

Historical Analysis

TEACHER: So what I wanted to do was just take a couple of seconds to go through a model of what you're going to be doing here today. Yesterday, we took a look at this painting. We looked at all four of the quadrants and what we saw, and we filled in the what did you see column on our graphic organizer.

We talked about William Jackson a little bit. We said he was wearing red, right? That made him stand out. We said that he was holding his hands up like this. We also said that he was holding something else in his other hand. We said that he was central in the image, and he was looking at us, right? He's right there in the center, and he's looking straight at the viewer.

He's wearing the same color as the carpet, and the carpet appears to be up on stage. So I'm wondering to myself whether or not that has meaning. This is the process and the thought process that you're going to go through as you evaluate and analyze the information presented in the text.

Good thinkers, good observers will ask questions along the way. My question I came up with is, did he object to anything in the document, and that's why he has his hand raised, or is he raising his hand in agreement? Who wants to read that second text passage? OK, anyone other than Christiana? Go ahead, Annika.

STUDENT: In all, 39 delegates, designated the Founding Fathers by a grateful nation, signed the constitution in September, 1787. But in fact, a fourteen--

TEACHER: [INAUDIBLE]

STUDENT: Oh, [INAUDIBLE], name appears on that historic document. That was William Jackson, the secretary of the convention, whose signature authenticated the results of the session in Philadelphia. Although Jackson lacked the delegates' right to debate and vote on the issues, he was clearly at one with those who manifested a strong dissatisfaction with the weakness of the central government under the Articles of Confederation.

TEACHER: Is there anything in here that supports the inference that I made earlier? Is there anything in there that helps to answer my question? Was he raising his hand in agreement? Anna?

STUDENT: [INAUDIBLE] I think he was objecting signing the document, because it says that he was one of the ones who manifested the strong dissatisfaction with the weakness of the central government under the Articles of Confederation, so he was probably trying to [INAUDIBLE] something stronger.

TEACHER: OK, but listen to what you said. You actually supported the opposite perspective of what you just said, OK? Because what you said is that he wanted to get rid of the Articles of Confederation because he wanted it to be stronger, and he was dissatisfied with it, which helps to support that what? Who can finish that?

STUDENT: The inference.

TEACHER: What?

STUDENT: The inference.

TEACHER: The inference? OK. How so, though? Let me see some other hands. Come on.
[INAUDIBLE] Yes.

STUDENT: That he's raising his hand to object or, like, vote for something. That's an inference.

TEACHER: What is he in agreement with?

STUDENT: In agreement with the Constitution?

TEACHER: Absolutely. He wants a strong central government, OK? And that's something that we're going to see coming through as we take a look at the document. There are some delegates that went to that convention, and they wanted a strong central government. There's others that did not.

We need to, as historians, we need to figure out what perspective Christi took and what message he's trying to portray to us by this artistic representation of that event. So the last thing I want to leave you with before you go ahead and start working are some directions that you could keep referring to as you working today. So then, you have all the resources. I'm going to be coming around and listening in and helping you out.

STUDENT: So, did he--

STUDENT: We all had different observations, though, right? They don't go.

STUDENT: Yeah, we had, definitely, a long list, long list thing.

STUDENT: What do you think we're gonna start with?

STUDENT: Well, wanna do the first part in the first quadrant? Yeah.

STUDENT: Did we all have that it's brighter?

STUDENT: Yeah, I wrote that it was already bright. Same thing.

STUDENT: So we'll say what we think that means.

TEACHER: What do you think the purpose of the author is in making that section brighter than the other sections.

STUDENT: Cause it had like a more important, meaningful kind of way.

STUDENT: Yeah, and then it had like the secretary and the cat.

STUDENT: Well, the secretary was more in two.

STUDENT: But if you made it a little bigger, this quadrant, it would have covered this whole corner, at least, is the brighter area.

STUDENT: And it had the foundation of our government with the Roman architecture in the back.

TEACHER: Good.

STUDENT: And then it also had the flag and the drums and the ribbon that George Washington is holding. And it has the delegates from North Carolina going up to--

TEACHER: I'm going to have you pause for just a second. The ribbon itself might be a clue to help us understand why he's in the spotlight here.

STUDENT: Yeah?

TEACHER: What do you think that means? What does the ribbon mean?

STUDENT: I think it was-- could have been some sort of award. Like either for the general, or because they voted him in for it. Or was that later?

TEACHER: It was later, but he was made the president of the convention. So that is a good observation.

STUDENT: So was that his role, then? President of the convention?

STUDENT: I remember we went over it yesterday, but I forget.

TEACHER: Which one?

STUDENT: The ribbon.

TEACHER: Well, could it have something to do with the American Revolution?

STUDENT: Oh, yeah. Wasn't it like--

STUDENT: They did a journal.

STUDENT: Yeah.

TEACHER: OK. And why do people win or get ribbons when they're in a war?

STUDENT: He was successful.

STUDENT: Yeah.

TEACHER: OK.

But like But like if he got hurt.

TEACHER: What are some of the characteristics that people display when they're in a war that are worthy of getting a ribbon?

STUDENT: Bravery.

STUDENT: Leadership?

STUDENT: Courage.

TEACHER: All of those things, OK? So now keep that in mind. If that's the message that the ribbon portrays, then why might there be a spotlight? Why might there be light in the direction of George Washington? We talked about it recently.

STUDENT: OK. What do you think it means? Because George Washington is there and--

TEACHER: Established a government after the war? That he should be larger and the light is focused on him. Which one are we on?

STUDENT: Uh, two.

STUDENT: Maybe the efficient delivery method of the current time period when the artist painted the picture.

TEACHER: How about these people in this area that are raising their hands? You seem to find them suspicious and that's why you noted them.

STUDENT: Like they're trying to get an opportunity to speak but they can't. Like they have--

TEACHER: Do we know who they are?

STUDENT: Um. We're eight, so that would be--

STUDENT: They're all from South Carolina.

TEACHER: They're all from South Carolina. Is there anything significant about South Carolina perhaps?

STUDENT: Did anyone have anyone from South Carolina here?

STUDENT: No.

TEACHER: So do you think there might be a question that we need to write down on our white board to this point?

STUDENT: What's the significance of South Carolina? Like almost, what role did they play?

TEACHER: That's the question. Good. So what question do you have so far?

STUDENT: Just-- what is the-- oh, I forgot the word for them.

STUDENT: Very helpful.

TEACHER: So which one are you on?

STUDENT: I'm on this.

STUDENT: We're just kind of jumping around here.

STUDENT: So we were just talking about why we think lots of people's faces are covered. And we said it might have been because if they didn't take as much part in, like, the talking part, so they didn't need to be up to the front as much because they didn't really do anything.

TEACHER: So how did the author, or the artist, in this case, use his craft?

STUDENT: Lighting? He puts emphasis on certain people that he wanted to be more seen.

STUDENT: Like George Washington.

STUDENT: Yeah.

TEACHER: So be specific. Using what you just told me, you said that the arms were placed out in a position intentionally. So how, then, did the artist use his craft?

STUDENT: [INAUDIBLE]

TEACHER: You talked about prominence before. You talked about some people being more important than other people. How is that connected to the arms being out?

STUDENT: Because maybe those people that are being blocked by the arms, like no one really-- they're not famous for the thing. Like when you think of the scene at the conservation. You don't hear about them. You hear about Washington and Ben Franklin.

TEACHER: And what do we notice-- now that was a really good point, because you said we don't hear about those people who are covered. But we hear about Washington and we hear about Franklin. What do we notice about them?

STUDENT: They're like out in the open. You can see their whole--

STUDENT: They look kind of brighter, almost, against the darker background.

STUDENT: Their faces are more there.

TEACHER: What about the numbering? Do we have any conclusions or inferences about the numbering?

STUDENT: It's almost like in order of importance. Yeah.

TEACHER: How so?

STUDENT: George Washington, he's the father of our country.

STUDENT: He's kind of like one of the leaders, so he's one of the people that more people know about or that you hear about more often.

STUDENT: Like this over here, 39. You can see only the top of his head. And he's the last of the last.

STUDENT: And nobody really--

STUDENT: Jacob Brown.

STUDENT: Is that it?

TEACHER: Can you find someone that maybe-- how about this guy? 20. Where is he located? Does that fit with your theory?

STUDENT: Not very much.

TEACHER: Your theory--

STUDENT: He doesn't really match, I guess.

TEACHER: Does anyone have Jennifer here? OK. Why does he have his back to us and why is he so prominent when he's number 20?

STUDENT: We talked about how his back turned towards us, we said how he doesn't really talk much on his own but he helps back up James Madison. So we talked about like, he has his back to him so it's kind of like, I got your back kind of thing. So it's something like that.

TEACHER: Let's see if we could keep that in mind as we're looking at some of the others. What evidence from the text helps us support our understanding of that individual? OK? So keep going back to your delegate readings to help you understand. You might even want to, at this point, see

where your people are located and how that connects to some of the inferences that you've been making. OK? Is there anything else in this picture that really sticks out to you?

STUDENT: Well, once we planted it out, the flags and the banner looks like a throne.

STUDENT: I think that's just [INAUDIBLE]

TEACHER: Hold on one second. I'm going to have you say that again. What was that?

STUDENT: I think really it's just there kind of almost as a font. Like I'm not sure it could symbolize very much. Because we know that if the colonies come together to write the constitution for our government, but-- Yeah. I'm not entirely sure how much that could symbolize other--

TEACHER: When you take a look at this, you notice that there are several flags, right? Would it be different if there was only one flag picture there? Or do you think the several flags picture--

STUDENT: That almost looks like a--

TEACHER: --is some sort of intentional?

STUDENT: OK, you know how like in the auditorium they have the American flag and then the other, like--

STUDENT: And then the Connecticut flag.

STUDENT: Yeah, Connecticut flag. So they might have like the different flags of the different states. How many states are these?

STUDENT: Thirteen.

STUDENT: Oh, there's people from all thirteen states.

TEACHER: But could they represent something else? What could they represent? Where is this located?

STUDENT: In Pennsylvania?

STUDENT: Maybe back then they had like a flag for like-- um, like, not [INAUDIBLE].

TEACHER: Let's go to what we said [INAUDIBLE] observers do. They observe, they make inferences, and they ask questions, OK? So what question can you write on your board that you need to answer?

STUDENT: We need a little [INAUDIBLE]

STUDENT: Yes, we do.

TEACHER: How we doing?

STUDENT: Good.

TEACHER: Which one are we on?

STUDENT: Three. We have--

TEACHER: What do you notice about these two people? Who are they, first of all?

STUDENT: They're both from Connecticut.

TEACHER: They're both from Connecticut. Now is it important that they're sitting at a table together?

STUDENT: I think so.

TEACHER: Why are they sitting and no one else is sitting?

STUDENT: Well, most people in that quadrant are sitting because they're like, that's like they're relaxed. But we thought they were sitting just because of the weather, cause it was hot, and when you're hot you don't feel like doing anything.

TEACHER: Could the artist have placed them sitting to reveal some sort of message?

STUDENT: Yeah.

TEACHER: Look at what they have here. What are people doing?

STUDENT: Paper.

TEACHER: And what's on the ground?

STUDENT: Shredded paper.

TEACHER: So what significance might the paper they're holding and the shredded paper on the ground have?

STUDENT: Could be that there's like a Water conflict going on and that there were some unimportant ideas or ideas that just weren't given the opportunity.

TEACHER: OK. If you go back to your packets, you're going back to that Constitution packet that you have, remember that we have a list of compromises. Is there anything from this text that would help to support us, the placement of these two gentlemen?

STUDENT: The Connecticut Compromise?

TEACHER: OK, what about it?

STUDENT: Well, cause they're both from Connecticut.

TEACHER: All right, they're both from Connecticut. How does that explain the paper they're holding, the paper on the ground? And what does it have to do with anything?

STUDENT: Well, it was because of the population. Virginia wanted the number of representatives to be based on the-- they wanted the population to determine how many representatives you had. And then New Jersey wanted each state to have the same number.

TEACHER: So how many plans do we have?

STUDENT: How many what?

TEACHER: How many plans?

STUDENT: Two.

TEACHER: Two at least, right? The New Jersey and Virginia plans. Now what did they have to do as far as those two plans went? Everyone wasn't going to accept Virginia. Everyone wasn't going to accept New Jersey. So what did they have to do?

STUDENT: They had to compromise.

TEACHER: Hold on a second. What was that?

STUDENT: Vote.

TEACHER: Well, they could have voted. What else could they have done? What did you say?

STUDENT: Compromise.

TEACHER: Compromise. And how could the concept of compromise relate to this image right here when we take a look at these two individuals? Why would the artist have placed paper ripped up on the ground? You told me there's paper there. Why? How does that link to the concept of what these two men are connected to? That Connecticut Compromise?

STUDENT: They combined plans. So like for a compromise, they combine the plans.

TEACHER: So what could those pieces of paper on the ground be?

STUDENT: Both the separate plans?

TEACHER: Perhaps. Let me give you an example of a question that has come up. I don't think anyone has this question written down, so I'm going to take the opportunity to say it. A lot of you, as I go around to your groups, keep on telling me, well, I think the numbering on Christy's key is in order of importance. But is there something that makes those people more important than others? So my question that I'm going to throw out there is, what are the political views of those top ten? What do they stand for?

Are they Federalist? Are they Anti-federalists? Are there any conclusions we can draw based on what other information we know or from our readings? So that's the style question that I'm looking for. I'm going to let this group go first, and you're going to ask a question. I want you to listen, because I'm going to ask that you write down the question if it is related to your group. That way you'll have a couple of minutes to go investigate it before you have to report back your answer. So what's your question? All right, pick the one you think is most important to understanding.

STUDENT: We were-- wait, who was it?

TEACHER: So who is it regarding?

STUDENT: OK. Alexander Hamilton.

TEACHER: All right, who has Alexander Hamilton? Who has Hamilton? OK.

STUDENT: We wanted to know what his point of view was on the thing, and why he was talking to Ben Franklin like that? Or whatever he was doing with Ben Franklin?

TEACHER: So what is his point of view? And why is he talking to Ben Franklin? Maybe even considering his relationship with Ben Franklin? All right. That group over there. What's one question you would like to have answered?

STUDENT: Why is Benjamin Franklin looking right at us?

TEACHER: So who has Ben Franklin?

STUDENT: She has him, too.

TEACHER: You have Ben's, too?

STUDENT: Yeah.

TEACHER: So why is Ben Franklin looking at us? Why do you want to know the answer to that question?

STUDENT: Because he-- it seems like there's a message that's trying to be sent. Why Christy made him look right at us. And he's in the front, too. So.

TEACHER: That's interesting, because that comes back to what you were saying too, right? What is the question that your group has? Your group's going to work together to find the answer to the question, but you're also going to continue to evaluate. I'm going to stop in a few minutes, but you report your answers. What was the question that was posed to you?

STUDENT: What were the views and the role of the South Carolina delegates? And I had Charles Pinky-- I think that's how you say it.

TEACHER: Pinckney.

STUDENT: Pinckney. And he was just a very major political person. He was always in politics. And he was a Federalist but he also owned a plantation and he was a slave holder. So he believed in slaves.

TEACHER: Now where was he-- you guys told me that one is most important and 39 or 40 is least important. Where was your individual?

STUDENT: He's nine.

TEACHER: Nine. OK. Who had Hamilton?