

## LESSON PLAN: Jay Szaro

**TOPIC:** Thomas Jefferson Newspaper  
**DISCIPLINE:** Social Studies/Computers  
**CLASS:** 7<sup>th</sup> Grade U.S. History/Computers

**NEH Institute Project**  
**DATE:** July 21, 2006  
**TIME:** Semester Project

**OVERVIEW:** *Creating an Historic Newspaper on the Life of Thomas Jefferson*

Students will work individually and in groups on an historic newspaper on the life of Thomas Jefferson. Throughout the Units on the American Revolution and the Age of Jefferson, students will learn about the role of Jefferson as one of the Founding Fathers (Guys) of our country. In doing so, each student will be responsible for creating a "Jefferson Department" for the class historic newspaper on Jefferson. They will create feature stories on Jefferson that will cover the major accomplishments, actions, policies, and writings from over the course of his career. Each student will present their work to the class and their "Jefferson Department" will then be merged with other student's work and will form the framework for the class historic newspaper. Each student's final copy will become part of their Tiverton Middle School, 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Digital Portfolio Requirement.

### **OUTCOMES:**

1. To understand the role Jefferson played during the American Revolution and throughout the early years of the United States.
2. To understand how and why Jefferson's actions, policies and writings still impact our lives today.
3. To know some of the key leaders, main events, dates, places, and outcomes during this time period that spans between the American Revolution and the Age of Jefferson.
4. To understand key computer functions and aspects of some of the software programs that would be necessary to create a computer-based newspaper: Microsoft Word, Publisher, Adobe Photoshop, In-Design and Illustrator.

### **STRATEGIES:**

#### INITIATORY:

1. Engage the students in a discussion on what steps go into creating a daily newspaper and the various departments that make up a paper. Examine various daily newspapers to give students an idea of the various topics and stories that are covered. Explain to them the type of individual effort and team work involved in turning out a daily newspaper. Have them think of various departments that might be used to cover the story of their own life, as well as the life of Jefferson.
2. Engage the students in a discussion on the different software programs available in the computer lab that could be used to create a computer-based historic newspaper, as well as the various computer functions that they would need to do to produce a final copy for print.

#### DEVELOPMENTAL:

1. Individually, in pairs, or in groups, students will create various "Jefferson Departments" that will reflect the various accomplishments, actions, policies and writings of Jefferson that we will cover throughout the units on the American Revolution and the Age of Jefferson. Students will select or be assigned to the Jefferson Department they will cover during this period. Suggestions for Departments may include:
  - a. Jefferson's Political Career: President, Vice-President, Secretary of State, Minister to France,...
  - b. Jefferson's Career: politician, lawyer, writer, inventor, farmer, architect, scientist, philosopher,...
  - c. Jefferson and the Declaration of Independence
  - d. Jefferson and the Louisiana Purchase
  - e. Jefferson and Lewis and Clark
  - f. Jefferson and Slavery

- g. Jefferson and Political Parties
  - i. Jefferson and Religion
  - j. Jefferson and His Writings
  - k. Jefferson and the Founding Fathers (Guys): Washington, Adams, Madison, Hamilton,....
2. We will look at the New York Historical Society's Historic Newspaper on Alexander Hamilton and discuss the types of stories that students could write for their Jefferson Department and the types of photo's and other material that could be included. We will discuss the layout and placement of their Departments and stories within the historic newspaper as well as other important sections: cover, masthead, headlines, table of contents, logo's, photo's, documents, timelines, cartoons, ect.
  3. Review the various sources available to students to help them research and write the stories for their Jefferson Department, that would include their class textbook, Jefferson biographies, Jefferson websites, Jefferson videos, Jefferson's writings, as well as their class notes and other material presented during the units on the American Revolution and the Age of Jefferson.
  4. Review the overall requirements and rubric that will be used to grade their individual and group performance throughout this project, as well as due dates and hours for afterschool lab time.
  5. Review the main functions they will need to know involving the computer program they chose to use for the historic newspaper, as well as the proofreading and editing process involved.

### CULMINATING:

1. Students will start work on their Jefferson Department by putting together a rough draft layout of their story, pictures, and other material in relation to where it would go in the overall layout of the historic newspaper.
2. Throughout the units on the American Revolution and the Age of Jefferson students will formalize their plans and the stories for their Jefferson Department. Students will submit their plan to the teacher for review and editing at various checkpoints during the semester. Class time and afterschool time will be set aside to work with students who need help in the research, writing, and computer aspects of the project.
3. Students will work in groups to merge their Jefferson Department into the final copy of the historic newspaper. Each student will then present their work to the class and explain their Jefferson Department in relation to Jefferson's life, as well as why it is relevant today. The final copy would be a part of the student's digital portfolio requirement for their grade level.

### **HOMEWORK:**

1. Review the various chapters in the class text relating to the American Revolution and the Age of Jefferson as they are assigned throughout this time period. Students will prepare any questions on the material covered relating to their Jefferson Department for the next days discussion.
2. Continue to work on aspects relating to the research, writing, and computer layout of the stories for their Jefferson Department, in relationship to the deadlines set for completion of the final project.

### **ASSESSMENT:**

1. Class participation during class discussion and any group work on the historic newspaper project.
2. Their final copy and presentation of their Jefferson Department within the historic newspaper.
3. Fulfillment of all requirements and deadlines based upon the project instructions and rubric.

### **MATERIALS:**

1. Computers and software that are appropriate for this grade level and time constraints.
2. Class textbook and other teaching resources that are included in the NEH Jefferson Institute Book of Readings: Jefferson biographies, articles, letters, documents, interviews, quotations, magazines, videos, historic sites and internet websites.

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Each Jefferson Department should cover at least: ¼ Page\_\_\_\_\_, ½ Page\_\_\_\_\_, 1 Page\_\_\_\_\_.
2. All stories and Departments should follow the overall requirements for the historic newspaper in regards to: Font size\_\_\_\_\_, Type\_\_\_\_\_, Style\_\_\_\_\_, Format\_\_\_\_\_, Spacing\_\_\_\_\_, Color\_\_\_\_\_.
3. All stories and Departments should contain an overview of Jefferson’s various accomplishments, actions, polices and writings in regards to the topic of your Department. Students should include at least 1-2 Jefferson quotes on that topic from primary sources, as well as any other important names, places, dates and facts related to the topic.
4. All stories and Departments should contain at least 1-2 photos that relate to the topic: photos can be about any relevant people, places, events or documents.
5. All stories and Departments should contain a bibliography for any source used related to the topic and should involve the class text, 2-3 primary source books or documents and 2-3 approved websites from the NEH Jefferson Institute Book of Readings.
6. Students will be allowed to pick which Department they would like to cover. However if necessary they may be assigned to a Department by the teacher and could be assigned with other students to cover more than one Department.
7. All students must present rough draft layouts and other research materials, including bibliography sources at various announced checkpoints throughout the length of the Project.

**Extra:**

- \*8. Students will be required to plot their important dates related to Jefferson from their Department on an overall Timeline to be included in the Historic Newspaper.
- \*9. Whenever possible students will look for and include any contradictions they find concerning Jefferson’s views, positions, and actions related to their Department.
- \*10. Whenever possible students will look for and include any opposing viewpoints from other leaders during this period, against Jefferson’s views, positions, and actions related to their Department.

**DUE DATES:**

1. Rough Draft Check #1\_\_\_\_\_
2. Rough Draft Check #2\_\_\_\_\_
3. Rough Draft Check #3\_\_\_\_\_
4. Final Copy Due..... \_\_\_\_\_
5. Class Presentation.....\_\_\_\_\_

