

TITLE OF LESSON

American Government, Unit 1, Lesson 17 – Articles of Confederation
What type of government is the United States?

TIME ESTIMATE FOR THIS LESSON

One class period

ALIGNMENT WITH STANDARDS

California – History 12.1, 12.9

MATERIALS

Shot Heard Round the World – Music Video
Articles of Confederation – Reading from <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/artconf.htm>
Zinn Reading Lesson 16 – Reading
Current Events 1 – Student Page
Lecture Notes Lesson 17 – Teacher Page

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- To define and describe the Articles of Confederation and connect it to D/A spectrum
 - To use the Zinn reading to analyze the Articles of Confederation
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FOCUS AND MOTIVATE STUDENTS – WARM-UP ACTIVITY

- 1) Homework Review – Stamp/initial complete homework assignments. Pass back graded assignments and have students place them in the appropriate section of their binders.
- 2) **Agenda** – Have students copy the goal, agenda and homework onto the next clean page in a notebook.
- 3) **Journal 3** – Under the agenda, answer the following question:

Which philosopher would most agree with the thoughts and ideas of Zinn? Why? (one full page)

NOTE: As a suggestion, as students are coming into class and beginning to get started, you might want to have the “Shot Heard ‘Round the World” music video playing in the background.

ACTIVITIES – INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP

1. Review Zinn Reading – When students have completed the warm-up question, collect the responses and have them take out the Zinn Reading and the questions that they wrote in their notebook from the previous lesson. Review the reading with them by having students read their questions aloud and answer them as a class. As much as possible, try to incorporate the details and facts of the American Revolution from the video into the discussion. At the end of the discussion briefly browse and read aloud the students’ answers to the warm-up question and ask students where they would place Zinn on the D/A spectrum. Have them explain why.
2. **Vocabulary** – Next, have students take out their Vocabulary List 2 and, in their notebooks, write their own definitions for the terms King George, colony, England and American Revolution. When finished, have students share their definitions to create a class definition that the students will copy onto their list.
3. Read Silently – Note that the *Articles of Confederation* (Reading) is divided into four distinct sections that focuses on different articles. As you pass out the *Articles of Confederation*, give out four copies of the first section to the first four students (that are sitting near each other), pass out four copies of the next section to the next four students and so on until all students have a section. Next, have students take out a blank sheet of paper (loose leaf). Tell them briefly (you will give them more detailed notes on this later) that after the revolution

began, the first government that was formed in the United States was written in the Articles of Confederation which they will read about in this handout. Explain that they are to read the handout silently and underline/highlight/circle key points as they read.

4. **Brainstorm** – When most students have completed their reading, have them title their blank page “Articles of Confederation” and write the numbers from 1 to 10 in a column on the left side of the sheet (do not skip lines). Tell students they have 3 minutes to write down 10 important items (names, places, events, ideas, etc) that they read about in the reading. Some students might be a little confused, but just reassure them by giving them a couple of quick ideas to get them started. Tell them they have 3 minutes.
 5. **Synthesis Paragraph** – After 3 minutes, you can either have them share their list with a partner who read the same section (depending on the time available in class) or go straight to the next step which is to write a five to seven sentence paragraph that explains or synthesizes the list of 10 items. Give them about 5 minutes to do this.
 6. **Teacher Read Aloud** – Collect the lists/paragraphs from students and quickly read the paragraphs aloud to the students. Emphasize students’ paragraphs that are particularly well-detailed and even insightful. Also, try to catch or correct misunderstandings or incorrect facts that students have on the reading.
 7. **Lecture** – Next, tell students to take out their notebooks and open up to the next clean page. Explain that they will be taking some notes from a lecture and they are to title these notes “American Revolution and Articles of Confederation Notes”. See the **Lecture Notes Lesson 17** for details on information for this activity. You should use the students’ synthesizing paragraphs as the foundation for this lecture and have the notes provide a framework and contextualization for the students to understand what they have been reading and how it fits into the development of our country’s government.
 8. **Problems** – Have students attempt to guess what problems might arise with the *Articles of Confederation* (you might want to use the Democracy/Autocracy spectrum to illustrate how the colonists attempted to create a “direct democracy” since they were so disgusted with the British monarchy/autocracy. Most importantly, have students guess how the leaders might try to fix the problems.
 9. **Vocabulary** – Before the end of class, have the students take out their **Vocabulary List 2** again and create a definition for *Articles of Confederation*.
 10. **Homework Review** – Pass out newspapers to students who need them. Remind them of their homework.
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HOMEWORK

- 1) Complete a new **Current Events 1**.
 - 2) Study vocabulary and notes to date.
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GROUP ROLES

None

DOCUMENTATION FOR PORTFOLIO

None