

**Book:** *What Makes America America?*

**Chapter One: The Declaration of Independence**

**Subject area(s):** Social Studies, English Language Arts

**Amount of time needed:** One 40-minute period

**Objectives:**

- 1) Students will research a philosopher using reference books and reliable Internet sources.
- 2) Students will write a two-page paper utilizing proper writing conventions.

**Materials needed:**

- ✓ Paper
- ✓ Pens or pencils
- ✓ Computers with Internet access
- ✓ Copy of Declaration of Independence

**Activities:**

- 1) Read quote on page 10. Draw attention to philosophers mentioned (Aristotle, Cicero, Locke, Sidney).
- 2) Have students choose one person to research and write about. Paper should include biographical information of person, important ideas held, and impact his writings had on the Declaration of Independence.

**Assessment:**

- ✓ Did the student choose a philosopher and research that person?
- ✓ Did the essay indicate the impact the philosopher had on the Declaration of Independence?
- ✓ Is there specific information from the Declaration to support the claims?

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**Chapter Two: The Constitution**

**Subject area(s):** Social Studies, English Language Arts

**Amount of time needed:** One 40-minute period

**Objectives:**

- 1) Students will be able to successfully complete reading comprehension sheet.

**Materials needed:**

- ✓ Worksheet

**Activities:**

- 1) Have students read chapter 2 in the text and then complete a worksheet with the following questions:
  1. Name five principles that guided the design of the U.S. government.
  2. Name the three branches of government.
  3. Explain the theory of checks and balances among the three branches of government.
  4. How many times does the word “slavery” appear in the Constitution? Where does it appear?
  5. Name and describe four important amendments.

**Assessment:**

- ✓ Do the answers to the five questions reflect an accurate, adequate understanding of the concepts and information in the text?

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**Chapter Three: The Bill of Rights**

**Subject area(s):** Social Studies, Art

**Amount of time needed:** One 40-minute period

**Objectives:**

- 1) Students will demonstrate understanding of the Bill of Rights.
- 2) Students will rewrite an amendment.
- 3) Students will create a poster for their chosen amendment.

**Materials needed:**

- ✓ Writing materials
- ✓ Art materials
- ✓ Dictionary
- ✓ Thesaurus

**Activities:**

- 1) Have students work individually or in pairs. Assign each student/pair one amendment to rewrite in language that is more easily understood. They may need dictionaries to look up unknown words in order to do this.
- 2) After the teacher has approved the rewritten amendment, have students create a poster with the rewritten amendment and illustrations. Display the posters in the room or hallway.

**Assessment:**

- ✓ Does the poster reflect an understanding of the assigned amendment?
- ✓ Is the poster attractive and neat?

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**Chapter Four:** The Electoral College

**Subject area(s):** Social Studies

**Amount of time needed:** One 40-minute period

**Objectives:**

- 1) Students will recognize the symbols (donkey, elephant) that represent the two major political parties.
- 2) Students will create an animal symbol for a third major political party.
- 3) Students will explain what characteristics are associated with the animal and the third party (dog = loyalty, owl = wisdom, etc.).

**Materials needed:**

- ✓ Paper
- ✓ Colored pencils

**Activities:**

- 1) Have students refer to pages 48 and 49 in the text. Discuss the meaning behind the symbols and the simplicity of the design.
- 2) Have students work in pairs or small groups to create an animal symbol for a new political party. They should draw the design and write a paragraph to explain the qualities of the symbol that represent the beliefs of the party.

**Assessment:**

- ✓ Does the symbol reflect an understanding of the meaning behind symbol?
- ✓ Does the symbol reflect group participation and effort?

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**Chapter Five: Ending the Legacy of Slavery**

**Subject area(s): Social Studies**

**Amount of time needed: One 40-minute period**

**Objectives:**

- 1) The students will read and review information in text.
- 2) The students will demonstrate an understanding of the amendments and the reasons behind them.
- 3) The students will be able to explain the reaction to the amendments in the Southern states.

**Materials needed:**

- ✓ Worksheet
- ✓ Pen, pencil

**Activities:**

- 1) Have students read chapter 5 in the text. Using the book, each student should then respond to this worksheet:
  1. Briefly state what each amendment says: 13th (p. 51), 14th (pp. 51–52), 15th (p. 53), 24th (p. 55).
  2. What were some ways Southern states tried to change these amendments?
  3. Do you think we've solved these problems? Explain.

**Assessment:**

- ✓ Do the worksheet responses indicate an understanding of these amendments and the problems they were meant to address?

**Book:** *What Makes America America?*

**Chapter Six: What Makes the American Economy?**

**Subject area(s):** Social Studies, English Language Arts

**Amount of time needed:** One to two 40-minute periods

**Objectives:**

- 1) Students will follow instructions to assemble a product.
- 2) Students will compare individual assembly with an assembly line.
- 3) Students will write an essay explaining how the assembly line influenced manufacturing in the United States.

**Materials needed:**

- ✓ Raw materials for product
- ✓ Instructions for assembly

**Activities:**

- 1) Review chapter 6.
- 2) Have some students work individually to assemble five items (such as 5 sandwiches or 5 Lego cars). Have other students form an assembly line to assemble five products.
- 3) When finished, let students discuss which method was easier, faster, and produced a better product. What were the differences with each method?
- 4) Using this personal experiment and information from the book, students will write essays that explore how the assembly line changed American manufacturing.

**Assessment:**

- ✓ Does the essay reflect an understanding of the changes brought about by the assembly line?
- ✓ Did the student participate in making the product?

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**Chapter Seven: What Makes America America Twenty-First Century**

**Subject area(s):** Social Studies, English Language Arts

**Amount of time needed:** One to three 40-minute periods

**Objectives:**

- 1) Students will research the Patriot Act.
- 2) Students will form an opinion about the constitutionality of the Patriot Act.
- 3) Students will prepare an oral presentation expressing their views.

**Materials needed:**

- ✓ Writing materials
- ✓ Computers with Internet access

**Activities:**

- 1) The teacher should have the students read the chapter in class and then entertain some questions and comments concerning the Patriot Act. The teacher will have students use outside sources to research the Patriot Act.
- 2) From the facts they find, students will assemble an oral presentation. This presentation should clearly state one opinion and support that opinion. The students will deliver their oral presentations in class. These may be videotaped to show to other classes or to have on display at open house.

**Assessment:**

- ✓ Does the presentation contain accurate information?
- ✓ Does the presentation clearly support one opinion, with supporting rationale?
- ✓ Is the oral presentation made with confidence and good public-speaking skills?