

# Jefferson's Economic Plan for the Louisiana Territory

## General

### Grade Level

High School

### Author Info

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### Type of Lesson

Document Analysis

### Duration

2 class periods

## Objectives

### Overview

Students will analyze several primary sources to collectively deduce the economic intentions of Thomas Jefferson for the Louisiana Territory and the Natives who inhabited the region.

### Prior Knowledge

Students will need to have a general understanding of the background information relating to the reasons why Jefferson was purchasing the Louisiana Territory and the overall Lewis and Clark expedition.

Students that do not have this base of knowledge should still be able to analyze the documents and extract meaning and context to answer any questions pertaining to this lesson.

## **State Standards**

Common Core Standards:

### **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1**

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.5 Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.

### **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7**

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8 Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

### **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1**

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

#### **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.A**

Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

#### **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.B**

Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.

#### **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.C**

Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.D Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

Virginia SOLs:

USI.1 The student will demonstrate skills for historical and geographical analysis and responsible citizenship, including the ability to

a) identify and interpret primary and secondary source documents to increase understanding of events and life in United States history to 1865;

d) interpret ideas and events from different historical perspectives;

e) evaluate and discuss issues orally and in writing;

i) identify the costs and benefits of specific choices made, including the consequences, both intended and unintended, of the decisions and how people and nations responded to positive and negative incentives.

USI.8 The student will demonstrate knowledge of westward expansion and reform in America from 1801 to 1861 by

a) describing territorial expansion and how it affected the political map of the United States, with emphasis on the Louisiana Purchase, the Lewis and Clark expedition, and the acquisitions of Florida, Texas, Oregon, and California;

b) identifying the geographic and economic factors that influenced the westward movement of settlers;

## **Objectives/Learning Outcomes**

Students will gain understanding of President Jefferson's economic goals and intentions for the United States in the Louisiana Territory.

Students will gain understanding of President Jefferson's intentions for the conversion of Natives' lifestyles and culture in order to achieve his goals for the United States.

Students will utilize a Philosophical Chair exercise to debate the merits of Jefferson's plan and whether the realistic achievement of his overall economic plan is attainable.

## Additional Learning Outcomes

Students should have a clear understanding of the intentions of Thomas Jefferson and Congress with respect to the economic implications of utilizing the Louisiana Territory and relations with the Native Americans.

## Essential Questions

These are essential questions that are to be considered with respect to the students creating arguments for the Philosophical Chair discussion on Day 2.

- 1) What are Jefferson's economic goals for the United States in the Louisiana Territory?
- 2) How does Jefferson plan to create a Federal stronghold on the profits of trading with the Natives?
- 3) Are Jefferson's plans for the Natives truly in their best interests or are those plans simply to control the Natives in order to benefit the United States?
- 4) What common theme is seen throughout Jefferson's letters to the Native peoples? Are his letters to be interpreted as genuine concern and benevolence or are they to be interpreted as manipulative and deceitful?

## Procedures

### 1. *5 min, Day 1*

Introduce the lesson and the documents the students will be analyzing. Explain to students the outcomes of the lesson are to understand the documents in terms of the economic goals and how each document explains the process in which to achieve those goals.

Instruct students that their homework will be to formulate arguments for Day 2's debate derived from the documents in either support for or opposition against Jefferson's economic plan in the Louisiana Territory. They must also include arguments about Jefferson's plan for the conversion of the lifestyles of the Natives.

### 2. *40+ min, Day 1*

Have all students read each of the document excerpts. Students will need to take notes on the documents as they read. It is suggested that they answer document questions as they go, but students may choose to answer them after all documents have been read and notes have been taken.

If students do not finish all of the notes and questions, they should finish those for homework prior to the Day 2 Philosophical Chair discussion.

### 3. Day 2

Students will conduct a Philosophical Chair exercise where they will debate the intentions of Jefferson's economic plan for Louisiana. One side will argue its viability, benevolence and positive goals while the other will argue its unrealistic nature, malevolence and the negative aspects. Ultimately the discussion should be based in facts from the documents and sound arguments with evidence.

Class set up:

Divide the desks in half so that each side is facing each other. Have the supporters on one side and the opposition on the other. Any neutral parties (if you allow it) can sit in the middle of the room until they hear an argument that sways them, at which point they can get up and sit with the side they now support.

Start the conversation with a topic you would like them to discuss and allow the students to direct the conversation. The students should control the flow of the discussion and will only need the facilitation of the teacher if the conversation has stalled.

If students on either side are persuaded to support the other side of the argument, they may get up and move over to the opposing side.

At the conclusion of the exercise, the students should have a much better understanding not only of the documents and their meaning, but also their own interpretation of the significance behind the documents and how they personally view the policies.

## Materials

### Materials Needed

You will need to use the PDF "Jefferson's Economic Plan for the Louisiana Territory" for this lesson. It contains excerpts from seven primary source documents. Below you will find the links to the full document transcriptions for all seven documents.

1) Jefferson's letter to Lewis (1803)

<http://www.monticello.org/site/preparations-lewis-and-clark-expedition>

2) Jefferson's "confidential" letter to congress (1803)

<http://www.monticello.org/site/jefferson/jeffersons-confidential-letter-to-congress>

3) An Act for Establishing Trading Houses with the Indian Tribes. (1806)

[http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th\\_century/na010.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/na010.asp)

4) Jefferson's letter to Handsome Lake, Seneca Leader (1802)

[http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th\\_century/jeffind2.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/jeffind2.asp)

5) Jefferson's letter to the Choctaw Nation (1803)

[http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th\\_century/jeffind3.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/jeffind3.asp)

6) Jefferson's letter to the Cherokee Nation (1806) [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th\\_century/jeffind4.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/jeffind4.asp)

7) Jefferson's letter to the Wolf and People of the Mandan (1806)

[http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th\\_century/jeffind5.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/jeffind5.asp)

## **Technology Needs**

If you plan on handing the PDF to the students to analyze the documents, no technology will be required.

If you plan on having students also review full documents, students will need access to the internet.

## **Assessment**

### **Homework**

If students do not finish the notes or questions from reading the document excerpts, they will need to finish these prior to the Day 2 Philosophical Chair discussion exercise.

Also, students will need to reflect on the essential questions for the lesson and develop arguments based on the documents for the Day 2 Philosophical Chair discussion exercise.

### **Assessment**

You may want to use the discussion exercise as your alternative assessment for the lesson. If this is the case, you can find a discussion rubric here

([http://bestpracticeslegaled.files.wordpress.com/2011/05/class\\_discussion\\_rubric.pdf](http://bestpracticeslegaled.files.wordpress.com/2011/05/class_discussion_rubric.pdf)) made by Professor Connie Mayer from the Albany Law School.

You may want to assess this lesson with an essay written by the students after the class discussion. Have the students answer the essential questions within this lesson and persuade the reader to take the side of support or opposition to Jefferson's plan. Essays must include evidence and support from the document excerpts in order to be properly done. The AP Essay Scoring Rubric can be found here (<http://mseffie.com/AP/Rubrics.pdf>) for you to score them properly. This comes from Conni M. Shelnut, Lakeland, Florida.

