**Lesson 1**

**Grade:** 8th

**Objective:**

Students will understand and analyze how one individual impacted the United States, and thus North Carolina, in a variety of ways.

**Standards:**

8.H.3: Understand the factors that contribute to change and continuity in North Carolina and the United States.

8.C&G.1:Analyze how democratic ideals shaped government in North Carolina and the United States.

8.C&G.2:Understand the role that citizen participation plays in societal change.

8.C.1: Understand how different cultures influenced North Carolina and the United States.

**Romance:** To get students’ attention I will tell the following story about Elizabeth Hamilton. This story should be told with the first slide of the PowerPoint titled Elizabeth Schuyler Hamilton shown. “Imagine you are sitting at home with your children, your youngest only two years old, waiting for your spouse to come home. Your spouse told you they were only going to a meeting and that they would be home before dark. You’re not sure if you should trust them because fifteen years ago they were with someone else while you were away at your father’s house. However, throughout the years you have learned to trust them again. Your spouse use to be a high-ranking government official but ever since his affair was exposed he has not been as well respected. Their political career officially ended three years ago with the death of your eldest son in a duel. Your eldest daughter also had a mental breakdown after Philip’s death and you had to place her in a home to be taken care of. You yourself have not fully recovered from his death. An added stress is money. Because your spouse has not been as active in politics money has been tight. As dusk is approaching you hear a knock on the door. Someone is standing there and they tell you your spouse was in a duel and was shot and is in grave condition. You race from the house to see your spouse but it is too late. They die the next day. Now you have not only loss your son to a duel but also your spouse. You are now left with little money and seven kids to raise on your own. What would you do?” Then I would have a class discussion with the students about what they do in this situation. I would then continue the story. “This actually happened to a woman named Elizabeth Schuyler Hamilton. She was married to founding father Alexander Hamilton. Hamilton was a key figure in the American Revolution and the founding of America’s government system. He was George Washington’s right hand man during the Revolutionary War, wrote most of the Federalist Papers, served as the first Treasury Secretary, and was outspoken against slavery. He was not on his own, however. Elizabeth was with him throughout his political career and even helped him accomplish these things. Unfortunately, Alexander Hamilton died in a duel against Aaron Burr in 1804. Elizabeth lived until 1854, fifty years longer than her husband. How did she spend these years? Did she just give up and wallow in self-pity as a widow? Or did she continue making a difference? Today we will find out.”

**Precision:** Go over the PowerPoint entitled Elizabeth Schuyler Hamilton that is attached on the back. Notes are given on how to present the PowerPoint next to each slide.

**Generalization:** Once the PowerPoint is completed students will do the “Before They Were…” activity.Students will look at Elizabeth’s life after Alexander Hamilton died and decide what the three most important factors before his death were that led her to continue to work closely with politics and start the first private orphanage in New York. Students will then get into groups of five and as a group decide the one most important factor. Each group will then share their factor with the class.

**Lesson 2**

**Grade:** 8th

**Objective:**

Students will understand how America got their governmental system and analyze how certain events led to the creation of the Constitution.

**Standards:**

8.H.1:Apply historical thinking to understand the creation and development of North Carolina and the United States.

8.H.2: Understand the ways in which conflict, compromise and negotiation have shaped North Carolina and the United States.

8.C&G.1:Analyze how democratic ideals shaped government in North Carolina and the United States.

8.C.1: Understand how different cultures influenced North Carolina and the United States.

**Romance:** An activity will be given to interest students in the content that will be covered later in the lesson. The activity is as follows:

Ask the students to imagine that the year is 1780 and that the 13 colonies have decided to create their own form of government. The students are to imagine that they are invited to a convention that will decide America’s government system and they are to summit a proposal for their own form of government. In their proposal they should cover the following five topics; who the ruler will be, what role the citizens will play, how the territory will be divided, how taxes will be given, and how laws will be passed. Students should use information from previous lessons to decide the type of government the colonists would want.

This does not have to be a detailed plan because it is a warm-up. This activity is meant to get students thinking about what makes up a government.

**Precision:** Go over the PowerPoint entitled Articles of Confederation VS. The Constitution. Notes on how to present the PowerPoint are written next to each slide.

**Generalization:** In the middle of the PowerPoint there will be a slide titled Articles Review! On this slide is a link to a virtual field trip (http://www.history.org/history/teaching/eft/sample\_more\_perfect/activity1/index.cfm) that will cover the Articles of Confederation. Students should complete the field trip in groups of three and take notes on what they have learned. Each group will then pick one fact to share with the class. This will ensure that the students understand what the Articles of Confederation were and what problems the Articles brought about. This will prepare the students to cover the Constitution.

After the PowerPoint students will revisit the opening activity. The students will get into groups of three and share their plans with their group members. Then the groups will compare their plans to the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution and decide which of these two their plans most resemble. Then the class will come back together and have a class discussion about their plans and how they relate to the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution.

**Lesson 3**

**Grade:** 8th

**Objective:** Students will analyze and evaluate events that occurred before the Civil War and understand why they led to the Civil War.

**Standards:**

8.H.2: Understand the ways in which conflict, compromise and negotiation have shaped North Carolina and the United States.

8.C&G.1:Analyze how democratic ideals shaped government in North Carolina and the United States.

8.C&G.2:Understand the role that citizen participation plays in societal change.

8.C.1: Understand how different cultures influenced North Carolina and the United States.

**Romance:** Students will do the activity A Classroom Secedes! This activity is taken from NC Civic Education Consortium and goes as follows:

A Classroom Secedes!

1. As a warm-up, tell students that you want to get their opinions on a situation occurring at your school, but that they must keep quiet regarding what you share with them. (To add effect, the teacher can say it was discussed at a staff meeting, but even though it’s “top secret,” you really feel the students should know and have a say) and explain the following situation to your students. (Really work to make them believe that what you are saying is actually being considered by the school’s administration.)

Tell students that at your last staff meeting, a teacher that they all know (but whom you cannot divulge the identity of) presented a proposal to the staff regarding secessionfrom the school. Discuss what secession is, then referring to the memo’s bullets, tell students that the teacher stated that he/she does not agree with the school’s philosophy, curriculum, or rules and thus he/she wants to start a “school within a school” consisting of 28 students. Explain that if approved, the seceded classroom will be located in the main building of our school, but will not recognize itself as part of our school as it will not be following any of our school’s established rules or guidelines for behavior, curriculum, etc. The school within our school will however use the main school’s resources such as the cafeteria, gym, and library.

Tell students that you have not made up your mind regarding how to vote on this situation yet, and even though this is supposed to be a confidential issue, you are trusting them to offer their opinions while keeping this situation quiet. Allow and encourage students to start expressing their thoughts. Most certainly they will have many questions for you regarding the situation. Answer them in the most realistic way you can, or tell them you don’t have the information they are requesting.

Allow students to discuss and facilitate further consideration by asking:

* What might be the benefits of the classroom seceding? (classroom can determine own curriculum, rules, dress code, etc.; will perhaps alleviate tension that exists between teacher and administration; the class may end up more successful than the school at large since it is trying something new)
* What might be the negative affects of the classroom seceding? (what is to keep other classrooms from doing the same; we are stronger united rather than divided; if students do not like being in the classroom they have no recourse since they are officially separate from the main school).
* How might we appear to other schools by allowing this to happen? (other schools may find this strange or consider us to be weak)

1. Eventually, tell students that the situation your school is facing reminds you a bit of the way in which the Civil Warbegan in 1861.

(Source: <http://civics.sites.unc.edu/files/2012/04/seccession.pdf>)

Once you have explained to the students that this activity is a lot like the events leading up to the Civil War then tell the students that today they will learn about the events leading up to the Civil War. Remind them to keep in mind the activity we did today while listening to the actual events that led to the Civil War.

**Precision:** Go over the PowerPoint entitled Events Leading Up to the Civil War. There are notes on how to give the PowerPoint next to each slide.

**Generalization:** At the end of the PowerPoint remind students that Elizabeth Hamilton not only lived through the events leading up to the Revolutionary War but also most of the events talked about in the PowerPoint. Ask the students to take out their notebooks and tell them that they are going to write a journal entry. While writing the journal entry they should imagine they are like Elizabeth Hamilton and have lived through the Revolutionary War and are now seeing another major war come about. Students should compare and contrast the actions leading up to the Revolutionary War to the actions leading up to the Civil War. Students can write as Elizabeth Hamilton and write a fictional journal entry that includes facts or students could write as a historian and make it a historical journal entry. This gives the more creative students a chance to be creative but does not force students to be creative. Each entry should have at least three facts about each war for a total of at least six facts. At the end of the lesson students can share their entries with the class if they want to.

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