**The United States Constitution: Strict or Broad Construction?**

**Subject area/course**: Social Sciences, U.S. History

**Grade level/band**: 11–12

**INSTRUCTOR PROCEDURES**

1. **Task overview**:

Students write a 3-page paper analyzing the constitutional issues that divided Jefferson, Hamilton, and their followers during the Washington administration. Then they examine their personal and political philosophy and determine if they would be “Jeffersonians” or “Hamiltonians” in today’s political climate. The goal is to determine if students consider themselves to be strict or broad constructionists when considering constitutional issues.

1. **Prior knowledge required:**

Students should be able to:

* Have a working knowledge of “liberalism” and “conservatism” in today’s political environment.
* Draw inferences from primary and secondary sources.
* Write an argumentative essay.
* Use MLA style or another format of your choice.

1. **Aligned standards:**

CCSS.ELA‐Literacy.RH.11‐12.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to the understanding of the text as a whole.

CCSS.ELA‐Literacy.RH.11‐12.2 Determine the central ideas as information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA‐Literacy.RH.11‐12.3 Evaluate various explanations for actions and events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11‐12.4 Determine the meanings of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.6 Evaluate the authors’ differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors’ claims, reasoning and evidence.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.9 Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11‐12.10 By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 11 CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

**C3 College, Career & Civic Life Framework Standards**

**D1.5.9-12**. Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of view represented in the sources, the types of sources available, and the potential uses of the sources.

**D2.Civ.2.9-12**. Analyze the role of citizens in the U.S. political system, with attention to various theories of democracy, changes in Americans’ participation over time, and alternative models from other countries, past and present.

**D2.Civ.4.9-12**. Explain how the U.S. Constitution establishes a system of government that has powers, responsibilities, and limits that have changed over time and that are still contested.

**D2.His.5.9-12**. Analyze how historical contexts shaped and continue to shape people’s

perspectives.

1. **Time requirements:**

After students have finished reading the assigned chapters in their primary text on the conflicts between Jefferson and Hamilton during Washington’s administration, plan about a week to ten days to complete their independent research and the various drafts of their paper. Plan to spend one class session after papers are submitted to discuss and compare students’ ideas and opinions on this topic.

1. **Instructor materials to use during administration:**

A selection of several current editions of major American history texts would be helpful. Also, a copy of *The Federalist* and political biographies of both Jefferson and Hamilton would be very useful.

1. **Instructor procedures during administration:**

* Students should work independently throughout this task.
* Students should have a fairly thorough understanding of the concepts of strict and broad construction as they are related to the writing and interpretation of the Constitution. They should have a basic understanding of the contemporary use of “liberal” and “conservative” when applied to political philosophies.
* Instructors should discuss these topics in class and clear up any confusion before students begin their work on their paper.

1. **Student support:**

The following suggestions are examples of scaffolding that can be used to meet the diverse student needs within the classroom.

* Provide class time for research on students’ topics.
* Provide definitions of new vocabulary words ahead of time.
* For the final product, all learners will benefit from peer assistance while brainstorming their topics, as well as a peer or teacher review of their papers before final submission.
* Some students will have good research skills, but some will need guidance in the determination of appropriate sources and where to look for them. It is important to spend class time in review of what constitutes an appropriate source in advance of students’ independent work time.

1. **Extensions or variations:**

* Students could present the results of their research to the class via an oral or multimedia presentation.
* If there is a particularly interesting and/or controversial topic, a debate could be organized where students choose sides on the topic and defend their views.

1. **Scoring and assessment considerations:**

EPIC developed the *College and Career Ready (CCR) Task Bank Scoring Rubric* to accompany this task. If your school or department uses a standardized rubric that would fit the content and requirements of this task, you may choose to use your existing rubric. The following notes and suggestions are meant to clarify the intent of the rubric and include considerations for the assessment of student work.

* When assigning the task, provide students with the rubric that will be used to score their final product and discuss it as a class.
* Unlike some rubrics, the *CCR Task Bank Rubric* does not predetermine “point values” for the scoring criteria. The rubric thus allows for flexibility with different instructors’ scoring systems and individual determination of the “weight” of each criterion.
* Student work that scores at the *Accomplished* level is considered to be entry-level college work.
* The *Exceeds* category on the rubric provides an example of how a student can go above and beyond the *Accomplished* level. These examples are intended to be only ONE way a work product can exceed expectations, thus allowing room for your professional judgment.
* If needed, consider including task-specific criteria as an additional scoring category to the rubric or providing a checklist of requirements for the task.