and enactment of the Articles of Confederation?

Additional questions that I suggest working into your lesson as you plan how you will discuss the topics of extremes and problem solving within the historical context of the Articles of Confederation and the document itself include: What does the failure of The Articles of Confederation demonstrate about the potential extremes of ideals when it comes to peacebuilding and creating a secure country? What does it demonstrate about the need for compromise or open-mindedness when examining solutions to a perceived problem? How changes could be made with the guidelines established in the Articles of Confederation. What were the limitations to this system that were demonstrated through history? What does this reveal about unanimous decisions and the need for compromise within government?

These are the questions that help connect the history of legislation to current issues that legislative bodies all around the world still struggle with. We need to be asking our students to teach them more than just about the imperfections of those who make legislation, as they are all

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<sup>16</sup> J. H. George "The British American Colonies and the Colonies Just Before the Revolution"

equally human, but to also press students to develop the ability to better understand that the solution to an issue is not typically the full opposite of the problem when it comes to creating a peaceful resolution to political strife.

As an assessment to this assignment, students could be given an exit ticket with any number of the aforementioned questions with the expectation that they write at least a full paragraph and include specific citations and explanations surrounding their answer that connect The actual text of the Articles of Confederation to the historical context surrounding its creation.

### *Shay's Rebellion*

Shay's Rebellion would be one of the final nails in the coffin for the Articles of Confederation. It showed that in the midst of an attempted revolution with over 1000 farmers objecting to their having to pay for the war debts of their states that a loose central government could not hold together a nation. The examination of this event as a tipping point for both citizens and politicians alike would end up leading to increased discussion of resolving the problems plaguing the nation and states. Issues from taxation to trade to national defense were all topics up for consideration. The main conversations about potential resolutions would increase in terms of state interest dramatically after Shay's Rebellion and the creation of The U.S. Constitution would begin at The Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.<sup>17</sup> Shay's Rebellion acts as the "glue" that transitions students from learning about The Articles of Confederation to learning about The U.S. Constitution, so covering this topic can be done at the end of the review of The Articles of Confederation as a bit of a suspenseful moment to end the lesson, or it can be introduced as an opener to The U.S. Constitution- this is based on time availability in either of the lessons.

### The U.S. Constitution: Formation to Completion

#### *The Constitutional Convention and Compromise*

With windows and doors sealed shut, 55 rich men would end up discussing and creating the first draft of the U.S. Constitution due to the failure of the Articles of Confederation. For days, words were to be expressed honestly and no outside interference was permitted. It is worth noting, though, that the Second Continental Congress was not the group in charge of the re-imagining of The Articles of Confederation that they had originally created.

The main issues discussed at the Constitutional Convention were state representation in central government which would be resolved through the Great Compromise where the idea for a two house congress would emerge; the House of Representatives would have representatives from each state based on population, while the Senate would consist of two representatives from each state, regardless of population. This compromise was a combination of the Virginia and the New Jersey Plan, which caused a rift between large and small states in relation to how representation should be given.

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<sup>17</sup> "Shays' Rebellion" [ushistory.org](http://ushistory.org)

With population becoming the basis for representation within the House of Representatives, who would be included in the count for population would become incredibly important. This too would end up creating strife amongst state delegates regarding if slaves should be counted in population. Delegates from southern states which had large populations of slaves wanted for slaves to be counted for the population for only the purposes of government representation, but not for the purposes of taxation so as to increase their representation but not weaken their economies. Delegates from northern states that had significantly less slaves wanted for slaves to not count for representation at all, as this would give them an increase in representation in the House of Representatives over their southern counterparts. The end result would be the Three-Fifths Compromise, which stated that three-fifths of the slave population of a state would count for both the purposes of representation and taxation.

A key takeaway from these two compromises is often overlooked, and that is the fact that without these compromises, the furthering of the establishment of the U.S. The Constitution would not have been able to commence.<sup>18</sup> Teachers should emphasize the importance of compromise within government and within areas of general political dispute as a means to actually make progress and move forward towards peace. Emphasizing who suggested these compromises in comparison to the arguing parties should also be gaining understanding of how compromises can be reached both with external and internal parties being present and active in their compromises. This is an example of emphasizing a skill required for peacebuilding while not actually mentioning the term itself.

### *A System of Checks and Balances*

In addition to compromises that had to be made, the establishment of a strong central government was also discussed, and the decision to increase central government power came alongside the creation of a system of checks and balances that would prevent the central government from drastic rulings without accountability from state representatives. The system of checks and balances that is upheld through the Judicial, Legislative, and Executive branches of government should be discussed with students while they fill out a chart that will be used as a reference point throughout the unit.

In order for students to see the System of Checks and Balances in action after overviewing the three branches of government, I recommend creating a faux “bill” that will need to be debated that could actually be applied within your classroom. The main objectives of this assignment are two-fold. Firstly, students will be able to actually map out the “journey” a bill must take to go from an idea in someone’s mind to actually being passed at the federal level, and secondly, students will be able to understand at what points their bill could be overturned or thrown out. The Schoolhouse rock video of this is simple, yet incredibly helpful for picturing this process.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Encyclopedia Britannica “Constitutional Convention”

<sup>19</sup> “I’m Just a Bill” Schoolhouse Rock

For the topic of the bill, the “bill” can be anything related to actual legislation that is currently going on within the United States, or, to make it more interesting and immediately applicable, related to a “bill” that could be passed within the classroom in relation to classroom policies that students want to debate or change. I will typically opt for the latter, with the “bill” being debated relating to whether or not their diagram they completed initially regarding the system of checks and balances should be entered in as extra credit or as a regular assignment grade. This gives students an “in” such that whichever ruling is made is what is put into practice.

To implement this, teachers should divide the class into three groups; there should be two larger groups, one which will play the role of the House of Representatives and the other will have the role of the Senate. The last smaller group will have the role of the Supreme Court, and the teacher will be the President. Once the situation that is being debated is read aloud, students will have their three branches of government chart available to them to use as guidance for what they can do within their group and are able to use their appropriate permissions to try and have the law either passed or rejected depending on their preference. The process for this should follow the established order through which bills are passed through the federal government today to enhance relevance and understanding of government structure and limitations. Note that this is not supposed to be an assessment, but rather a class activity to demonstrate the system of checks and balances itself.

## The U.S. Constitution

The United States Constitution is the backbone to legislation within the United States and constitutionality is the basis through which any law or bill must pass in order to have any shot of being put into effect. Additionally, any law or court ruling that is demonstrated to go against what is outlined within The U.S. Constitution loses its legality and is overturned. Therefore, the understanding of the U.S. Constitution is paramount for our students to understand and to also be able to implement.<sup>20</sup>

To ensure students are able to gain a richer understanding of The U.S. Students should be given a copy of The U.S. Constitution to use as they would a DBQ document and should annotate it in the following ways: highlight the rights of states in one color, highlight the rights of the federal government in another. Additionally, students should underline the policy related to how amendments can be made to The U.S. Constitution. Once this is done, students should also review their previously annotated version of The Articles of Confederation and create a Venn diagram that compares and contrasts the two documents, paying special attention to the differences in the processes of how both documents outlined the process of legal changes.

After students do this individually, a larger class diagram can be created on the board where the class will directly compare only the processes of legal changes between The Articles of Confederation and The U.S. Constitution and discuss the question: why did they change the process of what was required to amend the nation's foundational document? Was this a good or bad move? Why do you think so? Is there any way that the current process of how amendments

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<sup>20</sup> National Archives “The Constitution of the United States: A transcription”

are made within our current constitution should be amended to create more representation and efficiently without creating new weaknesses?

### *Bill of Rights:*

The Bill of Rights is one of the key differences between the Articles of Confederation and the U.S. Constitution and was also a deciding factor of compromise that earned the approval of the U.S. Constitution by antifederalists. It outlines the first 10 amendments that would later be added to. The amendments within the Bill of Rights outlined individual rights with recognition from the federal government that also ensured their protection.

To review the Bill of Rights, students are divided into ten groups. Each group is given a copy of the Bill of Rights, a poster, markers, and an amendment. Each group should receive a different amendment. The task for each group is to put on their poster the following things: their assigned amendment in the original wording, their assigned amendment worded in simple terms, and a picture or comic to represent the amendment. Once all groups are finished with their posters, a presenter from each group will explain their poster. During the presentations, all students will write down the amendments in simple terms on an individual amendment chart worksheet that will already contain the original wording for each amendment. At the end of all presentations, the teacher will go through 10-20 scenarios where as a class, students will decide which amendment protects the rights of the individuals in the given scenarios. A trick scenario can also be included in which the person within the scenario is not actually protected under the Bill of Rights.

Ideas for discussion questions to ask during presentations include: should there be limits for this amendment/ Why or why not? Why do you think this amendment was created to begin with? Do you think this amendment is still needed, if not, then should it be removed?

State Constitutions: What was their purpose? (Optional, but encouraged)

Since the Articles of Confederation established a weak central government with strong state governments, that meant that the individual states making up the United States at the time had to have their own established conditions and forms of government that individualized each state and also allowed for change within various regions that reflected the needs, demands, and objections of the people within that region. This happened in the form of state constitutions. In order to have students fully grasp The Articles of Confederation and the current U.S. Constitution, students should also be familiar with how state constitutions operate in relation to the national government, broadly, under both The Articles of Confederation and The U.S. Constitution. The examination of this should have been done within the review of The Articles of Confederation, but also deserves a bit more explanation, hence this section.

The specific takeaways that students should already have before entering into this section are that state governments were much less accountable to the national government under the Articles of Confederation and much more so under the current U.S. Constitution. However, without the context of examining a state constitution this rule is rather abstract. In order to make

the issue of state power versus national power more understandable, students should have about 30 minutes to an hour to comb through the North Carolina State Constitution and underline or highlight the similarities in terms of structure, laws, and processes that are described in The U.S. Constitution or the Articles of Confederation.<sup>21</sup> I find that this is best done as a homework assignment, as students should have experience with both reviewing and tearing apart official documents at this point.

In order to bring the learning from home back into the classroom, linking the highlighting assignment to the Do Now for the next day is always a good idea and allows for students to start the class off with revisiting previous knowledge. For this particular case, I would have students work in groups of 2-3 and complete a compare and contrast chart that examines the similarities and differences between the U.S. constitution and North Carolina Constitution, with each group providing both three similarities and three differences. Students would have about 3-5 minutes to complete this, and the teacher would lead the class in having a whole-group discussion about the topics as a master chart would be filled out on the board with at least 5 similarities and 3 differences being written down and discussed with students.

#### A Government for Peace? - The Ethics of Law

One of the most important things to consider when examining any legal document that is created is the reason behind the creation of the document and if the document, in this case legislation, is actually effective at what it supposedly aims to accomplish. To state it simply, when it comes to legislation, students that are seeking change, and peaceful change, as this unit aims for, should be encouraged to question the legislation itself, who is included in the decision making process, and who benefits from the legitimation. In order to be able to do this effectively, students should also be taught to question the ways of governing discussed and established within these documents that act as the basis of all legislation within the U.S.

Now, while some teachers prefer to lead the discussion of what it means to have ethical or peaceful legislation into a more philosophical direction, I find that students often get caught up in the process of questioning the operational definition of ethics rather than actually discussing the laws that could be considered ethical. In order to prevent getting hung up on vernacular, and to ensure operational definitions are also provided in terms of peace, students will be utilizing the [8 pillars of peace](#) to act as a backdrop by which to understand both the building blocks of a peaceful society according to the document and also to have a basis by which to judge the level of peace or ethics of the U.S. Constitution as it was originally established and as it is currently enforced.<sup>22</sup>

The 8 Pillars of Peace is a foundational document that details the 8 main factors that are required to achieve peace. With that in mind, the 8 Pillars of Peace allow for problems within nations to be categorized within one of those 8 pillars in order to better help with creating solutions that are more targeted and effective to the specific problem. Furthermore, the 8 Pillars of Peace also helps to break down systems of peace into 8 different pillars so as to make creating

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<sup>21</sup> "NC Constitution - North Carolina General Assembly"

<sup>22</sup> "Pillars of Peace: Understanding the Key Attitudes and Institutions that Underpin Peaceful Societies"



peace more manageable, as it allows for a starting point. Perhaps in an area that is seemingly devoid of peace, one would not know where to start with creating it, but with the 8 Pillars of Peace, people can more easily recognize what is missing within their society and chose one area to focus on in order to jump out of a place of wondering what can be done and into a place of actively taking action.

While I have chosen to use the 8 Pillars of Peace here, I am still maintaining my view that peace should not be the focus of the conversation. In short, students should not be asked “What is Peace?” The reason for this is to eliminate student hang-up surrounding semantics. The use of the 8 Pillars of Peace helps to create a more concrete and workable definition of peace that we will use in class that has a more targeted and usable form. The operational definition of peace, or rather the requirements for peace as described by the 8 Pillars of Peace better allow for students to focus on what peace can do and what it can look like rather than how it is described as a broad concept. With the goal of this unit being to teach students how to build peace through the legislative process, it is vital that while students are not defining peace themselves, that all students do have the same definition of what peace is in order to have a conversation where again, students are not getting hung up on using the same word to talk about two completely different ideals of peace. Additionally, working with a concrete definition of what peace is supposed to contain when it is expressed in society also allows for students to pull in ideas that guide concrete action rather than stopping at the awareness of an issue. With creating laws requiring action, teaching my students to think through the actions taken by lawmakers and how to examine them for if they are creating or disturbing peace is a crucial step to thinking like a peacebuilder.

For this section of the unit students will be divided into groups of 4 with each student having their own copy of the 8 Pillars of Peace document. Once placed, each student within each group will examine two of the pillars of peace for their group and answer the following on a class handout with the questions:

1. What is the pillar of peace you are examining?
2. What does this pillar actually advocate for?
3. In what ways does the U.S. Constitution and the current U.S. government enact this pillar of peace? Please provide a specific example (event, law, etc) and explain.
4. In what ways does the U.S. Constitution and the current U.S. government cause the U.S. to stray away from this pillar of peace? Please provide a specific example (event, law, etc) and explain.
5. What should the government (local or federal) do to make sure this pillar is enforced in the future in a more complete way than it is currently? Please answer this question by writing out a specific law that you would like to see passed.

After students have analyzed their own pillars, students will share the answers to the previous five questions with their group for each pillar of peace. Then, students will focus mainly on the aspects of each pillar that their community thinks should be better implemented and what they think the government should do. From here, students within each group will vote on which two actions by the government were most critical to them out of all of those proposed

for the full 8 pillars of peace and will provide a rationale describing why they choose those specific two.

This lesson will tie into the questioning skills that students need to have for the final project-based assessment of Practicing the Implementation of Peace through Legislation Assignment that concludes the unit.

### Pulling it all Together: Practicing the Implementation of Peace through Legislation

At the end of the Unit students should have a solid understanding of how the U.S. Constitution was established, the purpose of the Bill of Rights and the limitations to federal and state governments. Students should also have an understanding of how laws are passed within the United States within the governmental structure of a republic. This project is where they will implement their knowledge as a class and connect all of these documents and institutions together to gain a full picture of what it takes to create change at the federal level. See Assessments for more information.

### **Assessments**

#### Notebook Checks or Guided Notes

For the majority of my classes, I stress the importance of note taking as both a measure of additional interaction with material and also as a way to ensure students attention is on the lesson. I switch between using guided notes or freestyle notes depending on the needs of my students in each class and conduct two notebook checks per unit, with a full page of notes needing to be written for each lesson for students to earn full points for freestyle notes, and for 100% of notes to be filled out for guided notes to earn full credit for classes that receive guided notes for lessons on general material. A simple percentage is sufficient for grading where the percentage of notes completed fully for the unit will equate to the percent score students earn for their notebook check or guided notes.

#### Class discussions

For many of the topics within this unit there will be class discussions that are either listed here or that will arise naturally as students have questions, and grading for class discussions tends to be rather subjective. To eliminate this subjectiveness, when there is class discussion, planned or spontaneous, I mandate that notes be taken within their class notebooks or, I have students engage in think-pair-share style thinking to ensure students have time to process questions. During the think portion of this though, I always tell students to write down their thoughts and after the discussion, I collect the students notes that they wrote down during their think time for the various discussion questions.

In order for students to gain credit for discussion questions, I ensure that all questions asked to the entirety of the class are answered in complete sentences and to the fullest extent on

the paper that they turn in and also have enough detail to demonstrate knowledge of the topic at hand. Below is a rubric that can be used to help with grading:

	1 point	2 points	3 points
Questions Attempted	Less than half of the discussion questions were answered using complete sentences	Half or more of the discussion questions were answered using complete sentences	All discussion questions were answered using complete sentences
Relevance of Answer to Topic	Answer is not relevant to the topic question	Answer addresses main topic, but does not answer the question fully	Answer addresses main topic and answers the question fully
Correctness of Answer/ Demonstration of Knowledge	Answer is incorrect/ there is not enough detail to demonstrate knowledge of material	There is partial demonstration of knowledge or answer is partially correct, but lacking specificity or full correctness	Answer is fully correct and there is clear demonstration of knowledge on the topic of the question asked

Total possible points = 9 (Note that these points are converted into a 100 point scale by dividing the points earned over 9, and that percentage equates to student grade out of 100 points.)

### The Articles of Confederation

Each student should receive a copy of The Articles of Confederation on which they will be asked to highlight laws that demonstrate state control and state's rights in one color and highlight areas that demonstrate national or central government rights in another color. This can be done individually or in pairs depending on the dynamics of your classroom and needs of your students. The highlighted version of the document will be useful to students as discussion questions are brought up after the time for reviewing the document is completed. Students in advanced classes can also be asked to fully annotate the document as is appropriate for the level of rigor for your class.

In addition to highlighting and or annotating The Articles of Confederation in relation to states versus national rights, there should also be discussion of who (which groups) were included and left out of the writing and voting process for the enactment of the Articles of Confederation. Some guiding questions that can be used in this discussion include the following:

1. If more representation was involved in the creation of the Articles of Confederation would the laws have been different?
2. What was the reasoning behind who was included and who was left out of the writing of the Articles of Confederation?

3. How did the people who were not included in this decision making process respond to the Articles of Confederation?
4. What role did compromise play in both the writing of and enactment of the Articles of Confederation?

At the end of the lesson on The Articles of Confederation, students could be given an exit ticket where they can pick one of the questions below and for the question of their choosing they should write at least a full paragraph and include specific citations from The Articles of Confederation and explanations surrounding their answer that connect the actual text of The Articles of Confederation to the historical context surrounding its creation. Question options for students include:

1. What does the failure of The Articles of Confederation demonstrate about the potential extremes of ideals when it comes to creating a secure country?
2. What does the failure of The Articles of Confederation demonstrate about the need for compromise or open-mindedness when examining solutions to a perceived problem?
3. What does the failure of The Articles of Confederation reveal about unanimous decisions and the need for compromise within government?

The exit ticket should be graded using the same rubric as discussion questions.

### The U.S. Constitution

Students should be given a copy of The U.S. Constitution to use as they would a DBQ document and should annotate it in the following ways: highlight the rights of states in one color, highlight the rights of the federal government in another. Additionally, students should underline the policy related to how amendments can be made to The U.S. Constitution. Once this is done, students should also review their previously annotated version of The Articles of Confederation and create a Venn diagram that compares and contrasts the two documents, paying special attention to the differences in the processes of how both documents outlined the process of legal changes.

The completion of this Venn diagram should contain at least 4 accurate points for each document and 3 commonalities in order to receive full credit.

### *The Bill of Rights*

To review the Bill of Rights, students are divided into ten groups. Each group is given a copy of the Bill of Rights, a poster, markers, and an amendment. Each group should receive a different amendment. The task for each group is to put on their poster the following things: their assigned amendment in the original wording, their assigned amendment worded in simple terms, and a picture or comic to represent the amendment. Once all groups are finished with their posters, a presenter from each group will explain their poster. During the presentations, all students will write down the amendments in simple terms on an individual amendment chart worksheet that will already contain the original wording for each amendment.

Students should receive a grade that combines the work students completed for the poster that includes the criteria listed above and their amendment chart worksheet.

### A Government for Peace? - the Ethics of Law

For this section of the unit students will be divided into groups of 4 with each student having their own copy of the 8 Pillars of Peace document. Once placed, each student within each group will examine two of the pillars of peace for their group and answer the following on a class handout with the questions:

1. What is the pillar of peace you are examining?
2. What does this pillar actually advocate for?
3. In what ways does the U.S. Constitution and the current U.S. government enact this pillar of peace? Please provide a specific example (event, law, etc) and explain.
4. In what ways does the U.S. Constitution and the current U.S. government cause the U.S. to stray away from this pillar of peace? Please provide a specific example (event, law, etc.) and explain.
5. What should the government (local or federal) do to make sure this pillar is enforced in the future in a more complete way than it is currently? Please answer this question by writing out a specific law that you would like to see passed.

Please use the discussion question rubric to grade this as well.

### Pulling it all Together: Practicing the Implementation of Peace through Legislation

At the end of the Unit students should have a solid understanding of how the U.S. Constitution was established, the purpose of the Bill of Rights and the limitations to federal and state governments. Students should also have an understanding of how laws are passed within the United States within the governmental structure of a republic. This project is where they will implement their knowledge as a class and connect all of these documents and institutions together to gain a full picture of what it takes to create change at the federal level.

For this assignment the class will be creating a bill that they will wish to send to their local congressman. To start, students will brainstorm the current issues that are being faced in the U.S. today that they want to be solved and that are preventing their view of a peaceful society. After brainstorming, students vote on which topic they are wanting to tackle most by show of hands. Once the topic is decided, each student will be responsible for researching the following in the following order for their investigation worksheet:

1. What is the statistical and quantitative evidence that the issue that was proposed is an issue? Prove to me that this is actually a problem in the U.S.
2. What does the research surrounding this topic say about the potential causes and potential fixes or this issue?
3. Are there any current states or locations in the world where this problem was once an issue and is no longer an issue? If so, what did they do to eliminate it?

4. If this bill is passed and turned into a law, how should it be practically enforced?
5. How is this bill and your way of enforcing it going to help increase peace within the United States?
6. Combining all of your research, create a draft for a bill using MLA format that has a clear statement of your proposition alongside the evidence that you collected for the fact that what you are proposing is dealing with an observable issue and that your solution is based on research that can be applicable to the country.

Once all of the above tasks are completed, students will bring in their proposed bills and solutions and present them as if at a local council. The teacher will be in the position of moderator and will also provide counter arguments or extra considerations that students will need to address in their final draft. From here, students will revise their work. After these revisions, students will then swap papers and provide constructive criticism to each other about how to improve their work. Once more students will have the opportunity to amend their work, final corrections will be made, and alongside the bill students will also be asked to write a letter to go along with it to the state congressman of their choice and the final assignment will be submitted for credit. It is important to note that this assignment is student-led, and so long as the topics for the proposed law are school-appropriate, the class will be free to explore the issue.

This project will count as the formal or performance grade for the unit and will have 3 parts: the investigation worksheet, classmate bill revisions, and final bill. For the investigation worksheet, please ensure that students have answered each question fully and provided their sources of research. Given that this is the beginning stage of the project, it does not yet need to be perfect. For the classmate bill revisions, each student should receive a sheet that has the rubric teachers will use for the final bill. Students will receive credit for their assessment of another students' work here, as shown in the rubric they fill out. The final bill will be graded according to the following rubric as well:

	1 point	2 points	3 points
Topic or Social Issue of Bill is Clearly Stated	Topic is unclear	Topic is stated but is overly broad	Specific topic is stated clearly
Research and Evidence of the Social Issue for the Bill is Explained	Evidence is mentioned vaguely or not at all	Evidence is mentioned but not explained	Evidence is mentioned and fully explained
The Bill Proposes a Solution to the Social Issue Student is Investigating	No solution is proposed, or the solution is not related to the social issue mentioned	A solution is proposed and broadly relates to the social issue mentioned	A solution is proposed that directly relates to the social issue mentioned

Formatting (MLA)	There is no clear formatting used	Formatting is mostly correct (4-6 errors)	Formatting is completely/ almost completely correct (3 or less errors)
Citations	No citations are made	At least 2 citations are made	At least 4 citations are made
Total Points Possible: 15 (Note that these points are converted into a 100 point scale by dividing the points earned over 15, and that percentage equates to student grade out of 100 points.)			

### Appendix I: Teaching Standards<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> "American History I Course Unpacked Content" NCDPI

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AH1.H.1.3 Use historical analysis and interpretation to identify problems of the past, consider multiple perspectives, analyze cause-and-effect relationships, examine differing historical perspectives, and evaluate the effects of the past on contemporary issues

AH1.H.4.1 Analyze the political issues and conflicts that impacted the United States throughout and after The American Revolution

AH1.H.4.3 Analyze the social and religious conflicts, movements and reforms that affected the United States from colonization through Reconstruction in terms of participants, strategies, opposition, and results

AH1.H.4.4 Analyze the cultural conflicts that impacted the United States through Reconstruction and the compromises that resulted

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AHI.H.5 Understand how tensions between freedom, equality, and power have shaped the political, economic, and social development of the United States.

## **Appendix II Resources for Students**

[Smithsonian History Explorer](#) is a resource that will allow for students to have access to multiple and varying resources regarding the different topics within the unit to explore for extra learning about the topics covered in class.

[U.S. Bill of Rights in Simple English](#) This website lists the 10 amendments found in the Bill of Rights in simple English to help students understand the core rights that were established within the document without getting lost in the wording. There is another resource that allows students to better grasp the larger concepts of the current U.S. constitutional amendments without the legal jargon. Using these two resources together helps with application of material due to increased comprehension.

For students to complete research about topics for their bill proposals, I recommend students use [Core.ac.uk](#) - which is an incredibly large database of open source and free research.

## **Appendix III Resources for Teachers**

[PBS LearningMedia](#) is an incredible resource for teachers who are wanting to find instructional material on any of the topics within the unit. With the variety offered, teachers can adapt lessons as needed. The [Smithsonian History Explorer](#) and the [Smithsonian Learning Lab](#) are resources with similar functionality, but add increased variation. All resources are free and easy to use as well. The Smithsonian Learning Lab also has the added benefit of being able to create content directly through the platform that you can then share with others as well, making it optimal for collaborative lessons.

[Library of Congress](#) is also always a fantastic resource for finding various documents from the foundational documents of the nation to other vital documents from throughout history that are imperative to understanding the history of the U.S. and its peoples.

For resources that have increased access to African American history resources, The [National Museum of African American History and Culture](#) and The [Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database](#) have resources that discuss the time period after The Revolutionary War in early America as well. The [National Museum of the American Indian](#) can also be explored for resources surrounding the impacts of the founding documents and the actions within the early history of the United States on Native American populations.

## **Appendix IV Resources for Classroom Use**

The main resources that will need to be used within the classroom for the contents of this unit include the actual founding documents themselves. The [Articles of Confederation](#) this contains the original wording of the Articles of Confederation for students and teachers to read and

analyze. The [U.S. Constitution](#) and [A current list of U.S. constitutional amendments](#) will also need to be utilized.

Lastly, The [8 Pillars of Peace](#) by The Institute of Economics and Peace contains the 8 pillars of peace as well as detailed explanations of each of the 8 pillars of peace that go into the specifics of what each pillar requires and is an incredibly useful resource for the examination of the 8 Pillars of Peace in a more concrete way.