

## Thomas Jefferson and American Political Thought

A lesson by Jerry D. Andrews

By using the included Jefferson/Enlightenment power point presentation, along with prior knowledge, instructor input, and text references, the learner will be exposed to the basic concepts of the enlightenment and the philosophers who guided Jefferson as he penned the Declaration of Independence.

This lesson covers in whole or in part Goal 1 from the North Carolina Standard Course of Study with specific references to objective 1.02 and 1.03.

<b>Competency Goal 1</b>	<b>The learner will investigate the foundations of the American political system and explore basic values and principles of American democracy.</b>
	<b>Objectives</b> <b>1.01</b> Describe how geographic diversity influenced economic, social, and political life in colonial North America. <b>1.02</b> Trace and analyze the development of ideas about self-government in British North America. <b>1.03</b> Examine the causes of the American Revolution. <b>1.04</b> Elaborate on the emergence of an American identity. <b>1.05</b> Identify the major domestic problems of the nation under the Articles of Confederation and assess the extent to which they were resolved by the new Constitution. <b>1.06</b> Compare viewpoints about government in the Federalist and the Anti-Federalist Papers. <b>1.07</b> Evaluate the extent to which the Bill of Rights extended the Constitution. <b>1.08</b> Compare the American system of government to other forms of government.

Following the presentation, students will the create a poster, a (power point) presentation, or write an essay (5 paragraphs, 2 page minimum) on one of the following topics listed. Topic ideas not listed must be presented to and approved by your teacher.

1. Jefferson's role in the American Revolution
2. Jefferson and the writing of the Declaration of Independence  
*ie.* Who helped him? Why was TJ selected to write it? Did he write it alone?
3. Jefferson's role as political leader in Virginia.
4. The influence of the enlightenment on American political thought.  
*ie.* Who were the philosophers who help to establish the concepts of three branches of government, social contract, natural rights etc.

**Resources:** Laptop with wireless internet connection, Text, Poster board, colored pens, straight edges.

Robert A. Ferguson article, "With What Majesty Do We There Ride Above the Storms! Jefferson at Monticello", *Virginia Quarterly Review*, Autumn 1998.

<http://www.vqronline.org/articles/1998/autumn/ferguson-what-majesty>