

Jefferson: Democrat or Dictator?

A Study in the Tyranny of Liberty

Marion Truslow

Timeline: <http://www.monticello.org/site/jefferson/timeline-jeffersons-life>



"A prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people."

-Thomas Jefferson, The Declaration of Independence, referring to King George III

T R E A T Y
BETWEEN THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
AND THE
FRENCH REPUBLIC.

THE President of the United States of America, and the First Consul of the French Republic, in the name of the French people, desiring to remove all source of misunderstanding relative to objects of discussion mentioned in the second and fifth articles of the convention of the 8th Vendemiaire an. 9. (30th September, 1800,) relative to the rights claimed by the United States, in virtue of the treaty concluded at Madrid the 27th of October, 1795, between his Catholic Majesty and the said United States, and willing to strengthen the union and friendship which at the time of the said convention was happily reestablished between the two nations, have respectively named their plenipotentiaries, to wit, the President of the United States, by and with the advice and content of the Senate of the said states, Robert R. Livingston, minister plenipotentiary of the United States, and James Monroe, minister plenipotentiary and envoy extraordinary of the said states, near the government of the French republic; and the First Consul, in the name of the French people, citizen Francis Barbe Marbois, minister of the public treasury, who, after having respectively exchanged their full powers, have agreed to the following articles:

ARTICLE I. WHEREAS, by the article the third of the treaty concluded at St. Idelfonso, the 9th Vendemiaire, an. 9 First October, 1800,) between the First Consul of the French republic and his Catholic Majesty, it was agreed as follows:

"His Catholic Majesty promises and engages on his part, to cede to the French Republic, six months after the full and entire execution of the conditions and stipulations herein relative to his royal highness the duke of Parma, the colony or province of Louisiana, with the same extent that it now has in the hands of Spain, and that it had when France possessed it; and such as it should be after the treaties of friendship entered into between Spain

The burning of the Philadelphia.

From the collections of The Mariners' Museum.

https://www.marinersmuseum.org/sites/micro/usnavy/caption_pages/06j_QW40BurningPhila.htm



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The Original Louisiana Purchase Treaty - Page 1

<http://www.earlyamerica.com/earlyamerica/milestones/louisiana/1.html>



Charlie Russell Paints the Meeting

<http://www.lewis-clark.org/article/1439>



Jefferson's Embargo Act

http://cdn.history.com/sites/2/2013/12/jefferson_ograbme.jpg

“The concept of the benevolent dictator, just like the concept of the noble thief or the honest whore, is no more than a meaningless fantasy.”

- Alaa Al Aswany, *On The Stage of Egypt: A Novelist's Provocative Reflections*

Do you agree or disagree, and why?

Jefferson's Diplomacy: Unit Overview

This unit is part of Gilder Lehrman's series of Common Core State Standards-aligned teaching resources. These units were written to enable students to understand, summarize, and analyze original texts of historical significance. Through a step-by-step process, students will acquire the skills to analyze any primary or secondary source material

In this unit students are being asked to consider some of the difficult decisions that Jefferson had to make as a president during the Napoleonic Wars, and to reflect on the nature and effectiveness of his leadership. A selection of documents includes, among others, includes an image of a picture of the attack on the Barbary Pirates, a painting and map relating to the Lewis and Clark expedition, and Jefferson's letter to Napoleon regarding the Louisiana Purchase. Students will be asked to deduce from the documents what happened in each and why it happened; they will reflect on these events and consider what can be deduced from the evidence about the nature and skill of Jefferson's actions – his leadership in the era of the Napoleonic Wars through his second term as president. A follow up, or extension activity is provided to help reach some conclusions and assessment of Jefferson's leadership. Students will demonstrate their understanding by writing an evaluative essay, using textual evidence from the documents or reference to the images alongside their prior knowledge, and reach some conclusions about the nature of Jefferson's leadership in wartime.

Jefferson's Diplomacy: Unit Overview

Unit

Objectives:

- Analyze and summarize a range of documents including paintings, maps, letters, *et cetera*.
- Compare, contrast and order the evidence to support their conclusions.
- Within an argumentative essay evaluate Jefferson's leadership and demonstrate that their argument is supported by appropriate references to the documents and their own knowledge.

Grade Level:

- 11th and 12th grade levels or 6th Form students who need stretch and challenge. Prior knowledge of the events of the Foreign Policy of President Thomas Jefferson and executive powers of the president in war would be helpful.

Number of Class Periods:

- 3 class periods of 75 minutes each to complete 2 lessons.

Standards

Analyzing Evidence:

- Analyze features of historical evidence such as audience, purpose, point of view, format, argument, limitations, and context germane to the evidence considered.
- Based on analysis and evaluation of historical evidence, make supportable inferences and draw appropriate conclusions.

Making an Argument:

- Analyze commonly accepted historical arguments and explain how an argument has been constructed from historical evidence.
- Construct convincing interpretations through analysis of disparate, relevant historical evidence.
- Evaluate and synthesize conflicting historical evidence to construct persuasive historical arguments.

Lesson One

Objectives

- Students will be able to:
 - Analyze features of historical evidence such as audience, purpose, point of view, format, argument, limitations, and context germane to the evidence considered.
 - Based on analysis and evaluation of historical evidence, make supportable inferences and draw appropriate conclusions.

Materials:

- The burning of the Philadelphia.
 - https://www.marinersmuseum.org/sites/micro/usnavy/caption_pages/06j_QW40BurningPhila.htm
- The Original Louisiana Purchase Treaty - Page 1
 - <http://www.earlyamerica.com/earlyamerica/milestones/louisiana/1.html>
- Letter from Jefferson to Napoleon
 - <http://www.raabcollection.com/james-madison-autograph/official-letter-state-pres-jefferson-napoleon-recalling-robert-livingston>

Lessons One and Two

Historical

Contexts: Napoleonic Wars ravaged Europe and indeed the world, Jefferson's two presidential terms involved several monumental decisions that he made regarding the foreign policy of the United States; he had to protect the new republic. Additionally, Jefferson had to deal with north African pirates in order to protect American commerce. So the very survival of America was at stake. The Barbary Pirate wars, the Louisiana Purchase, the Lewis and Clark expedition, and the Embargo had lasting consequences for America and the world.

Lesson One

Procedure

- ○ Hand out the documents in the slide presentation to the students. Teacher comments on them and checks with the students for an understanding of the vocabulary. Students read through / look over the documents again with the teacher. Tell students to select key words, discuss, and tell students to summarize on the organizer.
- Introduce the images and tell students to extract the key points and words as indicated above using the organizer for the images, working in pairs to discuss and highlight the aspects of the images that pose questions. You may also choose to employ the shared reading method of written documents – this presents interesting discussion about the tone and inflexion of the documents.
- Ask the students if they have any questions about the documents and use these to direct a discussion into problem solving the events depicted.

Assessment (Optional)

- Give students a timed period to write 200 words or so, using direct evidence from the sources to explain what happened in the events depicted and their historical significance of those events.

Lesson Two

Objectives

- ○ Students will be able to:
 - Make an argument
 - Analyze commonly accepted historical arguments and explain how an argument has been constructed from historical evidence.
 - Construct convincing interpretations through analysis of disparate, relevant historical evidence.
 - Evaluate and synthesize conflicting historical evidence to construct persuasive historical arguments.

Materials:

- Charlie Russell Paints the Meeting
 - <http://www.lewis-clark.org/article/1439>
- Jefferson's speech to Congress, February 14 1806
 - <http://www.monticello.org/site/research-and-collections/embargo-1807>
- Jefferson's Embargo Act
 - http://cdn.history.com/sites/2/2013/12/jefferson_ograbme.jpg

Lesson Two

Procedure

- ○ Reflect on previous lesson, have students read their 200 word summary or recap events and ask students to consider/speculate what Jefferson might have done differently about events related to the Embargo and the Lewis and Clark expedition.
- Hand out Jefferson's speech to Congress, explain procedure, teacher reads to class, students read together and pick out key words, summarize etc. on the summary organizer.
- In pairs, tell students to group or organize the documents so that they can capture aspects of Jefferson's leadership (e.g. do they show decisiveness, authority, over-reach etc.). Compare and discuss conclusions.
- Introduce the Embargo cartoon. Discuss or ask the students to interpret it and put in the graphic organizer -- having drawn out ideas about what this unusual document means, ask them if they have any questions about it (e.g. was it ever used).
- Split class into two teams, one must argue Jefferson was a democrat and the other he was a dictator. Give them 25 minutes to prepare arguments, they can use the grid to record their quotes and ideas. Conclude the lesson with a swift debate on this topic. Set an extended piece of writing where they must evaluate Jefferson's leadership and use their previous knowledge and close reference to the text to support their argument and draw logical conclusions.

Lesson Two

Assessment

- ○ Give students a timed period to write 200 words or so (this is the extended piece of writing), using the Lesson Two documents and direct evidence from those sources to explain Jefferson's decision making and why the students agree or disagree with it?

"A prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people."

-Thomas Jefferson, The Declaration of Independence, referring to King George III

Quote by
Jefferson

Keywords?

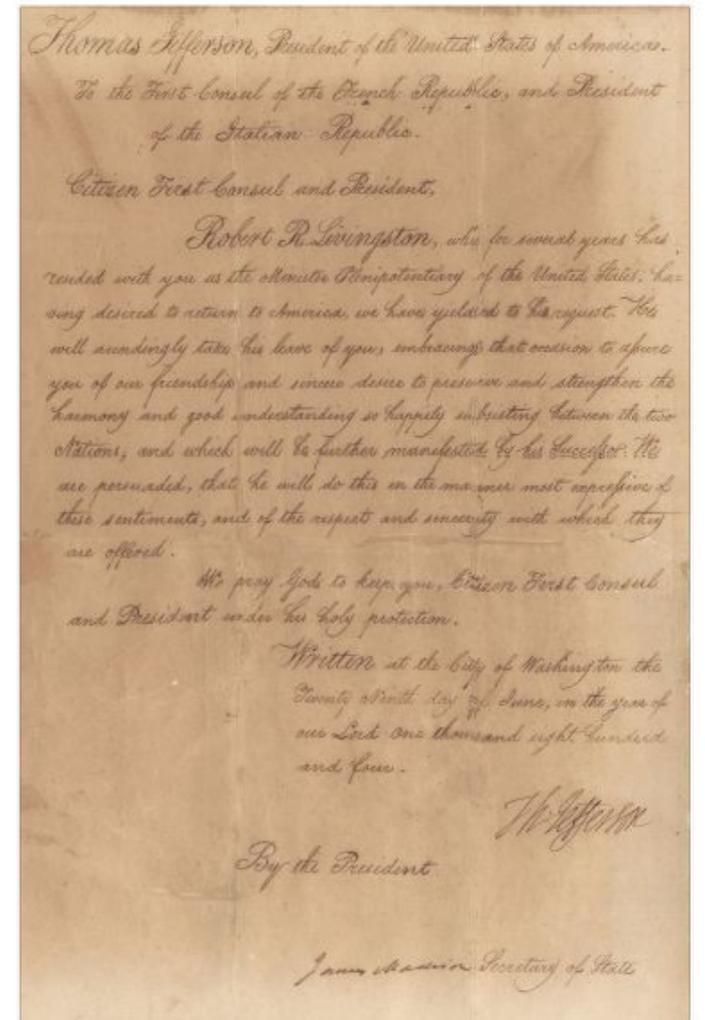
Summary?

In Your Own
Words?

Citizen First Consul and President,

Robert R. Livingston, who for several years has resided with you as the Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States, having desired to return to America, we have yielded to his request. He will accordingly take his leave of you, embracing that occasion to assure you of our friendship and sincere desire to preserve and strengthen the harmony and good understanding so happily subsisting between the two Nations, and which will be further manifested by his Successor. We are persuaded, that he will do this in the manner most expressive of these sentiments, and of the respect and sincerity with which they are offered.

We pray God to keep you, Citizen First Consul and President under his holy protection.



Letter by Jefferson

Keywords?

Summary?

In Your Own Words?

[Jefferson unsuccessfully]
"endeavored to form an association of the powers subject to habitual depredation from them. I accordingly prepared, and proposed to their ministers at Paris, for consultation with their governments, articles of a special confederation"... "The object of the convention shall be to compel the piratical States to perpetual peace."

-Autobiography of Thomas Jefferson
1785 and 1786

Quote by
Jefferson

Keywords?

Summary?

In Your Own Words?

"Resolved, that the capture and condemnation under the orders of the British government, and adjudications of their courts of Admiralty, of American vessels and their cargoes, on the pretext of their being employed in a trade with the enemies of Great Britain, prohibited in time of peace, is an unprovoked aggression upon the property of the citizens of these United States, a violation of their neutral rights, and an encroachment upon their national independence."

-Thomas Jefferson to the United States Congress, February 14th, 1806. Journal of the Senate of the United States of America, vol. 4.

Quote by Jefferson

Keywords?

Summary?

In Your Own Words?



Map of the Lewis and Clark Expedition

Keywords?

Summary?

In Your Own Words?