

James O'Donnell
Lesson Plan Abstracts
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New York Ratification Convention Lesson Plan Abstract:

In the lesson plan for the New York Ratification Convention, students will analyze and interpret the various perspectives regarding the ratification of the US Constitution by New York State in 1788. Students will study the federalist and anti-federalist debates that took place during the convention, including speeches and writings made by historical figures such as Alexander Hamilton and Governor George Clinton. The purpose of the lesson plan is for students to be able to determine the various perspectives concerning the ratification debates and understand the historical significance of the New York Ratification Convention.

**New York Ratification Convention
Lesson Plan
By James O'Donnell**

DAY 1: The New York Ratifying Convention Lesson Plan

<p>Pre-planning: Setting Clear goals and directions</p>	<p>OBJECTIVE. What will my students be able to do?</p>	<p>CONNECTION TO BIG IDEAS. How does the objective connect to your big ideas for the lesson, unit and course? (What is your assessment? What do you want students to think about your content in your assessment and in this particular lesson?)</p>
	<p>Lesson Objective: SWBT define the following vocabulary terms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Federalist - Anti-Federalist SWBT identify and analyze the political divisions in the New York Ratifying Convention. SWBT interpret historical sources (primary and secondary).</p>	<p>SWBT compare and contrast periods of political division throughout American history. Students will understand the deliberations that took place during the ratification process of the US Constitution and how aspects of these differing perspectives would continue to divide the country politically and ethically decades after the Constitutional Convention.</p>
	<p>ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS? What open-ended themes will I emphasize, and will my students be able to respond intelligently about? (e.g., In 20 years, what questions would I want my students to still be able to have something thoughtful to say about?)</p>	

Semester Essential Question:
“What is the value of history and how can acknowledgement of the past help shape a better future for all mankind?”

Unit Essential Question:
“How do the historic political divisions between Federalists and Anti-Federalists compare to modern American political divisions?”

Lesson Essential Question:
“What were the essential differences in political perspective between the Anti-Federalists and the Federalists and how did these differences unfold during the NYS Ratification Convention?”

At all times during the school year, these questions will be on the board and available for translation for any ELL students.

ASSESSMENT. (AKA How are you assessing the Four Resource Model?)
 How will I know whether your students have made progress toward the objective? How and when will I assess mastery?

Unit Assessment:
 Students will compose a short compare-and-contrast paper (2-3 pages) that analyzes the federalist and anti-federalist perspectives during the Constitutional ratification process. Students essays must sufficiently answer the following questions:

- *“What were the key points of conflict between the federalists and anti-federalists?”*
- *“Who were significant figures from both perspectives and what were the arguments [for or against ratification of the new constitution?]”*
- *“How do these political divisions resonate throughout American history? Do they still affect us today?”*

The teacher will review the assessment rubric and ensure students understand expectations.

Lesson Cycle	<p>OPENING. (___ min.) <i>Describe this phase of your lesson in chronological order, explaining:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How will I engage students and capture their interest? (Connect this to skill and to content) 	MATERIALS.
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	<p>Prior to the beginning of class, the teacher will place Worksheet 1.1 on all students' desks. Students will be directed to sit with their resource groups as they file into the class and begin working silently. Students will immediately begin working on the Opening section of Worksheet 1.1 by analyzing the <i>Federalist vs. Anti-Federalist</i> infographic and answering questions 1-3:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>What are the key differences between the federalists and anti-federalists?</i> 2. <i>What were the main causations of the Constitutional Convention?</i> 3. <i>How did the federalists and anti-federalists compromise?</i> <p>A timer will be set for 5 minutes on the smartboard. During this time period, the teacher will silently take attendance while students work on the Opening questions. Following the 5 minutes, the teacher will begin a KWL activity and probe and collect student ideas be asking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>“What do we know about federalism vs. anti-federalism? What were the key differences outlined by the infographic?”</i> - <i>“What are we wondering about the federalist and anti-federalist debates? What are we confused about?”</i> <p>The teacher will then transition into the Introduction to new materials section.</p>	<p>Worksheet 1.1 Source: https://www.behance.net/gallery/36767019/Federalists-vs-Anti-Federalists-Infographic</p>
	<p>INTRODUCTION TO NEW MATERIAL (I Do...). (___ min.) <i>Describe this phase of your lesson in chronological order, explaining:</i> - What key points will I emphasize and reiterate? How will I model?</p>	<p>MATERIALS</p>
	<p>The teacher will then direct students' attention to the new content, the New York Constitutional Ratification Convention. Students will be further studying the federalist and anti-federalist perspectives through analyzing the New York State Constitutional ratification Convention of 1788. The teacher will read aloud the <i>Summary of the New York Constitutional</i></p>	<p>Worksheet 1.1 Source: http://teachingamericanhistory.org/ratification/newyork/</p>

	<p><i>Ratification Convention, Poughkeepsie, NY, 1788, available on Worksheet 1.1. After finishing the reading, the teacher will probe and collect students' background knowledge by asking,</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>“How many state ratifications were required to nationally enact the US Constitution?”</i> - <i>“Who were the key figures on both sides of the debate in the New York Convention?”</i> - <i>“Why do you think New York was so politically divided between Federalists and Anti-Federalists?”</i> 	
	<p>GUIDED PRACTICE (...We Do...). (__ min.) <i>Describe this phase of your lesson in chronological order, explaining:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How will I clearly state and model behavioral expectations for this task? - How will I ensure that all students have multiple opportunities to practice? - How will I scaffold practice exercises from easy to hard? 	MATERIALS
	<p>The teacher will read aloud the excerpt from Alexander Hamilton's speech from the New York Convention, available for students to read along under the Guided Practice section of Worksheet 1.1. The teacher will host a think aloud activity and collect students about the following question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>What were Hamilton's arguments in favor of the new constitution?</i> - <i>What type of government is Hamilton pushing to ratify?</i> 	<p>Worksheet 1.1</p> <p>Source: http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/alexander-hamilton-speech/</p>
	<p>INDEPENDENT PRACTICE (...You Do). (__ min.) THIS IS THEM READING IN THE FOUR RESOURCE MODEL</p>	MATERIALS

	<p>The teacher will read aloud the excerpt from Cato’s (which historians believe to be a pseudonym for George Clinton) essay from the Anti-Federalist Papers. The excerpt is available under the Independent Practice section of Worksheet 1.1. Afterwards, in their resource groups, students will answer the questions on Worksheet 1.1 and identify/discuss the main idea of the excerpt.</p>	<p>Worksheet 1.1</p> <p>Source: http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/cato-v/</p>
	<p>CLOSING. (__ min.) <i>Describe this phase of your lesson in chronological order, explaining:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How will students summarize what they learned? - How will students be asked to state the significance of what they learned? - How will I provide all students with opportunities to master or make progress toward the objective? 	<p>MATERIALS</p>
	<p>The teacher will connect the lesson to the essential questions.</p> <p>The teacher will brief students on the upcoming in-class Federalist and Anti-Federalist debate. Students may volunteer for the roles of Alexander Hamilton and George Clinton (the teacher may pick students for these roles if there is a lack of volunteers). Students will also be divided into federalists and anti-federalists.</p>	

WORKSHEET 1.1

OPENING:

Federalists vs. Anti-Federalists Infographic

FEDERALISTS vs. ANTI-FEDERALISTS

Federalists & Antifederalists argued over the Constitution starting in 1787 when idea was released to the public after the Constitutional Convention to scrap the Articles of Confederation.

RATIFICATION OF CONSTITUTION 1787

FEDERALISTS (Red Side):

- NATIONAL GOVERNMENT
- WEALTHY CLASS
- ALEXANDER HAMILTON
- GEORGE WASHINGTON
- JAMES MADISON
- JOHN JAY

Federalists believed in a strong central government

- checks and balances would protect from tyranny of centralized authority
- support from urban areas such as merchants and skilled laborers
- small states w/ weak govts supported it
- wrote The Federalist Papers

ANTI-FEDERALISTS (Blue Side):

- STATE GOVERNMENT
- MIDDLE/LOWER CLASS
- THOMAS JEFFERSON
- PATRICK HENRY
- GEORGE MASON
- RICHARD HENRY LEE

Antifederalists believed in governing based on protecting people's rights and giving more power to the state governments

- believed there would be abuses in power
- thought privileged minority would be considered greater than the rights of the majority
- doubt that single gov could control the entire country
- support from rural areas
- states w/ strong economies supported it
- wrote the Letters from the Federal Farmer

HISTORICAL CAUSATION

Articles of Confederation

- adopted by Congress in 1777
- basic outline of laws for the country
- gave state govts most of the power
- federal government had very limited power

Shay's Rebellion (1786)

- armed uprising led by Daniel Shay in the Massachusetts area
- against state and local enforcement of tax collection
- colonists filled with fear of violence and paranoia
- rebellion showed the country that the national government was too weak to properly govern America

CHANGE OVER TIME

Feud between Federalists and Antifederalists began with Constitution in 1787

Parallel to emergence of Federalists and Democratic-Republicans in late 18th century

- Politically divided (Hamilton vs. Jefferson)
- Shows continued division of America that led to conflict in the country

SYNTHESIS

In order for the Constitution to be ratified, Federalists came up with a plan

- promised Bill of Rights, which would protect the rights of the people and limit the power of the gov
- Antifederalists agreed to ratify

Constitution and Bill of Rights combine both sides' ideals

- Federalists would get a strong central gov. with the Constitution
- Antifederalists would have rights of people protected with the Bill of Rights

Using the infographic, answer the questions below:

1. What are the key differences between the federalists and anti-federalists?
2. What were the main causations of the Constitutional Convention?
3. How did the federalists and anti-federalists compromise?

INTRODUCTION TO NEW MATERIAL:

Summary of the New York Constitutional Ratification Convention, Poughkeepsie, NY, 1788

By the end of May 1788, proponents of the Constitution had secured the approval of eight state ratifying conventions. But securing the ninth state was not going to be an easy task. Everything rested on the three remaining states: New Hampshire, Virginia, and New York. (North Carolina and Rhode Island did not ratify the Constitution until the First Congress sent twelve amendment proposals to the states for ratification.) The best evidence suggests that going into these three ratifying conventions, the Federalist–Antifederalist delegate split was 52-52 in New Hampshire, 84-84 in Virginia and 19-46 in New York. And all were scheduled to meet in June: Virginia on the 2nd, New York on the 17th, and New Hampshire on the 18th. News that New Hampshire ratified came one week into the New York convention. Chancellor Livingston captured the moment: “The Confederation, he said, was dissolved. The question before the committee was now a question of policy and expediency.” News that Virginia had ratified reinforced Livingston’s observation. Yet the delegates continued debating for another three weeks! On July 26, New York, by a vote of 30-27, ratified the Constitution and proposed 25 items in a Bill of Rights and 31 amendments. These proposals, along with the Circular Letter to the other States, are reproduced at the end of the day-by-day summary.

Among those delegates who defended the Constitution (Federalists) at the New York Ratifying Convention were 1) Alexander Hamilton and 2) John Jay, joint authors of The Federalist Papers and 3) Chancellor Livingston who administered the oath of office to President George Washington at the First Inaugural. Opposing adoption of the Constitution (Anti-Federalists) were 1) Melancton Smith, 2) John Lansing, a New York delegate to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia who left in protest after six weeks, 3) and Governor George Clinton, author of the Cato essays and President of the Convention.

GUIDED PRACTICE:

Excerpt of Alexander Hamilton’s opening speech at the New York State Constitutional Ratification Convention, Poughkeepsie, NY, 1788:

“The Confederation was framed amidst the agitation and tumult of society. It was composed of unfound materials put together in haste. Men of intelligence discovered the febleness of the structure, in the first stages of its existence; but the great body of the people, too much engrossed with their distresses, to contemplate any but immediate causes of them, were ignorant of the defects of their Constitution. But, when the dangers of war were removed, they saw clearly what they had suffered, and what they had yet to suffer from a feeble form of government. There was no need of discerning men to convince the people of their unhappy situation—the complaint was co-existent with the evil, and both were common to all classes of the community. We have been told, that the spirit of patriotism and love of liberty are almost extinguished among the people; and that it has become the prevailing doctrine, that republican principles ought to be hooted out of the world. Sir, I am confident that such remarks as these are

rather occasioned by the heat of argument, than by a cool conviction of their truth and justice. As far as my experience has extended, I have heard no such doctrine, nor have I discovered any diminution of regard for those rights and liberties, in defence of which, the people have fought and suffered. There have been, undoubtedly, some men who have had speculative doubts on the subject of government; but the principles of republicanism are founded on too firm a basis to be shaken by a few speculative and sceptical reasoners. Our error has been of a very different kind. We have erred through excess of caution, and a zeal false and impracticable. Our counsels have been destitute of consistency and stability. I am flattered with a hope, Sir, that we have now found a cure for the evils under which we have so long labored. I trust, that the proposed Constitution affords a genuine specimen of representative and republican government—and that it will answer, in an eminent degree, all the beneficial purposes of society.”

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE:

Excerpt from Cato V of the Anti-Federalist Papers, likely written by George Clinton of New York State, 22 November 1787:

It is a very important objection to this government, that the representation consists of so few; too few to resist the influence of corruption, and the temptation to treachery, against which all governments ought to take precautions—how guarded you have been on this head, in your own state constitution, and yet the number of senators and representatives proposed for this vast continent, does not equal those of your own state; how great the disparity, if you compare them with the aggregate numbers in the United States. The history of representation in England, from which we have taken our model of legislation, is briefly this: before the institution of legislating by deputies, the whole free part of the community usually met for that purpose; when this became impossible by the increase of numbers the community was divided into districts, from each of which was sent such a number of deputies as was a complete representation of the various numbers and orders of citizens within them; but can it be asserted with truth, that six men can be a complete and full representation of the numbers and various orders of the people in this state? Another thing [that] may be suggested against the small number of representatives is, that but few of you will have the chance of sharing even in this branch of the legislature; and that the choice will be confined to a very few; the more complete it is, the better will your interests be preserved, and the greater the opportunity you will have to participate in government, one of the principal securities of a free people; but this subject has been so ably and fully treated by a writer under the signature of Brutus, that I shall content myself with referring you to him thereon, reserving further observations on the other objections I have mentioned, for my future numbers.

CATO

1. What is the main argument of the excerpt?
2. What is the author's main concerns about the new Constitution? Explain them.
3. What are your thoughts about the Anti-Federalist perspective versus the Federalist perspective of the Constitution?

New York Ratification Convention Lesson Plan

Federalists vs Anti-Federalists Debate

TEAM 1

Affirmative (Support ratification)
(Federalists)

1st
2nd
3rd
4th
Closing:

TEAM 3

Judges
Chief Judge
Judge
Judge
(Timer) Judge

TEAM 5

Devil's Advocates (Major figures at the Poughkeepsie Convention)
Alexander Hamilton (*Federalist Papers*):
John Jay (*Federalist Papers*):
Governor George Clinton (President of the Convention):
Melancton Smith:

Guidelines:

- Students will sign up for the roles below.
- During the first five minutes of class, students may use their research, notes, and other class materials to prepare their arguments.
- Each speaker will have 4 minutes to make their statements in favor or against the ratification of the Constitution. USE YOUR TIME WISELY TO DEPOSE THE OPPOSING ARGUMENT.
- Speakers alternate starting with the 1st **Affirmative**, volley from the 1st **Negative**, etc.
- **Devil's Advocates** follow the affirmative & negative speeches in each round. You must be able to highlight the key issues after each round and offer another perspective/ask a question that will challenge each speaker's position.

TEAM 2

Negative (Against Ratification)
(Anti-Federalists)

1st
2nd
3rd
4th
Closing:

TEAM 4

Public Opinion
1.
2.
3.
4.

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- **Public Opinion** will physically move to sit on the side of the speaker they feel has won following each round. They will ask questions after each round, representing the voice of the people.
- **Judges** must anticipate the arguments and decide the winner based on the arguments made. You may ask questions at the end of the debate before reaching your judgment. (Keep track during the debate.)

ALSO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

- Legacy of British Tyranny
- Legacy of the American Revolution
- Articles of Confederation
 - Successes and failures
- Constitutional Convention
 - Compromises
- Perspective of George Washington
- Other ratification conventions within the states