

## Hamilton and Jefferson Debate

Throughout history, it has been made clear of the different viewpoints on how to interpret the constitution. Some people believe that there should be a strict following while others think that it should be loose. Being a modern day Hamiltonian, the constitution should be followed more leniently to allow more wiggle room when in the face of problems. History has shown that the Jeffersonians believed strongly in a strict interpretation of the constitution while the Hamiltonians believed in a looser interpretation. The debate on the constitution has been going on for years and continues in our democratic and republican parties today.

To begin, the Jeffersonians are followers of a strict interpretation of the constitution opting to follow it to a T. When asked about certain amendments they believed that we should follow them word for word. This is due to the fact that they thought that since the constitution was the supreme law of the land, it should be followed in that way. Nowhere in the constitution does it say that it is okay to have a loose interpretation; it was meant to be followed accordingly. The Jeffersonians had the belief that the purpose of the constitution was limit the use of implied powers and to keep the government small. This was to make sure that the government never was able to become a monarchy and or take away the peoples basic rights. The strict constructionists desired a small federal government, one that would leave most power to the states and to the people. They believed that the government as a whole should not be able to tax the people and that power should be left to the states. This is because they never wanted the government to get to powerful and that couldn't be controlled. The Jeffersonians believed that it was the right of the states to tax individually not nationally. They did not then think that it stated anywhere in the constitution that they could be taxed nationally. Therefore they were opposed to the entire idea of a strong central government. They were more so in favor of the states holding more power and the federal government to be small. Their strict views on the constitution directly connect with the way in which people perceive the right to bare arms. People that feel we should have a strict interpretation see it that the

1 constitution gives them the right to have and hold any firearm without a background check. They  
2 think that it is their right provided by the constitution to have this gun. Nowhere does it say that  
3 they have to have a background check, they are the people that see it says, the right to bare arms and  
4 think they can do that. This correlates to those back in the day to who followed a strict interpretation  
5 of the constitution.

6 On the contrary.it is the view of the Hamiltonians that the constitution should be loosely  
7 interpreted. They believe that it is meant to be followed more leniently and left to interpretation.  
8 Unlike the Jeffersonians, they believed that a strong national government was necessary in the  
9 proper formation of America. They were strongly in favor of the elastic clause which allowed them  
10 to interpret and deem what 1 constitutional or not. This was the opposing view of the Jeffersonians  
11 which did not promote the use of this clause. They believed that Congress should be allowed to  
12 exercise many implied powers so that government can take a greater role in society. They thought  
13 that this would be beneficial for America because never did we have a strong central government. It  
14 was the belief of the federalists that a strong national government would get everyone to be united.  
15 That the power would not be abused but embraced. It is the thought that government taxes can be  
16 held to help benefit the nation. The taxes will help with war debt and manufacturing new things.  
17 The debate on the right to bare arms has been debated for years. This is a subject has been debated  
18 on for years and is still today on how to interpret this amendment. It is the loose interpretation of the  
19 Hamiltonians that believe that you should be able to have a gun but you should have a background  
20 check. This loose interpretation is to ensure the public safety. They believe that the elastic clause  
21 permits them to have the ability to restrict certain people to have guns based on their background  
22 and gun Licensed. It is merely a way to help protect the people and society. The Hamiltonians  
23 believe that the necessary and proper clause give us the power to interpret the constitution loosely.

24 With careful consideration. I know that I am a Hamiltonian at heart. This is because by  
25 interpreting the constitution more leniently, you are allowing the government to have wiggle room in

1 which they can deal with problems. For example, say that the government needed to negotiate for  
2 the better of society. and the constitution doesn't specifically allow it, we have the ability to  
3 interpret the constitution in a different way and are able to do so. How could anyone follow a paper  
4 for the rules of society word for word? The constitution wasn't meant to be interpreted so strict in a  
5 way that it was impossible to make exceptions. The necessary and proper clauses were created to do  
6 that thing exactly. To be able to bend the rules, so to speak, for something to be constitutional. The  
7 constitution should be followed closely but honestly can be interpreted many different ways.  
8 Everyone has a different way of looking at things and the constitution is no different from any of  
9 that. It is my belief that the constitution should be open to different interpretations because in  
10 reality, there are two meaning to everything. The power of the constitution is very strong and  
11 dictates how we all act and behave but should be loose when interpreting, to better society. Going  
12 back to the right to bare arm argument, yes it is your right to have a gun, but for the protection of  
13 society it is important to have background checks. Overall, being a Hamiltonian I believe in a loose  
14 interpretation of the constitution.

15 To conclude, history has shown the long debate over whether the constitution should be a  
16 strict or loose interpretation. Jeffersonians and Hamiltonians have argued daily on this subject which  
17 is still a problem today. Both Democrats and Republican parties today have picked p where history  
18 has dropped off and continued this debate today. This can be seen especially in the amendments  
19 specifically, the right to bare arms. The Jeffersonians believed that everyone should obey the  
20 constitution word for word, while the Hamiltonians believed that it was open to be a loose  
21 interpretation. I for one am a modem day Hamiltonian and believe that it has a more broad meaning.  
22 History has shown that the debate stands strong, should we have a strict or loose interpretation of the  
23 constitution?

Works Cited

1. "Hamilton vs. Jefferson." N.p., n.d. Web. 03 Nov. 2014.
2. "The Right to Bear Arms." The Right to Bear Arms. N.p., n.d. Web. 02 Nov. 2014.

## Work Sample Evaluation

**Subject Area:** U.S. History

**Task Title:** The U.S. Constitution: Strict or Broad Construction?

**Student Work Sample Title:** Hamilton and Jefferson Debate

The document was scored using the CCR Task Bank Rubric. The final scores are indicated in the following chart.

Scoring Criteria	Insufficient Evidence	Developing	Progressing	Accomplished	Exceeds
Research and Investigation		X			
Ideas and Content		X			
Reading and Analysis		X			
Communication		X			
Organization			X		
Accuracy		X			

**Annotations:** The following evidence from the work sample and the reviewer’s comments support the scores above. Page and line numbers refer to the original work sample.

Scoring Criteria	Page #	Line #	Commentary about the work sample
<b>Research and Investigation:</b> <i>Locating resources independently and/or identifying information within provided texts</i>	4		The author utilizes only two sources (presumably both secondary), which are improperly formatted and do not appear to be authoritative or contain significant information to locate.
<b>Ideas and Content:</b> <i>Presenting a thesis and understanding concepts</i>	1	7-8	The thesis does not include the author’s position on construction, though this element is covered earlier in the introduction.
	1	7-8	The apparent thesis does not prove to be actually what most of the paper covers and is not terribly supportive of the required features of the assignment. It merely indicates that this issue has long been a source of contention and continues today.
	2	16	By only providing a hint of context through reference to war debt, the author makes it difficult to appreciate key concepts during the Constitution’s early years and how events shaped the philosophies of Hamilton and Jefferson.
<b>Reading and Analysis:</b> <i>Examining and evaluating sources, data, and/or supporting evidence</i>	All		No quotes are employed and the treatment of strict vs. loose construction is superficial.
	2	1	A modest effort to incorporate contemporary politics is made through reference to the issue of gun control, but the reader does not come away with a strong sense of what liberalism and conservatism connote today.
	All		The nearly total absence of context from the 18 <sup>th</sup> Century severely limits the analysis.
<b>Communication:</b> <i>Using subject appropriate language and considering audience</i>	1	13	“okay” as an example of overly casual language
	1	9	“to a T” is at least borderline in terms of being too casual
	All		Although spelling and grammatical errors fall within a different category, they are such a significant distraction that it is difficult to conclude that the author considered his/her audience.
	All		The use of subject-appropriate language is detectable, but not significant.
<b>Organization:</b> <i>Structuring main ideas and incorporated supporting information</i>	All		Although the essay lacks sophistication, its essential structure is logical for making a case.
	All		Transitions make for an adequate segue.

Scoring Criteria	Page #	Line #	Commentary about the work sample
<b>Accuracy:</b> <i>Attending to detail,            grammar, spelling,            conventions, citations,            and formatting</i>	All		Errors are too numerous to document here and most definitely serve as a distraction in absorbing the essay.
	1	8	Several first person plural references (“our,” “we”)
	1	19	Multiple uses of contractions that contribute to an overly casual language (also page 3, line 2 and page 3, line 4).
	2	15	Author employed sentence fragment (also page 3, line 6).
	1	1	Essay could use a more thoughtful title.
	All		Sentence variety is generally lacking as many begin with “this” or “they.”
	1	16	“Smal1” as one of many examples of the need for greater editing.