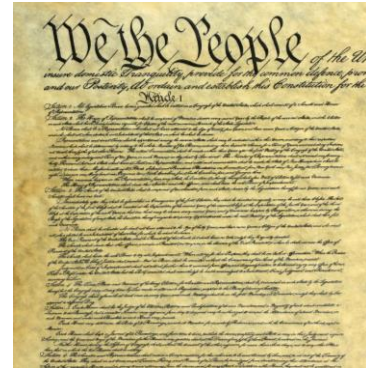


Changing the Course of History

“No work of man is perfect. It is inevitable that in the course of time, the imperfections of a written Constitution will become apparent. Moreover, the passage of time will bring changes in society which a Constitution must accommodate if it is to remain suitable for the nation. It was imperative, therefore, that a practicable means of amending the Constitution be provided.”

— Thomas Jefferson



In the late 1700s, a group of 56 men came together to ratify the terms for the new government for the United States of America. This was not the Constitutional Convention. In fact, this was the meeting of the Second Continental Congress during which the Articles of Confederation was drafted and ratified. Written in 1777, this document was finally ratified by all states in 1781. However, it was only in effect for six years, as it was replaced by the Constitution in September 1787. Two years after the Constitution was ratified, the first 10 amendments, also known as the Bill of Rights, were added.

The Founding Fathers realized that changes would need to be made to governing documents. The failure of the Articles of Confederation led to the Constitution. Feedback from the states led to the addition of the Bill of Rights. Today, there are 27 amendments, including the Bill of Rights, to the Constitution. The most recent amendment was actually written in 1789 by James Madison and ratified over 200 years later!

Throughout America's history, there have been long periods during which there were no constitutional amendments despite significant changes in society. According to an August 2013 article in the *New Republic*:

America's longest drought between constitutional amendments since the Civil War was from 1870 to 1913. In that time, there were two presidential assassinations and several financial panics; the light bulb, telephone, movie theater, radio, and airplane were invented; the Supreme Court legalized segregation; fire destroyed Chicago and an earthquake flattened San Francisco; and the United States added eleven new states. Despite the frenzy, the Constitution went untouched.

If you consider the fact that the 27th Amendment was actually drafted in 1789, it has been about 50 years since a new amendment was written. How has the United States changed since the 1970s? What scenarios and circumstances might the Founding Fathers have not considered when framing the original Constitution?

Does the Constitution, as it currently is worded, reflect the contemporary American experience? As engaged citizens, it is our duty to participate and fulfill the Constitution's promise of creating "a more perfect union." How would you amend the Constitution? Draft a letter to a national political figure advocating for your proposed amendment. Who knows? Maybe you could change the course of history!

Changing the Course of History Rubric (Individual Design Journal)

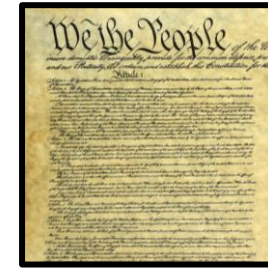
Student Material

	Novice	Apprentice	Practitioner	Expert
Formulate: Proposed Amendment	includes: - outline of current rights and restrictions enumerated in Constitution - identification of perceived gaps in rights <i>or</i> perceived constraining restrictions in Constitution - description of how citizens are impacted by identified gaps <i>or</i> constraints identified above	includes: - outlined description of current rights and restrictions enumerated in Constitution - identification of perceived gaps in rights <i>and/or</i> perceived constraining restrictions in Constitution - description of how citizens are impacted by identified gaps <i>and/or</i> constraints identified above	includes: - summary of current rights and restrictions enumerated in Constitution - description of perceived gaps in rights <i>and</i> perceived constraining restrictions in Constitution - explanation of how citizens are impacted by identified gaps <i>and</i> constraints identified above - hypothesis of future impact if gaps and constraints are not addressed	all of <i>Practitioner</i> plus: includes cause-and-effect web to support hypothesis of future impact if gaps and constraints are not addressed
Explore: Constructing the Constitution	- identifies strengths and weaknesses of Articles of Confederation - summarizes two major debates (listed below) of Constitutional Convention: - representation in Congress - election and tenure of president - slavery - taxation - defines <i>Federalist</i> and <i>Antifederalist</i>	- describes strengths and weaknesses of Articles of Confederation - summarizes major debates of Constitutional Convention, including: - representation in Congress - election and tenure of president - slavery - taxation - defines and provides an example of <i>Federalist</i> and <i>Antifederalist</i> - describes how limited government is achieved within Constitution - summarizes amendment process	- compares and contrasts strengths and weaknesses of Articles of Confederation with those of the Constitution - analyzes major debates of Constitutional Convention, including: - representation in Congress - election and tenure of president - slavery - taxation - defines, provides an example, and summarizes positions of <i>Federalist</i> and <i>Antifederalist</i> - explains role of limited government and how it is achieved within Constitution - explains amendment process and its purpose	all of <i>Practitioner</i> plus: compares and contrasts <i>Federalist</i> and <i>Antifederalist</i> positions
Explore: Amendments	identifies impetus for and summarizes the following amendments: 13th, 18th, 19th, and 22nd	identifies impetus for, summarizes, and describes impact on previous articles/amendments by the following amendments: 13th, 15th, 18th, 19th, 22nd, and 26th	identifies impetus for, summarizes, and describes impact on previous articles/amendments by <i>eight</i> of the following amendments 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 25th, and 26th	all of <i>Practitioner</i> plus: includes analysis of three remaining amendments

	Novice	Apprentice	Practitioner	Expert
Amendment Selection	- ideates at least four possible amendments - sifts pros and cons of each possible amendment	- ideates at least five possible amendments - identifies feasibility of each amendment - identifies possible unintended consequences of each amendment	- ideates at least six possible amendments - compares feasibility of each amendments - compares possible unintended consequences of each amendment - provides explanation of why final amendment was chosen	all of <i>Practitioner</i> plus: provides explanation why other amendments were not selected
Simulate Amendment	uses social media outlet(s) to gather at least 100 real American perspectives (for or against) on proposed amendment	- uses two or more social media outlets to gather at least 100 real American perspectives on the proposed amendment - displays data using dot plot, histogram, or box plot - disaggregates data based using one categorical (e.g., gender, political party, etc.) and one quantitative (e.g., age, family income, etc.) variable	- collects at least 200 perspectives for or against proposed amendment - analyzes data from dot plot, histogram, or box plot - analyzes shape of disaggregated data distribution for quantitative variable - analyzes two-way frequency table for categorical variable	all of <i>Practitioner</i> plus: analyzes degree of randomization within simulation and its impact on data
Advocate: Letter to National Leader	includes: - introduction with: - proposed amendment - significance of proposed amendment - support for claim from three or more appropriately cited primary and secondary sources as well as data collected during simulation - development of counterclaim - formal style - conclusion	includes: - introduction with: - proposed amendment - significance of proposed amendment - possible counterclaim to proposed amendment - overview of organization of argument - support for claim from four or more appropriately cited primary and secondary sources as well as data collected during simulation - development of counterclaim, including strengths and limitations - formal style throughout - conclusion highlighting key points	includes: - introduction with: - description of proposed amendment - significance of proposed amendment - possible counterclaim(s) to proposed amendment - overview of organization of argument - support for claim from five or more appropriately cited primary and secondary sources as well as data collected during simulation - fair and thorough development of counterclaim, including strengths and limitations - formal style throughout - conclusion highlighting key points and inspiring action	all of <i>Practitioner</i> plus: publishes digitally to be shared with multiple national leaders

Changing the Course of History *Scaffold for Learning*

Teacher Material



Benchmark Video and Discussions

- Unit launch to create a felt need
- Design Process
- Reading historical texts
- Introduction to Statistics — That's So Random!

Instructional Activities: Learning

Instructional Texts/Websites	Instructional Videos	How-to Sheets	Practice
• Understand the A. of C. (I, P) • How to code text for cent. ideas (I) • How to write a summary (I) • Understand sampling techniques (I) • Understand data types — univariate and bivariate (I) • Understand data types — categorical and quantitative (IV) • Letter-writing format (I) • Read like a historian — lang. focus • Synthesizing information (I, P)	• Understand the A. of C. (I, P) • How to code text for cent. ideas (I) • How to write a summary (I) • Understand sampling techniques (I) • Understand data types — univariate and bivariate (I) • Understand data types — categorical and quantitative (IV) • Letter-writing format (I) • Read like a historian — lang. focus • Synthesizing information (I, P)	• Set up design journal • Access and search National Archives • Identify primary/secondary sources • Read like a historian • Code text for central ideas • Create a random sample • Determine if data is univariate or bivariate • Write a letter format	• Identify strengths of A. of C. (I) • Identify weaknesses of A. of C. (I) • Determine weakness effects of A. of C. (I) • Sum. letter from R. Morris to J. Hanson (IV) • Define random sample (I) • Access National Archives (HW)
Interactive Websites	Learning Centers	Small-Group Mini-Lessons	Application
• Civics Games (I, P, SG) • Amendment Match (I, P) • Online quiz — Articles of Confederation (I) • Random number generator (I)	• Sort primary/secondary sources (I, P) • Categorize — strengths/weaknesses of A. of C. (I, P) • Sort random/nonrandom samples • Compare data from random samples with population (I, P) • Categorize univariate/bivariate data (I, P)	• Understand the A. of C. • How to code text for cent. ideas • How to write a summary • Understand sampling techniques • Understand data types — univariate and bivariate • Understand data types — categorical and quantitative • Letter-writing format • Read like a historian — lang. focus • Synthesizing information	• Search National Archives (I, P) • Investigate social media platforms for hosting simulation (I, P) • Create cause/ effect web — strengths/ weaknesses of A. of C. (I) • Determine cent. idea of letter from R. Morris to J. Hanson (I, P) • Analyze lang. used by Morris to promote (I)
			Assessment
			• Peer edit summaries (P) • Use rubric to peer edit (P) • Use rubric to self-assess task (I) • Self-assess data understanding (I)
			Reflection
			• Discussion: What were some “aha” moments? What are the biggest effects of the weakness of the A. of C.? (P, SG) • Reflect: What was your takeaway from this task? How might you use this experience/knowledge in the future? What voices do you feel are silenced? (I)

Key: Individual (I), Pairs (P), Small Groups (SG), Activities suitable for homework (HW), Insights Video (IV)