

Colleen Hyland

George Washington Lesson Plan for 7th Grade Social Studies

NEW YORK STATE STANDARDS:

1. organize information about the important achievements and contributions of individuals and groups living in the United States
2. consider the sources of historic documents or narratives and evaluate their reliability
3. describe historic events through the eyes and experiences of those who were there
4. explore the meaning of American culture by identifying the key ideas, beliefs, and patterns of behavior, and traditions that help define it and unite all Americans

OBJECTIVE:

Given George Washington's quotes, students will demonstrate the ability to synthesize information about Washington and make judgments about his personal character. Students will also demonstrate the ability to compare and contrast the quotes with what they learn from class discussion.

CONTENT:

This lesson will follow a unit on the American Revolution and begin a curriculum unit on the first presidents. This lesson will serve as a way to review prior knowledge and introduce students to Washington's presidency.

ACTIVITIES AND MATERIALS:

Class discussion, quote handouts, worksheets, teacher transparency

VOCABULARY: Character

HOMEWORK:

Students will be asked to write 3-5 sentences about how character is shown through action, either with information discussed during the lesson or other historical figures they have studied or from their own personal observations.

LESSON OVERVIEW:

As students enter the room, they will brainstorm and write their own definition of character in their notebooks. We will open the class by discussing the meaning of character, giving examples, and forming a class definition of the word, which will be written on the board. We will then address the idea of "action is character" and discuss what that might look like. Students will be handed a worksheet and each group will be given a different Washington quote focused on one of the five main topics to be discussed. In their groups, students will discuss the meaning of the quote and as a group write a translation on the worksheet in the space provided. They will be given 5 minutes to complete this part of the lesson. The next step involves one member of each group reading the quote and the group's

translation. (Each group's quote will be projected on the board) The translation will be written on the overhead transparency. Students are to copy this onto their

worksheet. They will then lead the class in a discussion about the meaning of the quote. In a teacher-led discussion, students will copy the "facts" part of the lesson onto their worksheet as the back-story for each topic is discussed. This formula will be used for each of the quotes. For closure, students will be asked to revisit the idea that "action is character." They will be asked to give specific examples of how Washington expressed his character through his actions. To further tie-into the character education component of the lesson, for homework students will be asked to write 3-5 sentences about how character is shown through action, either with information discussed during the lesson or other historical figures they have studied or from their own personal observations

QUOTES

Education

"The best means of forming a... virtuous and happy people will be found in the right education of youth. Without this foundation, every other means, in my opinion, must fail." [To George Chapman, December 15, 1784]

Military

"I can with truth assure you, I have heard the bullets whistle; and believe me, there is something charming in the sound." [French and Indian War, London Gazette, 1754]

Revolution

"It is our duty to make the best of our misfortunes." [To William Hearsh, August 28, 1778]

Slavery

"There is not a man living who wishes more sincerely than I do, to see a plan adopted for the abolition (ending) of it." [To Robert Morris, April 12, 1786]

President

"The presidency... has no enticing charms and no fascinating allurements (appeals) for me."

Name _____ Period _____

WASHINGTON: ACTION IS CHARACTER

Read the quote you have been assigned. Working as a group, translate the meaning of the quote and write it in the space provided. Be prepared to explain your translation.

QUOTES	TRANSLATIONS	FACTS
EDUCATION		
MILITARY		
REVOLUTION		
SLAVERY		
PRESIDENCY		

QUOTES	TRANSLATIONS	FACTS
EDUCATION		Washington worked his whole life to improve both his education and manners, and struggled to control his temper.
MILITARY		As a young man, Washington dreamed of his own military glory and status, but as general he worked to improve the conditions of his soldiers.
REVOLUTION		Washington lost 9 out of 12 battles during the war, but he learned from his experiences and never gave up hope. His own determination was key to the American victory.
SLAVERY		Washington owned slaves, but friends made him realize that slavery and democracy do not mix. In his will, he freed his slaves.
PRESIDENCY		Washington could have become king, but he did