**Struggling Readers Portfolio Lesson Plan**

**Objectives:**

* Teach students about the Articles of Confederation and U.S. Constitution in relation to Virginia and U.S. History SOL requirement VUS 5 a-d.
* Students will learn about the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation in relation to SOL requirement VUS 5a.
* The major compromises (Connecticut and Three-Fifths) of the Constitution, as well as the roles of George Washington and James Madison in the formation of the Constitution will be discussed in relation to SOL requirement VUS 5b.
* The Bill of Rights, as well as the importance of the Virginia Declaration of Rights and Virginia Statue of Religious Freedom in framing the Bill of Rights will be discussed in relation to SOL Requirement VUS 5c.
* The role of federalists and anti-federalists in the formation of the Constitution and Bill of Rights will be discussed in relation to SOL Requirement VUS 5d.
* Students will watch short videos on the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution, do a short reading about these documents, as well as read the Bill of Rights.
* Students will do an anticipation guide to help them better understand the Articles of Confederation and the U.S. Constitution (Fisher, Brozo, Frey & Ivey, 2011).
* Students will also work in groups or engage in collaborative learning in completing the anticipation guide after the reading (Alvermann, Gillis & Phelps, 2013).
* If time permits a class debate (discussion group) may be held on whether or not the federal government is too powerful today in relation to the states (Alvermann, Gillis & Phelps, 2013).

**Essential Questions/Rationale:**

* This is an important lesson for several reasons because this lesson is a Virginia SOL requirement, but more importantly the U.S. Constitution is an extremely important document that affects people today.
* The Constitution has provided the framework for American democracy and our basic rights.
* The document might be of particular interest to some ELL’s because many other nations based their Constitutions on the U.S. Constitution.
* Many issues debated during the Constitutional Convention like the size of the Federal government are issues still discussed today.
* Also people that believe that their personal freedoms are being violated use the Bill of Rights to support their rights today.
* The anticipation guide should help stir interest in the subject for students (Fisher, Brozo, Frey & Ivey 2011), and the assignment should also help students understand the material better.
* The readings are relatively straightforward and not lengthy; however, they cover the subject area very well.
* These readings should be easier for struggling readers or ELL’s because the readings are short and the grammar is not extremely complex.
* The videos should stir interest in the subject matter for students (including struggling readers and ELL’s), and will help reinforce ideas in the reading.
* The collaborative work during the anticipation guide after the readings and videos should be of particular help to struggling readers and ELL’s; as a student in their group will be able to help them if they had trouble with the readings or videos.
* The debate should be fun and help show students the relevance of the Constitution to today.
* The anticipation guide debate will also force students to elaborate on their ideas.

**Instructional Steps:**

* Students will complete the before reading section of the anticipation guide independently. Approximate time: around 3 minutes
* Students will complete the readings on the Constitution and the Bill of Rights from the History channel website. I would probably print copies of both readings for the class to read. Approximate time: around 7 minutes
* Students will watch two youtube videos. One is on the Articles of Confederation; the other is a Schoolhouse Rock video on the Preamble to the Constitution. Approximate time: around 6 minutes
* I will talk briefly about the importance of SOL requirements like the Virginia Declaration of Rights and Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom since they were not really mentioned in the readings or video. Approximate time: around 2 minutes
* Students will get into groups and complete the after reading portion of the anticipation guide. Approximate time: around 7 minutes
* We will discuss the anticipation guide and answer any questions students have on the Constitution or lesson in general. Approximate time: around 10 minutes
* We will have a class debate on whether or not the federal government is too powerful today in relation to the states. Approximate time: around 15 minutes
* Total lesson time: around 50 minutes

**Reading/Video links:**

* History Channel U.S. Constitution Reading: <http://www.history.com/topics/constitution>
* History Channel Bill of Rights: <http://www.history.com/topics/bill-of-rights>
* Articles of Confederation YouTube video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fbP0JWQeXag>
* Schoolhouse Rock Constitution YouTube video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pIKhRERqPS4>

**Assignment Example:** answers in bold, all answers after reading are correct

ANTICPATION GUIDE

Statement and Support Before Reading After Reading

1. Articles of Confederation provided **True** FalseTrue **False**

a strong national government.

Support: the articles supported a weak national government, as Congress had little power to raise money or control the states

1. The Constitution provided a system **True** False **True** False

of checks and balances.

Support: the Constitution created three separate branches of government that could check and balance each other

1. The Three-Fifths Compromise **True** False **True** False

dealt with slavery.

Support: this compromise ended up counting slaves as 3/5 of a citizen

1. The Connecticut Compromise dealt True **False** True **False**

with slavery.

Support: this compromise resulted in equal representation in the Senate from each state, while representation in the House of Representatives was based on state population

1. James Madison was the President of **True** False True **False**

the Constitutional Convention.

Support: George Washington was the President; however, James Madison played a major role in the Convention

1. The Bill of Rights are the first ten **True** False **True** False

amendments to the constitution.

Support: the Bill of Rights was created in response to concerns about individual liberties and the power of the Federal government

1. Anti-Federalists like Patrick Henry True **False** True **False**

supported a big National government.

Support: the Federalists supported a strong national government, while anti-federalists like Henry were deeply suspicious of a large Federal government

**Assignment Checklist:**

* Students made a thoughtful effort to complete the assignment.
* After working in groups students are able to come up with the correct answers to the questions after the readings and videos.
* Students are able to elaborate on their answers in the support section of the anticipation guide.

**Notes:**

* If students are having difficulty with this lesson, I can provide further assistance to those students during and/or after the lesson.
* Groups can be assigned to make sure all the struggling readers or ELL’s are not put in the same group.
* The debate is being done more for fun and to show the relevance of the lesson to today; however, I will encouraged all students to participate and respect each other’s views.
* It is possible to complete this assignment using a chapter in a history or government textbook as well, as long as students have the ability to comprehend the readings.

**Bibliography**

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