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A&HW 4036

12/17/03

Unit: Colonial America and the American Revolution.

Lesson: Understanding the Declaration of Independence.

AIM: How did the Declaration of Independence help to influence other important political documents as well as important political thinkers?

Goals/Objectives:

1. Given various political texts, students will be able to interpret its meaning.
2. Students will learn how to read political documents.
3. Students will be able to explain the political consequences of the creation of many different political documents for Americans and for global citizens.
4. Students will be able to discuss how the documents still affects everyone today.
5. Students will be able to gather and organize information about accomplishments of individuals and groups. They will learn that the Declaration had certain political consequences, including influencing other important documents as well as individuals. (NYS 1.3)
6. Given the information, students will understand their historical roots and be able to reconstruct the past. Students will understand how the Declaration influenced one of the great leaders of the Civil Rights movement. (NCSS Standard II)

Main Ideas:

- The Declaration of Independence was one of the most significant documents of the 18th century.
- Some of the most influential Americans of the Revolutionary period signed the document (e.g. Thomas Jefferson).
- It still has an important political impact on America today as well as the rest of the world.

- It combined a lot of enlightenment ideas into one document. (e.g. Locke's theory)

Instructional Procedures:

Opening (15 minutes): "Do Now" activity. After reading a part of the Declaration of Independence, the students should think about the following questions and answer them in their notebooks: What is the language of the document like? Is it effective? Why was writing this document treasonous? Do you agree with the list of grievances in the document? Is this document still relevant today? Why or why not?

Teaching and Learning Activities (25 minutes):

1. After completing the "Do Now", the students will quickly get into groups. They will be required to do a document analysis of several documents. Each group will be given a different document. The documents to be examined are selections of: "Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen", "Declaration of the Rights of Woman and of the Female Citizen", Locke's "Second Treatise on Government", and finally "Magna Carta". (There should only be 4 groups)
2. After completing the document analysis dittos, the students should re-assemble the classroom back into the regular format. A selection of Martin Luther King's famous "I Have a Dream" speech will be shown to class. This should take about half of the allotted time.

Assignment: Students should be prepared to talk about the Battle of Saratoga the subsequent lesson. They should read the text to keep up.

Closure (5 minutes): Give personal view of why Declaration was important for America and the world. A quick discussion should be held to help sum up the lesson. Ask: "What documents helped to influence the Declaration?", "What documents were influenced by the Declaration?", "How did MLK Jr. use the ideas of the Declaration in his speech?"

Evaluation: Students will be evaluated based on how completely they fill out the document analysis sheet. If necessary a formal grade may be applied.

Materials:

1. Selections of the aforementioned documents.
2. Document analysis ditto.
3. Martin Luther King Jr. "I have a dream" speech.

Sources:

Philip F. Riley. *The Global Experience: Readings in World History since 1550*.
(Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 2002).

The Magna Carta. www.cs.indiana.edu/statecraft/magna-carta.html.

Second Treatise on Government. <http://www.constitution.org/jl/2ndtreat.htm>