

Founding Freedoms

America's Founding Documents

Middle School



Inquiry Design Model (IDM) Blueprint™

<p>Compelling Question</p>	<p>How have these documents shaped the United States of America?</p>
<p>Standards and Practices</p>	<p>Students will evaluate the reasons for the development of the United States Constitution by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describing the purpose of the Constitutional Convention. • Analyzing how the Great Compromise addressed the regional interests and differences. <p>Students will evaluate the impact of the Constitution on the structure of the United States government by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying the goals of the Constitution as stated in the preamble. • Explaining how the Constitution embeds key principles of checks and balances, separation of powers, federalism, popular sovereignty, individual rights, and limited government. <p>Students will analyze how the Bill of Rights resolved the issues over the ratification of the Constitution by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyzing the Federalist and Anti-Federalist arguments for and against the ratification of the Constitution. • Evaluating the impact of the Bill of Rights on the ratification of the Constitution. <p>American Government</p> <p>Students will analyze historic documents to determine the basic principles of the United States government and apply them to real world situations by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracing the evolution of limited government and other principles from English common law through the Enlightenment philosophers to the foundations of American government. • Describing how the Declaration of Independence articulates the philosophy of government founded on basic principles. • Analyzing how the Constitution reflects the basic principles and eliminated the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation.
<p>Staging the Question</p>	<p>Read the first two paragraphs of the Declaration of Independence, interpret into modern language, and discuss what the founders were communicating to Great Britain and the colonists by writing a document declaring independence.</p>

Supporting Question 1		Supporting Question 2	Supporting Question 3
How did the Declaration of Independence communicate the colonists' principles?		How did varying political views lead to the creation of the Constitution and Bill of Rights.	What were the reactions of the people in the newly formed United States?
Formative Performance Task		Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task
In groups or individually, assign paragraphs of the Declaration of Independence to students. Have students read, interpret, and write in modern language and then share with the class.		Compare and contrast the ideals of the Federalists and Anti-Federalists. Discuss the importance	Read letters and newspaper articles detailing the people's responses. Outline their viewpoints and how it affects their lives.
Featured Sources		Featured Sources	Featured Sources
https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript		Hamilton Soundtrack – Cabinet Battle #1 and Cabinet Battle #2; https://billofrightsinstitute.org/would-you-have-been-a-federalist-or-an-anti-federalist/ ;	Source A: The Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution Digital Edition, ed. John P. Kaminski, Gaspare J. Saladino, Richard Leffler, Charles H. Schoenleber and Margaret A. Hogan. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009. Original source: Ratification by the States, Volume II: Pennsylvania https://csac.history.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/281/2017/07/anno-pennsylvania.pdf Source B: The Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution Digital Edition, ed. John P. Kaminski, Gaspare J. Saladino, Richard Leffler, Charles H. Schoenleber and Margaret A. Hogan. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009. Original source: Ratification by the States, Volume XIX: New York, No. 1 https://csac.history.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/281/2017/07/new_york.pdf
Summative Performance Task	Argument	How have Washington's Resignation, the Declaration of Independence, the US Constitution, and the Bill of Rights shaped our nation? Construct an argument (e.g. detailed outline, poster, essay) that discusses the compelling question using specific claims and relevant evidence from historical and contemporary sources while acknowledging competing views.	
	Extension	Examine the founding documents and propose revisions	
Taking Informed Action		ASSESS Have a class discussion on how these documents affect our daily lives. ACT As a class develop your own government. Determine how the country will be lead, what rights citizens are given, how laws will be created and enforced, and what requires citizenship. Consider the challenges the founders faced and the compromises they made to form the United States.	

Overview

Inquiry Description

The goal of this inquiry is to encourage students to consider the immediate and lasting effects of the founding documents, including the Declaration of Independence, Washington’s Resignation as Commander of the Army, the US Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. In examining the compelling question--“How did the founding documents shape the United States of America?” students explore the history of early America including the political climate, the challenges of early Americans, and the collegiality of the founders. Students work with these primary source documents to understand the challenges faced by the founders during the creation of a new nation. The goal of this inquiry is to provide students with an opportunity to explore these documents in depth and analyze their meaning and impact.

NOTE: This inquiry is expected to take three to five 40-minute class periods. The inquiry time frame could expand if teachers think their students need additional instructional experiences (i.e., supporting questions, formative performance tasks, and featured sources). Teachers are encouraged to adapt the inquiries in order to meet the needs and interests of their particular students. Resources can also be modified as necessary to meet individualized education programs (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans for students with disabilities.

Structure of the Inquiry

In addressing the compelling question “How have the founding documents shaped the United States of America?” students work through a series of supporting questions, formative performance tasks, and featured sources in order to construct an argument supported by evidence and counterevidence from a variety of sources. The inquiry concludes with students Taking Informed Action on a related issue in a classroom setting.

Staging the Compelling Question

The Staging the Compelling Question exercise provides teachers with an opportunity to begin the Taking Informed Action sequence of tasks. To do so, teachers may have students engage in a think-pair-share activity to develop a list of American Ideals. Students will refer to these ideals developing their own government.

Supporting Question 1

The first supporting question—“Why did the colonists seek independence from Great Britain? encourages students to consider the principles of the United States . This first formative performance task asks students to write a newspaper article outlining their grievances as American colonists. Students will explore the Stamp Act and Townshend Acts.

Featured Source A provides dates and context for the events to be added to the timeline. Featured Source B shows one of the events in more detail. Featured Source C portrays an event through imagery. Featured Source D illustrates the result of the events on the timeline.

Supporting Question 2

The second supporting question—“How did varying political views lead to the creation of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights?” turns students’ attention to the collaboration and compromise required to develop the founding documents. The formative performance task is to compare and contrast the ideals of the two major political parties involved in the creation of these documents. The first featured source showcases the passion and dedication of the founders through song. The second featured source is the US Constitution. The third featured source is the Bill of Rights. The fourth featured source details the differences in the political parties. After reviewing the sources students create a Venn diagram of platforms of the federalists and the anti-federalists.

Supporting Question 3

The third supporting question—“What were the reactions of the citizens in the newly formed United States?”—builds on students’ understanding of the time period and the impacts the documents had not only on the founders, but average Americans. The featured sources highlight the personal experiences of Marylanders following the founding of the new nation. The formative performance task calls students to research and read primary source documents and outline various points of view.

Summative Performance Task

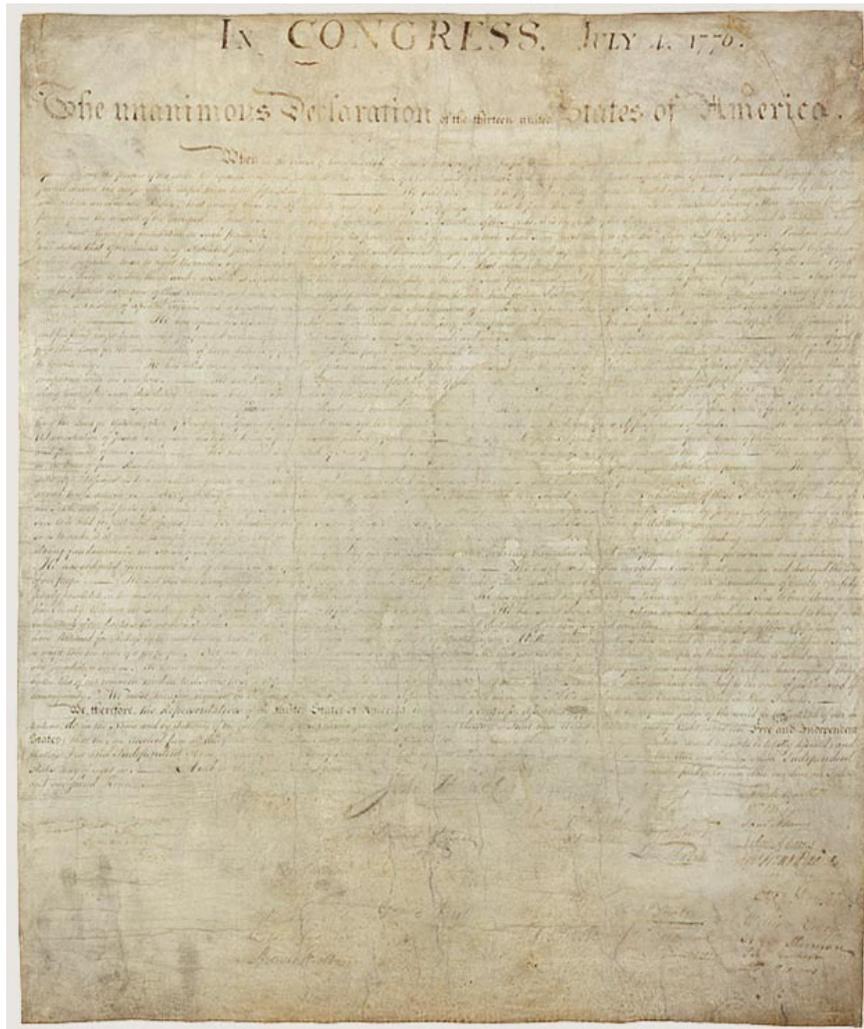
At this point in the inquiry, students have analyzed founding documents and their impacts both locally and nationally. The students should be able to demonstrate the breadth of their understandings and their abilities to use evidence from multiple sources to support their claims. In this task, students examine the founding documents and propose revisions. It is important to note that students’ arguments could take a variety of forms, including a detailed outline, poster, or essay.

Students could extend their study by discussing how the documents affect their daily lives. Using their arguments as a foundation, they could develop their own government. They would debate various aspects of the foundations of government while considering the challenges the founders of the United States faced.

Staging the Compelling Question

Featured Source

Source A: Declaration of Independence. <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript>



Supporting Question 1

Featured Source

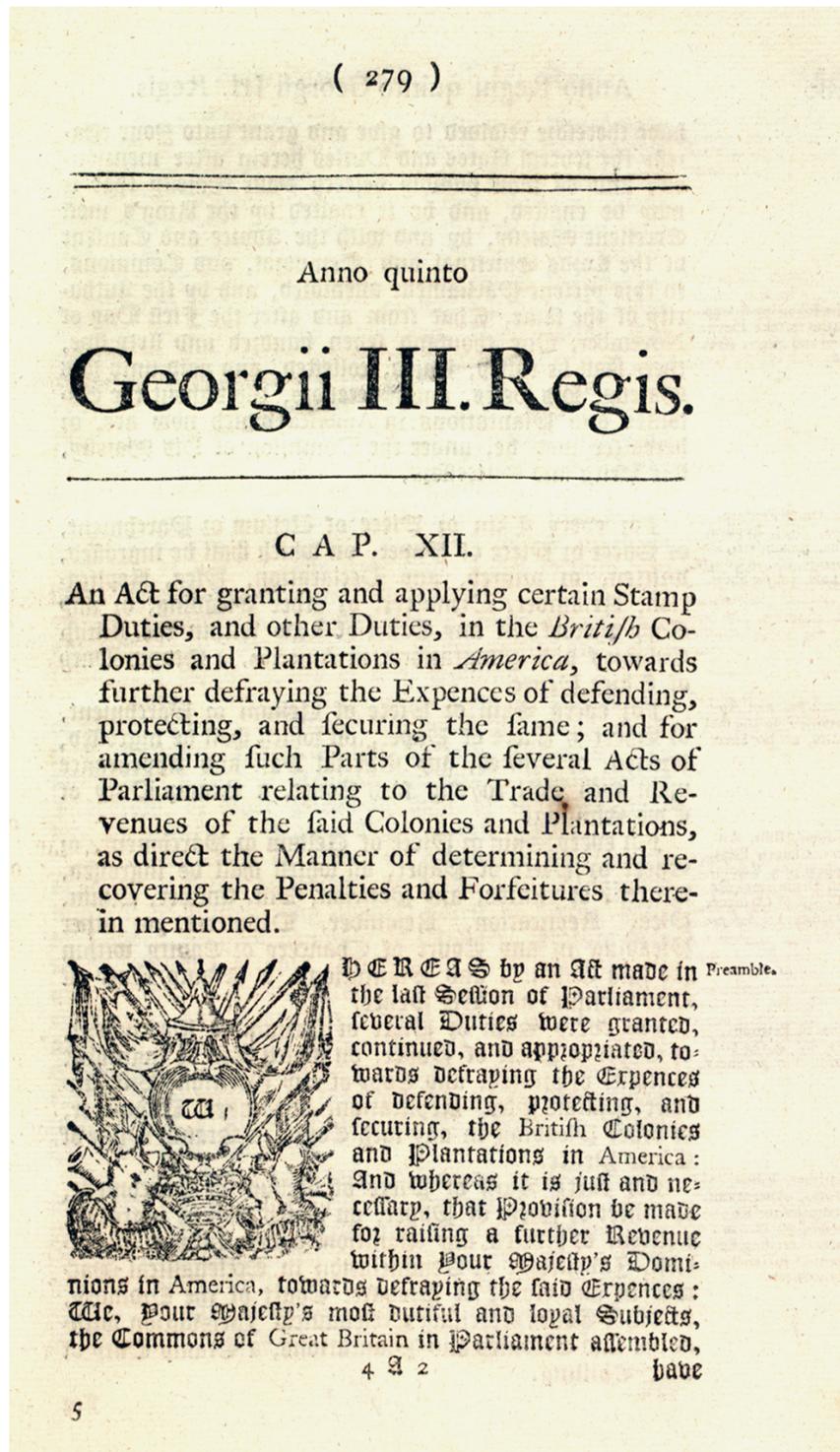
Source A: National Park Service. "Timeline of the Revolution." January 4, 2021.

Accessed from: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/americanrevolution/timeline.htm>

Supporting Question 1

Featured Source

Source B: The Stamp Act, Gilder Lehrman Institute, 1765.



Accessed from: <https://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-resources/spotlight-primary-source/stamp-act-1765>

Supporting Question 1

Featured Source

Source C: Townshend Acts, Encyclopædia Britannica.



Supporting Question 2

Featured Source

Source A: Hamilton Soundtrack, "Cabinet Battle #1" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Cx0xr1OvtU>

Supporting Question 2

Featured Source

Source B: Hamilton Soundtrack, "Cabinet Battle #2" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wNUdqRC78es>

Supporting Question 2

Featured Source

Source B: Bill of Rights Institute. "Would you have been a federalist or an anti-federalist?" <https://billofrightsinstitute.org/would-you-have-been-a-federalist-or-an-anti-federalist>

Supporting Question 3

Featured Source

Source A: The Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution Digital Edition, ed. John P. Kaminski, Gaspare J. Saladino, Richard Leffler, Charles H. Schoenleber and Margaret A. Hogan. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009. Original source: Ratification by the States, Volume II: Pennsylvania. <https://csac.history.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/281/2017/07/anno-pennsylvania.pdf>

Source B: The Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution Digital Edition, ed. John P. Kaminski, Gaspare J. Saladino, Richard Leffler, Charles H. Schoenleber and Margaret A. Hogan. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009. Original source: Ratification by the States, Volume XIX: New York, No. 1. https://csac.history.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/281/2017/07/new_york.pdf