

Lydia, Stephanie, and Jill – Here is my proposed draft. I plan to start on Part I, #2 on or around March 22nd. We would take what ever time is needed. I need everyone to add what ever content or skill objectives you think are necessary – we can also include the appropriate standards if we think it necessary. Don't be afraid to adapt what I already have. Please add steps and/or refine them where necessary. Perhaps we can meet to discuss early next week? Also – we have an “old” research booklet we used to use that we can adapt.

## DRAFT

### Constitutional Convention – Interdisciplinary Project

Mr. Cook – 7<sup>th</sup> Social Studies   Mrs. Gehrig – 7<sup>th</sup> English Arts  
Mrs. Keough – Library   Miss Szykowny- Special Education

### **Overview:**

As part of our 7<sup>th</sup> Grade exploration of American History, our students will be investigating the creation of the United States Constitution. To do this, students will “recreate” the Philadelphia Convention at which the Constitution was written. Using our research and writing process, the students will create biographies of the main delegates to the actual Constitution and use this information to participate in a series of activities which will explore the issues, events, and outcomes of the Convention.

### **New York State Learning Standards covered in this activity:**

#### **Social Studies**

Standard 1 - Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States and New York.

Standard 4 – Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of the necessity for establishing government; the governmental system of the US and other nations; the US Constitution; the basic civic values of American constitutional democracy; and the roles, rights, and responsibilities of citizenship, including avenues of participation.

(we can add more from your areas)

## **Objectives**

### **Content Objects**

Students will

1. be able to explain the reasons why the Convention was convened in Philadelphia in 1787.  
(Review from previous lesson)
2. be able to identify the names and background of the major participants at the Convention.
3. be able identify and discuss the major issues at the Convention and tell how the delegates dealt with these issues
4. be able to describe the basic goals, parts, and processes found in the Constitution
5. be able to outline the process the delegates created for the ratification of the new document.

### **Skill Objectives**

Students will

1. Be able to outline and follow the basic steps of the research process including:
  - a. research questions,
  - b. notetaking,
  - c. outlining,
  - d. creating bibliography
2. Successfully complete a biographical research paper
3. Apply acquired information to solve historical problems
4. Be able to construct generalizations with supporting details
5. Speak effectively and persuasively in front of an audience

## **Process:**

(SS-Social Studies Class) (LMC-Library Media Center) (E – English Arts)

The Students will

### **Part I Introduction (4 classes)**

1. complete a previous lesson which covers the issues and events which led to the calling of the Convention. (ss)
2. identify the time and place that the Convention was held (ss)
3. be introduced to the Constitutional Convention Activity (ss)

### **Part II Biographical Research (6 classes) (George Washington is used as model)**

4. introduce Biographical Research activity and review research process (ss) or (e)
5. introduction to Library resources ( LMC)
6. carry out research (LMS)
7. organize data (e)
8. write biographies (e)
9. create book of biographies to be handed out in class. (e)
10. create info poster on delegate to be used in Part III (s)
11. classes will share their information on the various state delegates and divided them into “big or little” states and “slave or nonslave” states. This will be used to determine the position they will take in the Convention debates.

### **Part III The Convention Begins (5 classes)**

12. Visit Independence Hall in Philadelphia via Distance Learning (this may take place out of sequence!)
13. Recreate Convention (Mr. Cook will be G Washington ☺ and act as facilitator. (s) This will be done over a series of classes. The classes will be organized as follows:
  - a. Class will be provided with a daily briefing including a review of previous day’s proceedings and the issues to be debated that day.
  - b. Each student will be given a position sheet based upon their character (they will be assuming the roles of the people they research.
  - c. Each student will be given a daily agenda
  - d. Mr. Washington will conduct the daily meeting, presenting an issue
  - e. Delegates will debate the issue based upon their position sheets, the textbook reading (given the night before) and their knowledge of their character.
  - f. The class will come to a position (compromise) on the issue which will be recorded.
  - g. Students will complete their daily reaction sheet and be assigned the next days reading.
14. The Convention will be closed by Mr. Washington

#### **Part IV Concluding Activity (4 classes)**

15. Students will write a newspaper article which summarizes their Convention experience.  
(e)
16. Students will complete a study of the actual Constitution. This will include
  - a. Examining the preamble and identifying the goals
  - b. Identifying each section and describing the main ideas found in each.
  - c. Comparing and contrasting their compromises with the actual compromises found in the Constitution(s)
17. The Classes will use the Constitution to outline the steps that would need to be taken for ratification. (s)
18. Students will take a quiz on the Convention and Constitution.

#### Assessment/Grading

Students will be given Social Studies grades for

Research process  
Written Work on Assigned Delegate  
Poster  
Daily Worksheets/reaction work from Convention  
Overall Convention Re-enactment grade  
US Constitution Worksheet Grade  
Quiz Grade

#### Follow Up

After completing this activity, the classes will go on to

Examining how the Constitution was ratified including Federalist vs Antifederalist arguments.  
A Look at the Federal Government and their role as Citizens  
A Distance Learning visit to the National Archives  
Examination of the Presidency of George Washington