

Northwest History Consortium

Constitutional Convention

Cindy Mapston

5th Grade

National Standard

Era 3: Revolution and the New Nation / Standard 1

Standard 1: The causes of the American Revolution, the ideas and interests involved in forging the revolutionary movement, and the reasons for the American victory.

SCENARIO/TEACHER NOTES

Select teams. As a class discuss who all attended the convention. Then each team will need to select who they will be while attending the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. As the teacher you will need to make sure that you have an equal amount of teams representing both sides.

Another option would be to split the class and hold a mock debate or assembly and have each student present their proposal. Teachers may want to select administration, fellow staff, or community members to act as a panel posing as one of the more elite forefathers of the convention. Have prepared questions for the adults to ask students in order to get the debate started if needed and to use for an oral assessment of the historical content achieved.

TASK

You have been selected to attend the May 1787 Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to come up with a plan to strengthen the shaky national government. What a great honor this is, as there are only 55 men who have been asked to attend. You must prepare a plan proposing your colony's views and present it to the assembly. Be advised that this will not be a public meeting and your directness and honesty are requested.

- Students are to prepare a written speech proposal to express their colony's opinions on how the government should be set up. Should they just tweak the Articles of Confederation or begin from scratch?

Extension:

- Write an editorial of the Constitutional Convention as if you were a news reporter that was present.

RESOURCES

Books

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ASSESSMENT

- Written tests or quizzes can be given for both scenarios.
- Rubrics can be used to score students' PowerPoints, brochures, or other projects that you have had the students use to demonstrate what they had learned from the PBL activity.
- Rubrics that can be used to score these projects are as follows on following pages:

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Oral Presentation Rubric For Constitutional Convention Assembly Debate

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Comprehension of Content Material	Shows a full understanding of the topic.	Shows a good understanding of the topic.	Shows a good understanding of parts of the topic.	Does not seem to understand the topic very well.
Preparedness	Student is completely prepared and has obviously rehearsed.	Student seems pretty prepared but might have needed a couple more rehearsals.	The student is somewhat prepared, but it is clear that rehearsal was lacking.	Student does not seem at all prepared to present.
Comprehension	Student is able to accurately answer almost all questions posed by classmates about the topic.	Student is able to accurately answer most questions posed by classmates about the topic.	Student is able to accurately answer a few questions posed by classmates about the topic.	Student is unable to accurately answer questions posed by classmates about the topic.
Speaks Clearly	Speaks clearly and distinctly all (100-95%) the time, and mispronounces no words.	Speaks clearly and distinctly all (100-95%) the time, but mispronounces one word.	Speaks clearly and distinctly most (94-85%) of the time. Mispronounces no more than one word.	Often mumbles or can not be understood OR mispronounces more than one word.
Stays on Topic	Stays on topic all (100%) of the time.	Stays on topic most (99-90%) of the time.	Stays on topic some (89%-75%) of the time.	It was hard to tell what the topic was.
Time-Limit	Presentation is 5-6 minutes long.	Presentation is 4 minutes long.	Presentation is 3 minutes long.	Presentation is less than 3 minutes OR more than 6 minutes.

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Vocabulary	Uses vocabulary appropriate for the audience. Extends audience vocabulary by defining words that might be new to most of the audience.	Uses vocabulary appropriate for the audience. Includes 1-2 words that might be new to most of the audience, but does not define them.	Uses vocabulary appropriate for the audience. Does not include any vocabulary that might be new to the audience.	Uses several (5 or more) words or phrases that are not understood by the audience.
Volume	Volume is loud enough to be heard by all audience members throughout the presentation.	Volume is loud enough to be heard by all audience members at least 90% of the time.	Volume is loud enough to be heard by all audience members at least 80% of the time.	Volume often too soft to be heard by all audience members.

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Newspaper Article for Colonial Job Location

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Layout - Headlines & Captions	All articles have headlines that capture the reader's attention and accurately describe the content. All articles have a byline. All graphics have captions that adequately describe the people and action in the graphic.	All articles have headlines that accurately describe the content. All articles have a byline. All graphics have captions.	Most articles have headlines that accurately describe the content. All articles have a byline. Most graphics have captions.	Articles are missing bylines OR many articles do not have adequate headlines OR many graphics do not have captions.
Layout - Columns	Columns are neatly typed in the "justified" type style. There are adequate and consistent "gutters" between all columns and articles. A glance at the newspaper makes you think "professional."	Columns are neatly typed. There are adequate and consistent "gutters" between all columns and articles. A glance at the newspaper makes you think "fairly professional."	Columns are typed. There are adequate "gutters" between most columns and articles. It is easy to read, but looks somewhat nonprofessional.	Columns are not neatly typed and/or "gutters" are not adequate, so newspaper is somewhat difficult to read.
Contributions of Group Members	Each person in the group has contributed at least two articles and one graphic without prompting from teachers or peers.	Each person in the group has contributed at least one article and one graphic with a few reminders from peers.	Each person in the group has contributed at least one article with some minimal assistance from peers.	One or more students in the group required quite a lot of assistance from peers before contributing one article.

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Knowledge Gained	All students in the group can accurately answer all questions related to a) stories in the newspaper and b) technical processes used to create the newspaper.	All students in the group can accurately answer most questions related to a) stories in the newspaper and b) technical processes used to create the newspaper.	Most students in the group can accurately answer most questions related to a) stories in the newspaper and b) technical processes used to create the newspaper.	Several students in the group appear to have little knowledge about the facts and the technical processes used for the newspaper.
Spelling and Proofreading	No spelling or grammar errors remain after one or more people (in addition to the typist) read and correct the newspaper.	No more than a couple of spelling or grammar errors remain after one or more people (in addition to the typist) read and correct the newspaper.	No more than 3 spelling or grammar errors remain after one or more people (in addition to the typist) read and correct the newspaper.	Several spelling or grammar errors remain in the final copy of the newspaper.
Articles - Purpose	90-100% of the articles establish a clear purpose in the lead paragraph and demonstrate a clear understanding of the topic.	85-89% of the articles establish a clear purpose in the lead paragraph and demonstrate a clear understanding of the topic.	75-84% of the articles establish a clear purpose in the lead paragraph and demonstrate a clear understanding of the topic.	Less than 75% of the articles establish a clear purpose in the lead paragraph and demonstrate a clear understanding of the topic.
Articles - Supporting Details	The details in the articles are clear, effective, and vivid 80-100% of the time.	The details in the articles are clear and pertinent 90-100% of the time.	The details in the articles are clear and pertinent 75-89% of the time.	The details in more than 25% of the articles are neither clear nor pertinent.
Graphics	Graphics are in focus, are well-cropped and are clearly related to the articles they accompany.	Graphics are in focus and are clearly related to the articles they accompany.	80-100% of the graphics are clearly related to the articles they accompany.	More than 20% of the graphics are not clearly related to the articles OR no graphics were used.

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Articles - Interest	The articles contain facts, figures, and/or word choices that make the articles exceptionally interesting to readers.	The articles contain facts, figures, and/or word choices that make the articles interesting to readers.	The article contains some facts or figures but is marginally interesting to read.	The article does not contain facts or figures that might make it interesting to read.
Use of Primary Sources	Reading of primary source material was thorough.	Reading of primary source material was fairly thorough.	Reading of primary source material was incomplete.	Reading of primary source material was not done.

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HyperStudio/PowerPoint Appearance and Content : Colonial American Occupations and Location

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Background	Background does not detract from text or other graphics. Choice of background is consistent from card to card and is appropriate for the topic.	Background does not detract from text or other graphics. Choice of background is consistent from card to card.	Background does not detract from text or other graphics.	Background makes it difficult to see text or competes with other graphics on the page.
Graphics Sources	Graphics are hand-drawn. The illustrator(s) are given credit somewhere in the presentation.	A combination of hand-drawn and HyperStudio graphics are used. Sources are documented in the presentation for all images.	Some graphics are from sources that clearly state that non-commercial use is allowed without written permission. Sources are documented in the presentation for all "borrowed" images.	Some graphics are borrowed from sites that do not have copyright statements or do not state that non-commercial use is allowed, OR sources are not documented for all images.
Originality	Presentation shows considerable originality and inventiveness. The content and ideas are presented in a unique and interesting way.	Presentation shows some originality and inventiveness. The content and ideas are presented in an interesting way.	Presentation shows an attempt at originality and inventiveness on 1-2 cards.	Presentation is a rehash of other people's ideas and/or graphics and shows very little attempt at original thought.
Text - Font Choice & Formatting	Font formats (e.g., color, bold, italic) have been carefully planned to enhance readability and content.	Font formats have been carefully planned to enhance readability.	Font formatting has been carefully planned to complement the content. It may be a little hard to read.	Font formatting makes it very difficult to read the material.
Content - Accuracy	All content throughout the presentation is accurate. There are no factual errors.	Most of the content is accurate but there is one piece of information that might be inaccurate.	The content is generally accurate, but one piece of information is clearly flawed or inaccurate.	Content is typically confusing or contains more than one factual error.

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Spelling and Grammar	Presentation has no misspellings or grammatical errors.	Presentation has 1-2 misspellings, but no grammatical errors.	Presentation has 1-2 grammatical errors but no misspellings.	Presentation has more than 2 grammatical and/or spelling errors.
Sequencing of Information	Information is organized in a clear, logical way. It is easy to anticipate the type of material that might be on the next card.	Most information is organized in a clear, logical way. One card or item of information seems out of place.	Some information is logically sequenced. An occasional card or item of information seems out of place.	There is no clear plan for the organization of information.
Use of Graphics	All graphics are attractive (size and colors) and support the theme/content of the presentation.	A few graphics are not attractive but all support the theme/content of the presentation.	All graphics are attractive but a few do not seem to support the theme/content of the presentation.	Several graphics are unattractive AND detract from the content of the presentation.
Cooperation	Group delegates tasks and shares responsibility effectively all of the time.	Group delegates tasks and shares responsibility effectively most of the time.	Group delegates tasks and shares responsibility effectively some of the time.	Group often is not effective in delegating tasks and/or sharing responsibility.
Effectiveness	Project includes all material needed to gain a comfortable understanding of the topic. It is a highly effective study guide.	Project includes most material needed to gain a comfortable understanding of the material but is lacking one or two key elements. It is an adequate study guide.	Project is missing more than two key elements. It would make an incomplete study guide.	Project is lacking several key elements and has inaccuracies that make it a poor study guide.

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Brochures

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Writing - Organization	Each section in the brochure has a clear beginning, middle, and end.	Almost all sections of the brochure have a clear beginning, middle and end.	Most sections of the brochure have a clear beginning, middle and end.	Less than half of the sections of the brochure have a clear beginning, middle and end.
Writing - Grammar	There are no grammatical mistakes in the brochure.	There are no grammatical mistakes in the brochure after feedback from an adult.	There are 1-2 grammatical mistakes in the brochure even after feedback from an adult.	There are several grammatical mistakes in the brochure even after feedback from an adult.
Spelling & Proofreading	No spelling errors remain after one person other than the typist reads and corrects the brochure.	No more than 1 spelling error remains after one person other than the typist reads and corrects the brochure.	No more than 3 spelling errors remain after one person other than the typist reads and corrects the brochure.	Several spelling errors in the brochure.
Writing - Vocabulary	The authors correctly use several new words and define words unfamiliar to the reader.	The authors correctly use a few new words and define words unfamiliar to the reader.	The authors try to use some new vocabulary, but may use 1-2 words incorrectly.	The authors do not incorporate new vocabulary.
Writing - Mechanics	Capitalization and punctuation are correct throughout the brochure.	Capitalization and punctuation are correct throughout the brochure after feedback from an adult.	There are 1-2 capitalization and/or punctuation errors in the brochure even after feedback from an adult.	There are several capitalization or punctuation errors in the brochure even after feedback from an adult.
Content - Accuracy	All facts in the brochure are accurate.	99-90% of the facts in the brochure are accurate.	89-80% of the facts in the brochure are accurate.	Fewer than 80% of the facts in the brochure are accurate.

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Attractiveness & Organization	The brochure has exceptionally attractive formatting and well-organized information.	The brochure has attractive formatting and well-organized information.	The brochure has well-organized information.	The brochure's formatting and organization of material are confusing to the reader.
Sources	Careful and accurate records are kept to document the source of 95-100% of the facts and graphics in the brochure.	Careful and accurate records are kept to document the source of 94-85% of the facts and graphics in the brochure.	Careful and accurate records are kept to document the source of 84-75% of the facts and graphics in the brochure.	Sources are not documented accurately or are not kept on many facts and graphics.
Knowledge Gained	All students in the group can accurately answer all questions related to facts in the brochure and to technical processes used to create the brochure.	All students in the group can accurately answer most questions related to facts in the brochure and to technical processes used to create the brochure.	Most students in the group can accurately answer most questions related to facts in the brochure and to technical processes used to create the brochure.	Several students in the group appear to have little knowledge about the facts or technical processes used in the brochure.
Graphics/Pictures	Graphics go well with the text and there is a good mix of text and graphics.	Graphics go well with the text, but there are so many that they distract from the text.	Graphics go well with the text, but there are too few and the brochure seems "text-heavy".	Graphics do not go with the accompanying text or appear to be randomly chosen.

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Role Play for Constitutional Convention

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Historical Accuracy	All historical information appeared to be accurate and in chronological order.	Almost all historical information appeared to be accurate and in chronological order.	Most of the historical information was accurate and in chronological order.	Very little of the historical information was accurate and/or in chronological order.
Role	Point-of-view, arguments, and solutions proposed were consistently in character.	Point-of-view, arguments, and solutions proposed were often in character.	Point-of-view, arguments, and solutions proposed were sometimes in character.	Point-of-view, arguments, and solutions proposed were rarely in character.
Knowledge Gained	Can clearly explain several ways in which his character "saw" things differently than other characters and can clearly explain why.	Can clearly explain several ways in which his character "saw" things differently than other characters.	Can clearly explain one way in which his character "saw" things differently than other characters.	Cannot explain one way in which his character "saw" things differently than other characters.
Required Elements	Student included more information than was required.	Student included all information that was required.	Student included most information that was required.	Student included less information than was required.
Props/Costume	Student uses several props (could include costume) that accurately fit the period, show considerable work/creativity and make the presentation better.	Student uses 1-2 props that accurately fit the period, and make the presentation better.	Student uses 1-2 props which make the presentation better.	The student uses no props OR the props chosen detract from the presentation.

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