

Is Thomas Jefferson Relevant Today?/ Lesson # 1:

NAME _____

DATE _____

SECTION _____



ACTIVITY ONE: Pre-Assessment:

Directions:

Please make an attempt to answer the following questions based on what you know and more importantly, what you do not know about this topic involving Thomas Jefferson.

1. Who wrote the Declaration of Independence? _____
2. When and where was it written? _____
3. Why was it written and who was it written to?

4. What do you think that the following passages from the text mean today? Make an educated guess on each of these.

The Unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United States of America:

It becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another:

They should declare the causes which impel them to the separation:

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:

That whenever any form of government becomes destructive to these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness:

The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations:

In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms: our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury:

We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be free and independent states:

ACTIVITY TWO: READING AS WELL AS WATCHING THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE:

Electronic Copy of Thomas Jefferson's Declaration of Independence:

<https://www.monticello.org/site/jefferson/transcript-declaration-independence-final>

Actors Reading the Declaration of Independence:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DSKOx8DKPIg>

NOTE:

We will not only be reading Thomas Jefferson's Declaration of Independence but also watching modern actors reading this document which was the original intent of Thomas Jefferson.

ACTIVITY THREE: Reflections on the Declaration of Independence:

What did you take away from this document? Please summarize TWO MAIN IDEAS from this Founding Document.

Please write down the one sentence or passage that resonates with you the most. In other words, which part of this document do you think is the most meaningful to you and your own person life.

PASSAGE: _____

Why did you select this passage?

ACTIVITY FOUR: Connecting the Declaration of Independence to Current Events in 2016

STEP ONE:

Please select one of the following topics that are most interesting to you. If neither are of interest, please ask your teacher to differentiate and find topics that are of more interest to you.

BLACK LIVES MATTER VS. BLUE LIVES MATTER DEBATE:

<http://blacklivesmatter.com/about/> (PRO- BLACK LIVES MATTER WEBSITE)

<http://bluelivesmatter.blue/organization/> (PRO- POLICE WEBSITE)

<http://www.cnn.com/videos/us/2015/10/26/black-lives-matter-police-officers-panel-nr.cnn> (Debate between the two groups)

_____ OR

TRANSGENDER BATHROOM SUPPORTERS VS. THOSE THAT ARE IN OPPOSITION:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aCyvdl9sCDk>

(President Obama's Executive Order involving Transgender bathrooms in US Public Schools)

<http://fox13now.com/2016/05/13/gov-herbert-we-will-not-hesitate-to-fight-order-on-transgender-students-bathroom-access/>

(Utah's Governor's challenge of President Obama's Executive Order on Transgender Bathrooms)

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-nation/wp/2016/05/25/texas-governor-says-state-will-sue-obama-administration-over-bathroom-directive/?utm_term=.e299be84b503

(Newspaper article about both sides of this controversial issue involving Transgender bathrooms)

Which current event did you choose? _____

WHY?

NOTE:

Once you select a current event/ issue, **you will be researching both sides** and eventually, in class, we will have a respectful debate on the issue. For now, please complete the VISUAL ACTIVITY on the

provided poster board. There will be exemplars in the class for you to facilitate the process and as always, please see your teacher if you have any questions.

RELEVANCE OF THOMAS JEFFERSON'S DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE VISUAL ACTIVITY:

STEP ONE:

Select an issue/ current event provided by your teacher.

STEP TWO:

Please take out either your electronic or paper version of Thomas Jefferson's Declaration of Independence along with your notes from the Pre- Assessment which has essential vocabulary and various defined passages of this challenging document. Lastly, please use your chromebook or IPAD to rewatch the actors reciting the Declaration.

STEP THREE:

Take a poster board and fold it in half either vertically or horizontally. Next, write the name of each of your two sides at the top of each half of the poster board in BLACK sharpie marker.

It will look like one of these two examples.

OPTION ONE:

Black Lives Matter:

Blue Lives Matter:

_____OR

OPTION TWO:

Pro Transgender Bathrooms:

Anti Transgender Bathrooms:

NOTE: Once you have achieved this step, please see your teacher to make sure that your VISUAL has started off correctly before you start to fill it out.

STEP FOUR:

On a piece of scrap paper, **brainstorm the main ideas for each side of the issue** that you selected and bullet each of them. The bigger the list the better. A main idea is something that summarizes the movement or issue that you received from watching the videos or reading the articles.

STEP FIVE:

This is the most challenging part of the activity and will require some higher order thinking as well as you applying what you have learned about Thomas Jefferson to something that is meaningful in your life today.

Next, examine both sides of the issue separately and role play that you are a leader in the movement and want to justify your beliefs and actions using the Declaration of Independence as support which would defend all that you stand for in a debate with the opposition. Put your main idea sheet side by side with the Declaration of Independence and make a connection. You should find **THREE PIECES OF EVIDENCE** per side of the issue. Once you have found three pieces of supporting evidence from the Declaration of Independence for each side of the issue, please see your teacher so they can read them over to evaluate if they are accurate and could be used to defend your views in a debate.

REMINDER OF THE FORMAT OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE:

Heading

Preamble

Philosophy of Government

Wrongs committed by the King

Vain appeals to the King

Declaration of Independence

Signatures

STEP SIX:

After your three pieces of evidence per side of the issue have been approved, please add them along with the main ideas to the visual under the correct column. Please be creative using colors, symbolism, drawings, Google images, art, photographs, cartoons and other unique methods to express all of work that you have done throughout this process.

SAMPLE OF WHAT THE VISUAL SHOULD LOOK LIKE:

Black Lives Matter:

MAIN IDEA ONE:

**SUPPORTING EVIDENCE
From Jefferson ONE**

MAIN IDEA TWO:

**SUPPORTING EVIDENCE
From Jefferson TWO**

MAIN IDEA THREE:

**SUPPORTING EVIDENCE
From Jefferson THREE**

Pro Transgender Bathrooms:

MAIN IDEA ONE:

**SUPPORTING EVIDENCE
From Jefferson ONE:**

MAIN IDEA TWO:

**SUPPORTING EVIDENCE
From Jefferson TWO**

MAIN IDEA THREE:

**SUPPORTING EVIDENCE
From Jefferson THREE**

Blue Lives Matter:

MAIN IDEA ONE:

**SUPPORTING EVIDENCE
From Jefferson ONE:**

MAIN IDEA TWO:

**SUPPORTING EVIDENCE
From Jefferson TWO**

MAIN IDEA THREE:

**SUPPORTING EVIDENCE
From Jefferson THREE**

OR

Anti Transgender Bathrooms:

MAIN IDEA ONE:

**SUPPORTING EVIDENCE
From Jefferson ONE:**

MAIN IDEA TWO:

**SUPPORTING EVIDENCE
From Jefferson TWO**

MAIN IDEA THREE:

**SUPPORTING EVIDENCE
From Jefferson THREE**

STEP SEVEN: (FINAL ONE)

INFORMAL GALLERY WALK where we will set up the classroom like an art gallery or public space where we can all go around to examine all of the amazing work that has been accomplished based on our in depth analysis of Thomas Jefferson and his overall impact on our lives today.

GRADING RUBRIC FOR IS JEFFERSON RELEVANT TODAY? LESSON ONE:

TOTAL POSSIBLE SCORE: 100

PRE- ASSESSMENT: worth 10 points

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
No Attempt			Minimal Attempt			Moderate Attempt			Engaging and Involved Attempt	
COMMENTS: _____										

READING/ VIEWING OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE: worth 10 points

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
No Reflection			Minimal Reflection			Moderate Reflection			Thoughtful and in depth Reflection	
COMMENTS: _____										

SELECTION OF CURRENT EVENT/ ISSUE AND RATIONALE BEHIND IT:

0	1	2	3	4	5	
No Selection Nor Rational			Selection with No Rationale		Selection with weak Rational	Selection with detailed and well supported Rationale
COMMENTS: _____						

worth 5 points

PREP WORK FOR VISUAL: worth 5 points

0	1	2	3	4	5
No Prep Work		Minimal Prep Work		Moderate Prep Work	Impressive and detailed Prep Work
COMMENTS: _____					

BRAINSTORMING OF MAIN IDEAS FOR BOTH SIDES OF THE SELECTED ISSUE:

0	1	2	3	4	5
No Brainstorming		Minimal Brainstorming		Moderate Brainstorming	Detailed and high quality Brainstorming

Worth 5 points

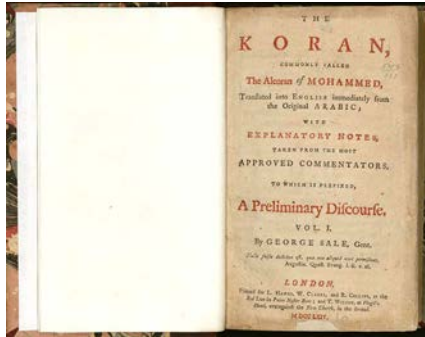
Is Thomas Jefferson Relevant Today?/ Lesson # 2:

NAME _____

DATE _____

SECTION _____

Mr. McGravey



ACTIVITY ONE: Pre- Assessment

Directions:

Please answer the following questions based on what you know and more importantly, what you don't know about the following topics.

1. What is the Qur'an which is also referred to as the Koran?

2. Why is this book so controversial in 2016 and the religious faith associated with it?

3. Can you think of any news stories about the topic of the Islamic faith, Muslims or the Koran? Please describe the story briefly.

4. What was the religion of the majority of the Founding Fathers such as George Washington, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson?

5. What do you know about Thomas Jefferson and his beliefs about freedom of religion?

6. What book do politicians swear upon when they take the oath of office?

7. What is your opinion of a Muslim taking the oath on the Koran? Please explain.

8. Why do you think that we study Thomas Jefferson so much in US History class? Do you think that he should be included in the class so extensively? Why or why not?

ACTIVITY TWO: Group Reading of Primary and Secondary Resources

Directions:

We will be examining all of the following resources together as a class and will be completing a brief series of reflection activities.

RESOURCE I: Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom

<https://www.monticello.org/site/research-and-collections/virginia-statute-religious-freedom>

Well aware that the opinions and belief of men depend not on their own will, but follow involuntarily the evidence proposed to their minds; that Almighty God hath created the mind free, and manifested his supreme will that free it shall remain by making it altogether insusceptible of restraint; that all attempts to influence it by temporal punishments, or burthens, or by civil incapacitations, tend only to beget habits of hypocrisy and meanness, and are a departure from the plan of the holy author of our religion, who being lord both of body and mind, yet chose not to propagate it by coercions on either, as was in his Almighty power to do, but to extend it by its influence on reason alone; that the impious presumption of legislators and rulers, civil as well as ecclesiastical, who, being themselves but fallible and uninspired men, have assumed dominion over the faith of others, setting up their own opinions and modes of thinking as the only true and infallible, and as such endeavoring to impose them on others, hath established and maintained false religions over the greatest part of the world and through all time: **That to compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves and abhors, is sinful and tyrannical; that even the forcing him to support this or that teacher of his own religious persuasion, is depriving him of the comfortable liberty of giving his contributions to the particular pastor whose morals he would make his pattern, and whose powers he feels most persuasive to righteousness; and is withdrawing from the ministry those temporary rewards, which proceeding from an approbation of their personal conduct, are an additional incitement to earnest and unremitting labours for the instruction of mankind; that our civil rights have no dependance on our religious opinions, any more than our opinions in physics or geometry; that therefore the proscribing any citizen as unworthy the public confidence by laying upon him an incapacity of being called to offices of trust and emolument, unless he profess or renounce this or that religious opinion, is depriving him injuriously of those privileges and advantages to which, in common with his fellow citizens, he has a natural right;** that it tends also to corrupt the principles of that very religion it is meant to encourage, by bribing, with a monopoly of worldly honours and emoluments, those who will externally profess and conform to it; that though indeed these are criminal who do not withstand such temptation, yet neither are those innocent who lay the bait in their way; that the opinions of men are not the object of civil government, nor under its jurisdiction; that to suffer the civil magistrate to intrude his powers into the field of opinion and to restrain the profession or propagation of principles on supposition of their ill tendency is a dangerous falacy, which at once destroys all religious liberty, because he being of course judge of that tendency will make his opinions the rule of judgment, and approve or condemn the sentiments of others only as they shall square with or differ from his own; that it is time enough for the rightful purposes of civil government for its officers to interfere when principles break out into overt acts against peace and good order; and finally, that truth is great and will prevail if left to herself; that she is the proper and sufficient antagonist to error, and has nothing to fear from the conflict unless by human interposition disarmed of her natural weapons, free argument and debate; errors ceasing to be dangerous when it is permitted freely to contradict them.

We the General Assembly of Virginia do enact that no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burthened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer, on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities.

And though we well know that this Assembly, elected by the people for the ordinary purposes of legislation only, have no power to restrain the acts of succeeding Assemblies, constituted with powers equal to our own, and that therefore to declare this act irrevocable would be of no effect in law; yet we are free to declare, and do declare, **that the rights hereby asserted are of the natural rights of mankind, and that if any act shall be hereafter passed to repeal the present or to narrow its operation, such act will be an infringement of natural right.**⁴

Reflection Questions:

1. Please summarize three main ideas of this primary resource.

2. In your opinion, do you think that these words are relevant to the topic of religious freedom today? Why or why not?

3. Based on this document, what are some of the main reasons why people within Virginia and eventually the United States have freedom of religion? Please be specific.

4. In your opinion does banning a certain religion or discriminating against people because of their religious faith go along or clash with this document written by Founding Father, Thomas Jefferson? Please explain your application of this principle.

5. As a student of US history living in the present year, please construct a brief one to two sentence reflection on its relevance or importance in modern times. In other words, why does this apply to your daily life or why does it not? Please be specific.

FINAL REFLECTION (Private and for your eyes only)

What is your religious affiliation and how important is it to you? (Please see your teacher if you have any questions)

How might you feel if this right was infringed upon or taken away from you? What about if it was taken away from a friend or family member. Please discuss.

RESOURCE II: Selections from Denise A. Spellberg’s book Thomas Jefferson’s QUR’AN: Islam and the Founders:

Amazon’s description of the book:

In this original and illuminating book, Denise A. Spellberg reveals a little-known but crucial dimension of the story of American religious freedom—a drama in which Islam played a surprising role. In 1765, eleven years before composing the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson bought a Qur’an. This marked only the beginning of his lifelong interest in Islam, and he would go on to acquire numerous books on Middle Eastern languages, history, and travel, taking extensive notes on Islam as it relates to English common law. Jefferson sought to understand Islam notwithstanding his personal disdain for the faith, a sentiment prevalent among his Protestant contemporaries in England and America. But unlike most of them, by 1776 Jefferson could imagine Muslims as future citizens of his new country.

PASSAGE I: (Thomas Jefferson, quoting his influence from the Enlightenment John Locke, 1776)

[He] says “neither Pagan nor Mahamedan [Muslim] nor Jew ought to be excluded from the civil rights of the Commonwealth because of his religion.”

Page 3 of the book

PASSAGE II: (Thomas Jefferson’s notes on William Salkeld’s Reports on Cases Adjudg’d in the Court of the King’s Bench (1717):

“Turks and Infidels are not perpetui inimici (enemies for life), nor is there particular Enmity between them and us; but this is a common Error founded on a groundless Opinion of Justice Brook; for tho’ there be a difference between our Religion and theirs, that does not oblige us to be Enemies to their Persons; they are Creatures of God and of the same kind as we are, and it would be a Sin in us to hurt their persons.”

Page 93 of the book

PASSAGE III: (From Thomas Jefferson’s “in Life and Selected Writings”)

[T]he insertion [of “Jesus Christ”] was rejected by a great majority, in proof that they meant to comprehend, within the mantle of its protection, the Jew and the Gentile, the Christian and Mahometan (Muslim), the Hindoo, and Infidel of every denomination.”

Page 119 of the book

PASSAGE IV: (Taken from a letter written by Thomas Jefferson to James Smith, December 8, 1822, in Life and Selected Congress)

“I write with freedom, because while I claim a right to believe in one God, if so my reason tells me, i yield as freely to others that believe in three. Both religions, I find, make honest men, and that is the only point society has any right to look to.”

Page 229 of the book

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

1. What was your reaction when you learned that Thomas Jefferson owned a copy of the Koran and wrote about it during his lifetime? Were you surprised to learn this and why?

2. What is a Pagan and how does Jefferson feel about religions other than Christianity being practiced within the United States? Please be specific.

3. Is calling Muslims "Infidels" a compliment or offensive which was taken from Jefferson's own words?

4. How does Jefferson feel about anyone hurting another person of a different religious faith other than Christianity? Please be specific.

5. Why do you think that Thomas Jefferson is pleased that the term "Jesus Christ" will not be included in any of the United States' founding documents? Why does he think that this will protect people of other religious faiths such as Muslims, Hindus and people of the Jewish faith?

6. Please summarize the final passage taken from Jefferson's words. What is he saying in regards to those individuals who worship a different faith than Christianity? Please be specific.

MODERN RESOURCES:

Directions:

After reading the passages from Thomas Jefferson, please read the following article and watch the following videos that all take place in modern times.

1. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/01/05/AR2007010500512.html>
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6LW2uUxS-eU>
3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-sz0KY-3PbQ>

THOMAS JEFFERSON TWITTER ROLE PLAY:

Directions:

Based on your research and readings about Thomas Jefferson, please complete the following activity role playing that you are Thomas Jefferson living now and have just watched these two video clips and read the article that all have to do with freedom of religion. I want you to pretend that Thomas Jefferson has just created a profile on Twitter and wanted to post his reaction to the following people based on their actions.

What do you think Thomas Jefferson's Twitter handle should be?

Why? _____

TWEET #1 reflecting upon Donald Trump as if Thomas Jefferson was watching the speech live:

TWEET #2 reflecting upon Keith Ellison who took the oath of office to be a Congressman on Thomas Jefferson's actual Koran as if Jefferson was watching the ceremony live:

TWEET #3 reflecting upon Rep. Virgil Goode who was critical of Keith Ellison's action as well as the US electing the first Muslim Congressman as if Jefferson was reading the remarks live:

FINAL ASSIGNMENT/ PERSUASIVE LETTER TO THE *[insert local school board here]*:

Directions:

Based on this exercise/ lesson plan, please create a persuasive letter to the ***[insert local school board here]*** either advocating for a mandatory Thomas Jefferson curriculum unit to be given to all eighth graders or respectfully disagreeing and thinking that it would be bad idea. Remember, your thesis statement should be based on how relevant that you think Thomas Jefferson is on the life of a person living in 2016. The letter should follow the LETTER TO A PUBLIC OFFICIAL FORMAT that we have been following all year in class and should contain an introduction, a minimum of two pieces of supporting evidence as well as a recognition of the opposing view. As always, please remember to sign and date your professional letter to your government officials.

LETTER TO A PUBLIC OFFICIAL FORMAT:

Date

Dear members of the ***[insert local school board here]***,

FIRST PARAGRAPH: Respectfully introduce yourself and gently weave in your issue/ concern.

SECOND PARAGRAPH: More in depth discussion of your issue/ concern with a minimum of two pieces of supporting evidence that showcases its overall importance.

THIRD PARAGRAPH: Recognition of the opposing view in a respectful manner but bring it back to your position of the issue.

FOURTH PARAGRAPH: Conclusion where you briefly wrap up the letter, thank the School Board for addressing your concern, and a contact where they can reach you such as a cell phone number or email.

Sincerely,

(personal signature)

Typed name

GRADING RUBRIC FOR IS JEFFERSON RELEVANT TODAY? LESSON TWO:

TOTAL POSSIBLE SCORE: 100

PRE- ASSESSMENT: worth 10 points

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
No Attempt			Minimal Attempt			Moderate Attempt			Engaging and Involved Attempt	

COMMENTS: _____

RESOURCE #1: GROUP READING/ REFLECTION QUESTIONS: worth 5 points

0	1	2	3	4	5
No Reflection		Minimal Reflection	Moderate Reflection		Thoughtful and in depth Reflection

COMMENTS: _____

RESOURCE #2: GROUP READING/ REFLECTION QUESTIONS: worth 5 points

0	1	2	3	4	5
No Reflection		Minimal Reflection	Moderate Reflection		Thoughtful and in depth Reflection

COMMENTS: _____

THOMAS JEFFERSON TWITTER ROLE PLAY: worth 40 TOTAL points

- TJ's Twitter Handle and Rationale behind it: 10 POINTS _____
- TJ's Role Play Tweet about Trump: 10 POINTS _____
- TJ's Role Play Tweet about Ellison 10 Points _____
- TJ's Role Play Tweet about Goode 10 Points _____

SCORE OUT of 40 _____ **COMMENTS** _____

PERSUASIVE LETTER TO SCHOOL COMMITTEE: worth 40 TOTAL points

STRUCTURE/ SYNTAX (Spelling, Grammar, Punctuation) 10 points

PERSUASIVENESS: 10 points _____

PROFESSIONALISM/ FLOW OF LETTER 10 points _____
(Following the Format)

APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE/ HISTORICAL ACCURACY 10 points _____

FINAL SCORE OUT OF 100: _____

FINAL COMMENTS: _____