Title of Lesson: Declaration of Independence: Created Equal?

Overview:
Students will examine the Declaration of Independence, specifically the phrase “All Men Are Created Equal.” Students will determine Jefferson's reasons for using this phrase from studying various Library of Congress primary source documents. Students will develop a working definition of the word equality and compare the two examples constructing meaning and understanding. Students will research Jefferson’s life and times to understand his reasoning and beliefs that led to the phrase.

Learning Goals:
1. Students will understand Jefferson's meaning of the phrase “All Men Are Created Equal.”
2. Students will develop a workable definition for what the term equality means.
3. Students will compare the two interpretations and develop understanding for why Jefferson used the phrase as he did.
4. Students will use historical perspective to understand Jefferson's motives and beliefs.

Required/Duration of Activity: Students will need approximately 4 to 5 class periods to complete this activity. Students will use the majority of the 42 minutes to complete the activity. Classes will use the first 4 minutes of each class as a review for questions and review of findings.

Recommended Grade(s): 9th Grade American History.

Subject: Social Studies/American History
PA.CC 8.5.9-10.1 Compare and Contrast/
PA.CC 8.5.9-10D Determining meaning / PA.CC whst. 9-10.9 / PA.CC whst. 9-10.7

Credits: Don Evans, 9th Grade American History Mohawk Junior Senior High School
Mike Larson and Doug Hyde were the creators that deserve credit for the creation of this activity.

LDC Teaching Task:
Task 14 (Informational or Explanatory/Description)
What did Jefferson mean when he used the phrase, “All Men Are Created Equal?” After reading a variety of primary source informational texts, write a summary in which you describe what Jefferson meant when he used the phrase, “All Men Are Created Equal.” Support your discussion with evidence from the texts.
Section II

PA Common Core Standards:
- W.9-10.7 Students will conduct a short research project to answer a question.
- W.9-10.4 Students will produce clear and coherent writing in which development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- RH.9-10.9 Students will compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

Materials Used: Primary Source Analysis Tool, student textbook, IPad and the three texts described in the resources used section.

Resources Used:

Harker, George Albert. “Reading of the Declaration of Independence White Plains, New York’s declaration of independence” (Courtesy Westchester Title and Trust Co.)...Compliments of the Westchester County Historic, 11 July 1776. Web. 11 Nov. 2013c


Section III

Instructional Procedures:

In pairs, students will analyze the Declaration of Independence
- Students will determine the various sections of the document
- Students will determine the Main Idea of each section
- Students will create a title that will reflect the Main Idea of each section
- Students will summarize the main points of each section in 4-6 sentences

Using copies of the Declaration of Independence, students working in pairs will first read the document for meaning to determine the sections of the document (There are five sections). Students will then analyze the document, using the Library of Congress’ primary source analysis worksheet and guide for analyzing books and other printed texts, to determine the main idea of each section. Students will develop meaning from the guided reading and discussion activity. Students will then take that meaning and create a title that reflects the main idea. Students will write summaries that are 4-6 sentences in length.
Section IV

Assessment:

Students will complete a mini task concerning the creation of titles for the various sections of the Declaration of Independence. Students will be assessed using a mini-task rubric which reflects the learning outcomes. Students will be evaluated using the following guidelines: Critical thinking, Creativeness, and Historical Perspective. Students will be evaluated on a 1 to 4 scales; Distinguished, Established, Emerging and Not Yet. To achieve 4 students must demonstrate that complete understanding of the text and must be able to correctly analyze the main idea of each section. Students will demonstrate this through their selection of the title that is creative and correct. Students must demonstrate knowledge of the time period and the events and feelings of the time period. This rubric will also be used to evaluate the main idea summaries for each section.