

Teacher's Name:  
Employee Number:  
School:

**Social Studies Lesson Plan**  
**Explain how and why the United States government was created**

**1. Title: Creation of United States Government**

**2. Overview- Big Idea**

Enduring Understandings

- Understand reasons for creating the United States government
- Realize the importance of independence to the American colonists
- Recognize that a constitution is the foundation of laws for a government.
- Comprehend the importance of the Bill of Rights

Essential Questions

- How did the actions of the British influence the creation of the United States government?
- What factors led to writing the Declaration of Independence?
- What are some of the reasons the colonists decided to create their own government?
- What is the significance of the first ten amendments to the United States Constitution?

**3. Lesson Objectives**

Standards - (Next Generation Sunshine State Standards for Social Studies)

NGSSS-SS Benchmarks \_\_\_\_\_

- Explain how and why the United States government was created.

Tested Seventh Grade NGSSS-SS Benchmarks Relevant to this Lesson

- SS.7.C.1.4 Analyze the ideas (natural rights, role of the government) and complaints set forth in the Declaration of Independence.
- SS.7.C.1.9 Define the rule of law and recognize its influence on the development of the American legal, political and governmental systems.
- SS.7.C.2.4 Evaluate rights contained in the Bill of Rights and other amendments to the Constitution.

**4. Key Vocabulary:**

constitution, republic, article, ratify, legislative branch , executive branch , judicial branch, preamble, domestic tranquility, republicanism, amendment, popular sovereignty , limited government, individual rights

**5. Evidence of Student Understanding in this Lesson:**

***What key knowledge and skills will students acquire as a result of this lesson?***

After students complete this lesson, they will be able to identify the reasons the American colonists issued the Declaration of Independence. Students will be able to explain how and why the United States government was created.

Also, as a result of acquiring the knowledge and skills addressed in this lesson, students should be able to discuss the painting by John Trumbull and the founding fathers that are in the painting.

***What will students be able to do as a result of such knowledge and skills?***

As a result of acquiring said knowledge and skills, students will be able to complete the attachments associated with this lesson. Students will also be able explain how and why the United States government was created.

Additionally, students will be able to correctly answer the questions that are part of the formal assessment included in this lesson.

Both **formative and summative assessments** are included.

**6. Materials Needed:**

Attachment A: Radio Theater Script

- Attachment B: Context of the Declaration of Independence reading
- Attachment C: Quiz to the Above Reading
- Attachment D: John Trumbull painting” Declaration of Independence”
- Attachment E: Bill of Rights
- Attachment F Post Quiz

**7. Steps to Deliver the Lesson:**

*A detailed, step by step description of how to deliver the lesson and achieve the lesson plan objectives*

- a. Lesson Opening: Briefly review why we celebrate the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Have students brain storm what they remember about the Revolutionary War and the important people during this time period.
- b. Readers Theater (Attachment A) Radio Script: *We Got to Get Independence!* Students will perform the radio script and discuss the problems and restrictions the colonists likely experienced under King George III and the British government, what they probably thought and felt and why they sought independence. Have students’ journal about what they might have thought in the same situation and what they might have done.
- c. Reading: Distribute reading (Attachment B): Context of the Declaration of Independence. Use jump in or other effective reading strategies appropriate for your class to read the background information contained in the article. The true –false assessment tool (Attachment C) can be used a post reading exercise and discussion stimulus.
- d. The Declaration in Visual Art. Show students (Attachment D) or view webpage <http://www.ushistory.org/declaration/images/trumbull-large1.jpg> of Trumbull’s painting, “The Signing of the Declaration of Independence. Have students describe the room and furniture. Ask them what they think is happening and who is in charge. Discuss the significance of the event in the painting. (More lessons on the painting can be found at: <http://asp1.umbc.edu/newmedia/sites/chetah/lessondisplay.cfm?lesson=62&heading=3> )

An interactive website of Trumbull's painting which can be shown on a SMART board or computer is located at <http://www.quiz-tree.com/Declaration-of-Independence-Trumbull.html>

- e. Students will view a copy of the Bill of Rights and discuss the rights of citizens under the United States Constitution. (Attachment E). For a “kid friendly” power point presentation on the Bill of Rights visit: <http://government.pppst.com/billofrights.html>
- f. After students have discussed the Bill of Rights, have them sing the Bill of Rights song (below).

Bill of Rights Song:

The 1st 10 amendments to the Constitution.

“Music from the Twelve Days of Christmas.”

Refrain:

The 1<sup>st</sup> amendment of the Constitution says (doing numbers 1 through 10).

- 1) Freedom of Speech and Religion
- 2) Militia and Arms
- 3) No quartered soldiers
- 4) No search and seizure
- 5) Right to D-U-E P-R-O-C-E-S-S
- 6) Jury in Civil Court
- 7) Right to a Jury
- 8) No cruel Punishments
- 9) Basic human rights
- 10) Unlisted powers for people and states

The song leads into a class discussion which can also be illustrated and made into a class booklet.

- g. Finally, have students take the post-quiz associated with this lesson (see attachment F). Go over the quiz with students and check for understanding as needed. Re-teach concepts not understood.

## **8. Specific Activities: (from Guided to Independent)**

- a. Once students have read and completed the attachments (A-C), have them write a one to two paragraph summary describing the information that is presented in the readings.

- b. Pair students who are struggling readers and/or English Language Learners, with another student for assistance.
- c. Be sure to circulate the room to monitor students' abilities in writing the paragraph(s). If students have difficulty writing the paragraphs, model the beginnings of paragraphs with them on the board.
- d. Have students share their completed paragraphs with the class in a small or large group.

**9. Differentiated Instruction Strategies:**

*How to accommodate a variety of student learning needs, remediation strategies as well as enrichment strategies.*

- a. While students are completing the readings and reading quiz, work on an individual basis with students having difficulty.
- b. Students may also be teamed in a pair/share style to work on readings and the reading quiz (attachment C).

**10. Technology Integration:**

*Activities incorporating technology; e.g., address lesson content through online resources.*

- a. Students may visit , Ben's guide to the government for grades 3-5, online at -<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/3-5/index.html>
- b. Students may visit, PBS – Life in the Colonies, online at-  
[http://www.pbs.org/ktca/liberty/perspectives\\_daily.html](http://www.pbs.org/ktca/liberty/perspectives_daily.html)
- c. Declaration of Independence Trumbull image:  
<http://www.ushistory.org/declaration/images/trumbull-large1.jpg>
- h. Lessons on Trumbull image:  
<http://asp1.umbc.edu/newmedia/sites/chetah/lessondisplay.cfm?lesson=62&heading=3> )

- i. An interactive website of Trumbull's painting which can be shown on a SMART board or computer is located at <http://www.quiz-tree.com/Declaration-of-Independence-Trumbull.html>
- j. Bill of Rights, activities, power point presentations:  
<http://government.pppst.com/billofrights.html>

**11. Lesson Closure:**

*Methods to draw ideas together, review concepts, etc.*

- a. After completing the post-quiz reviewing with students, ask students the following questions to wrap up the lesson:
  - What are some of the reasons the United States government was created?
  - Why and how did the colonists declare their independence from England?
  - What rights are guaranteed in the Bill of Rights?
- b. For Home Learning-Have students write and illustrate a summary of one of the rights guaranteed in the Bill of Rights.

## Attachment A

### Radio Theatre Script:

#### WE GOT TO GET INDEPENDENCE!

*\*\*This is a radio theatre. The characters are set in front of real or imagined microphones. They may sit or stand. The inflection of their voices along with the script will tell the story. The title, author, and list of characters are introduced to the audience by the narrator.*

#### List of Characters:

Narrator

John Hancock

Samuel Adams

Chorus of 10 students or more

Narrator: This event is set in Boston, in the colony of Massachusetts, several years before 1776. This fictional play reflects a conversation that could have taken place between two good friends and American patriots, John Hancock and Samuel Adams. Their conversation reveals some of the true reasons why the American colonists decided to declare their independence.

Samuel Adams: I've been reading over the Navigation Acts. Did you know it means that all goods that come in to or go out of our colony have to be inspected by the British and transported on their ships? We can't even ship our own goods.

John Hancock: It's so the British can make money from the American colonies.

Chorus: WE GOT TO GET INDEPENDENCE!

Samuel Adams: And did you know that the British government won't allow us to trade with other countries without British permission and regulation?

John Hancock: That will greatly hinder the colonies' success.

Chorus: WE GOT TO GET INDEPENDENCE!

Samuel Adams: It also says that we're not allowed to manufacture products in our colonies that are already made in Britain. We have to buy from them.

John Hancock: Where will we get the money to pay for those things?

Chorus: WE GOT TO GET INDEPENDENCE!

John Hancock: I've been reading over the Stamp Act. Did you know the British government could tax us fifty-five ways from this act alone?

Samuel Adams: The colonists did not agree to it.

Chorus: WE GOT TO GET INDEPENDENCE!

John Hancock: When I graduated from college, they charged a tax on my diploma. And when a friend wrote his will, there was a tax on that too. They put taxes on every kind of document!

Samuel Adams: Why don't they let us make our own laws?

Chorus: WE GOT TO GET INDEPENDENCE!

John Hancock: Do you know about his other acts? Now the British are stationed at all our ports, and they have search warrants to make sure we don't ship anything without their permission. We can't get fair trials if we go to their courts about it.

Samuel Adams: Will they ever learn how much we value liberty?

Chorus: WE GOT TO GET INDEPENDENCE!

John Hancock: I'm not buying or drinking that tea shipped to the colonies from one of their companies. There's a tax on it, too! They think we won't notice, and they just want to control our colony.

Samuel Adams: I know what to do. Do tea leaves mix with salt water?

John Hancock: What are you planning?

Samuel Adams: There's tea waiting to be unloaded on the ships in Boston harbor. Let's disguise ourselves tonight and dump it overboard!

John Hancock: The fewer people who know the better.

Chorus: WE GOT TO GET INDEPENDENCE!

Source: [www.americanheritage.org](http://www.americanheritage.org)



## The Context of Our Declaration of Independence

At one time, the American colonies belonged to the King of England. The British government had taken a lot of the Americans' money for taxes. They would not let them buy and sell things with other countries. The king said that his soldiers could live in the buildings and homes of the American colonists. There could be little protest because the judges and government officials were appointed and paid by the king. Many people in America were tired of all the problems with the British government and king, so their leaders or delegates met to decide what to do. These leaders were rich plantation owners, business men, and ordinary citizens such as Samuel Adams. After the first meeting, a list of pleas were sent to the king, but he refused to make changes. The American leaders decided that they wanted to be independent, or free, from the king and the British government. At their next meeting, they chose Thomas Jefferson and some other men to write a paper to tell the world about how they wanted to be free to make their own decisions in their own nation. The colonists' leaders voted to accept what Jefferson had written and signed their names on the paper. John Hancock, the presiding delegate, or leading man, at both meetings was the first to sign the Declaration of Independence. The story is that Hancock made his signature big and bold because he wanted the king to be able to read it without the aid of eyeglasses. Hancock's signature became so famous that even today when someone asks for a person's signature, he or she sometimes says, "Put your John Hancock there."

After the other delegates signed the Declaration, copies were made so that all the people could read it. The Declaration said that all men were created equal and that God gives all people important things like life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The Declaration also listed the reasons why the American people were mad at the king and British government. Lastly, the Declaration said that the people were starting their own country called the United States of America. All of the fifty-six men who signed the Declaration of Independence knew that the king would not let them be free without a fight. Many of them would be hurt or killed in the fighting. The colonists knew that if the British won, all who signed the Declaration would go to jail or maybe even hanged. Nine of the signers died because of the fighting. Twelve of them had their homes destroyed. These men and other Americans fought hard and won the war for independence. Now every year on the 4th of July, we remember the Declaration of Independence and the brave men who fought so that we could be free.

Reading from: [www.americanheritage.org](http://www.americanheritage.org)

## Attachment C

### Declaration of Independence Assessment Tool

Instructions: This is an assessment tool for the reading passage entitled, "The Context of Our Declaration of Independence." Write T for each true statement and F for each false statement.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The King of England totally owned the American colonies.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. In the pre-Revolutionary American colonies, a new needle and spool of sewing thread had to be bought from a British company.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. In the pre-Revolutionary American colonies, all trade was open and free.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Thomas Jefferson was the first person to sign the Declaration of Independence.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. All delegates or leaders of the American colonists were rich businessmen.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. John Hancock loved the British and their king.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Fifty-six men and women signed the Declaration of Independence.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. On the 5th of July every year, we celebrate our independence.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. According to the British king, all 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence committed treason.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. A British soldier in pre-Revolutionary War time could occupy your home.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Tyranny or injustice caused the colonists to unite and declare their freedom.

Attachment C- ANSWERS

Declaration of Independence Assessment Tool

Answers: 1=T, 2=T, 3=F, 4=F, 5=F, 6=F, 7=F, 8=F, 9=T, 10=T, 11=T

ATTACHMENT D



## Attachment E

### **Bill of Rights**

The following text is a transcription of the first ten amendments to the Constitution in their original form. These amendments were ratified December 15, 1791, and form what is known as the "Bill of Rights."

---

#### Amendment I

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

---

#### Amendment II

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

---

#### Amendment III

No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

---

#### Amendment IV

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

---

#### Amendment V

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

---

#### Amendment VI

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defence.

---

#### Amendment VII

In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise re-examined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

---

#### Amendment VIII

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

---

#### Amendment IX

The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

---

#### Amendment X

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

Source: National Archives

[http://archives.gov/exhibits/charters/bill\\_of\\_rights\\_transcript.html](http://archives.gov/exhibits/charters/bill_of_rights_transcript.html)

Low Complexity Items (3 items):

1. Which document was written to let the world know that the colonists wanted to be free to make their own decisions in their own nation?
  - a. The Citizenship Document
  - b. The United States Constitution
  - c. The Bill of Rights
  - d. The Declaration of Independence
  
2. Who was the author of the Declaration of Independence?
  - a. Abraham Lincoln
  - b. George Washington
  - c. Bill Clinton
  - d. Thomas Jefferson
  
3. What was the name given to people in the thirteen colonies who supported independence?
  - a. Tories
  - b. Patriots
  - c. Loyalists
  - d. pacifists

Moderate Complexity Items:

4. When John Hancock signed the Declaration of Independence, he made his signature big and bold because he wanted the king to be able to read it without his eyeglasses.  
Why was this a bold thing to do?
  - a. It might have caused jealousy from the many colonists who weren't able to read and write
  - b. It might have caused him to be jailed or put to death by the king
  - c. It might anger the other signers by not leaving enough space for their signatures
  - d. It might have angered the colonists that he was taunting the king
  
5. Why do you think the Declaration of Independence was written?
  - a. to tell the world more soldiers should be sent to the colonies
  - b. to tell the world why the colonies thought they should be an independent nation
  - c. to tell the world how kindly the colonists were treated by the king
  - d. to tell the world that the colonists would always be loyal to the king
  
6. Why did the colonists have so little success in protesting their many grievances to government officials in the colonies?
  - a. because the colonists were not very good at protesting
  - b. because the colonists were not well organized and didn't get along with one another
  - c. because the judges and government officials were appointed and paid by the king
  - d. because the judges and government officials were appointed and paid by the patriots



## High Complexity Items

7. Amendment III (3) in the Bill of Rights states that “No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner prescribed by law.”

Why did the people think this was important enough to be included as an amendment to the United States Constitution?

- a. Some colonists had been forced to feed and provide shelter for the patriots
  - b. Some colonists were forced to raise quarter horses for the British army
  - c. Some colonists had been forced to feed and provide shelter for British soldiers
  - d. Some colonists had been forced to pay larger taxes on their homes
8. Which group of events about early American history is in the correct chronological order (earliest to latest)?
- a. Revolutionary War→Declaration of Independence→King taxes colonists
  - b. King taxes colonists→Declaration of Independence→Revolutionary War
  - c. Colonization→Revolutionary War→Declaration of Independence
  - d. Declaration of Independence→Colonization→Revolutionary War

9. The beginning of the Declaration of Independence states:

“We hold these truths to be self evident; That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;...”

By putting this statement at the beginning of the Declaration, what does it suggest that the authors thought the most basic function of government should be?

- a. to make sure that all of the people vote
- b. to make sure that all of the people’s rights are guaranteed
- c. to make sure that everyone is protected by a strong military
- d. to make sure that all of the people have jobs

10. What was the main reason the Bill of Rights was added to the United States Constitution?

- a. to give citizens rights and protect them from too much power from the Federal Government
- b. to give citizens rights and make sure they all had equal wealth
- c. to give the states increased responsibilities so they would have more power than the Federal Government
- d. give citizens jobs and make sure they all served at least four years in the military

## Answers to Post Quiz

1. D
2. D
3. B
4. B
5. B
6. C
7. C
8. B
9. B
10. A