Historical Inquiry Deliberation (HID): The New Republic Lesson Plan

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Historical Inquiry Deliberation: The New Republic Lesson Plan

The following lesson plan is an example of adapting the Structured Academic Controversy (SAC) format for use with students in a history class. A SAC lesson typically engages students in the deliberation of multiple perspectives for a current societal issue. In this adapted process, which I call Historical Inquiry Deliberation (HID), students deliberate multiple perspectives and evaluate a historical event or decision. The sample history lesson included here for engaging students in this process is entitled “Historical Inquiry Deliberation: The New Republic.” More extensive discussion of the research supporting the use of SAC as a format for student discussion and its modification for historical inquiry can be found in the Research Review for Educators section of this issue of the journal.

An Example of Historical Inquiry Deliberation (HID) – or SAC for a Past Event

In a HID activity, students use primary sources from various perspectives of a historical issue to more deeply analyze decisions made in the past through a scaffolded group discussion. The format for the sample lesson included here on the era of the New Republic can be modified to use with different historical questions and documents. Some additional US History questions that lend themselves to this type of inquiry activity might include:

- How democratic was the Jacksonian Democracy of the 1830s?
- Did the benefits outweigh the negative consequences of Manifest Destiny?
- Was Reconstruction successful?
- Should the United States join the League of Nations (students deliberate as if they were Senators in 1919)?
The Stanford History Education Group (SHEG) https://sheg.stanford.edu also has lessons on their website that use the general SAC format. A free account is required for the SHEG materials.

The following lesson is one I use with high school US History students. I have found this lesson format and specific activity to be an effective way for students to examine a historical issue from multiple perspectives. The format, inquiry question, and supporting documents could be further modified for use with younger students or students of different ability levels.

It is important that all students be familiar with the general rules for engaging in the deliberation. These expectations include:

- Practice active listening
- Challenge ideas – not each other
- Share the floor: Each person in the deliberation pair must have an opportunity to speak during position presentations
- No disagreeing until consensus building segment of HID

The procedure and room arrangement for both a traditional SAC activity and a HID are the same. The only difference in the two activities is that the SAC typically involves a current issue or policy debate whereas the HID utilizes primary source documents from the past to investigate historical events from various perspectives.

**Room Arrangement and Student Grouping for SAC or HID**
Divide the class into groups made up of four students each. Each group of four will then be subdivided into two pairs (Group Pair A & Group Pair B). Assign each pair one of the two positions being analyzed in the SAC or HID. There will be multiple groups of 4 within the classroom – all analyzing, presenting, discussing, deliberating, and negotiating at the same time. Each group looks like the following:

- Pair A receives a set of sources aligned with one perspective of the issue.
- Pair B receives a set of sources aligned with another perspective of the issue.

The timing for each step listed below is suggested and may be adjusted as needed. However, the teacher should keep the class moving in a timely manner through each step within the class period.

Step 1: Prepare the Position Statements (15 minutes)
Step 2: Present Position Statements (6 minutes total – 3 minutes for each pair presentation)
Step 3: Reverse Positions (10 minutes total – 6 minutes preparation & 2 minutes for each pair)
Step 4: Open Discussion / Deliberation (10 minutes)
Step 5: Finalize Consensus Statement (5 minutes)
Step 6: Debrief (9 minutes)

In the lesson included here, students will deliberate the following historical question:

*Which of the competing visions for America’s future was the best approach for the nation at the early stage of its development in the late 18\textsuperscript{th} century?*
• **Manufacturing**: The US should foster financial success through the promotion of manufacturing.

• **Agriculture**: The US should foster commercial agriculture and the independence it affords farmers.

Student pairs will use primary source excerpts from Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, and Tench Coxe to build evidence in support of their assigned position within each group of four. Teachers may want to modify the sources either by excerpting the sources further or allowing students to add additional relevant sources they locate through research of the period.

Assessment of the activity may take the form of a consensus statement that utilizes supporting evidence from the primary sources that led to the group’s answer to the original inquiry question. Another option is to have each student write a reflection concerning the deliberation process, including an evaluation of what helped and/or hindered the process for the group.

The full lesson plan and student handouts for the HID related to the United States’ era of the New Republic from the 1780s through the early decades of the 1800s are included on the following pages.
Historical Inquiry Deliberation: The New Republic Lesson Plan

Overview

In this lesson, students will examine the contending economic approaches that divided leaders of the United States in the 1790s by weighing evidence from primary sources of the New Republic era. Some Americans believed the nation should focus on developing more manufacturing as a means for greater financial success, while others believed that promoting a stronger focus on agriculture and the independence it affords farmers was better for the nation. Documents from Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, and Tench Coxe highlight key points that support both sides of the issue.

Student groups will weigh the issue’s opposing perspectives by examining the documents provided (and others if the teacher wants students to conduct additional research). The class will then engage in a Historical Inquiry Deliberation (HID), which is based on the Structured Academic Controversy (SAC) process for evaluating various perspectives and communicating within the small group to form a consensus opinion that answers the original inquiry question.

Intended Grade Level and Number of Class Periods

- Grades 9-12
- 1 traditional 55-minute class period (or 2 if the teacher chooses to have students conduct additional research)

Objectives

1. Compare the economic options considered by United States government officials during the early years of the New Republic.
2. Prepare an evidence-based rationale to support an assigned position related to the issue.
3. Deliberate the evidence in small groups to develop a consensus answer to the inquiry question.

**Georgia Standards for Excellence (GSE) Alignment**

SSUSH6 – Analyze the challenges faced by the first five presidents and how they responded.
   a. Examine the presidency of Washington, including the precedents he set.

SSUSH7 – Investigate political, economic, and social developments during the Age of Jackson.
   b. Explain how the North, South, and West were linked through industrial and economic expansion including Henry Clay and the American System.

L11-12RHSS7 – Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media in order to address a question or solve a problem.

**Essential Question**

1. What factors contributed to the United States’s economic focus during the nation’s early years?
2. How can considering different perspectives of an issue contribute to effective problem solving?

**Materials**

1. Student handout – “HID Capture Sheet – New Republic” (1 per student)
2. Student handout – “HID Document Set – New Republic” (1 set per student)

**Procedure**

1. *Pre-HID Classroom Preparation:*
   - Assign students to groups of four.
     - Subdivide each group of four into two pairs.
o One pair within each group is assigned the pro-manufacturing position (Group Pair A) and the other pair takes the pro-agriculture position (Group Pair B).

o It is best if the teacher makes these assignments.

* Optional – The teacher might assign the class to read the document set as homework prior to the in class HID activity the following day. Students should read all four documents even though only 2 support their assigned position. Because this task may take time beyond that allotted in class, having students read the documents the night before might be a good strategy for preparation. The teacher might also want to generate a guided reading form for each document depending on the students’ ability levels.

2. *In-class Historical Inquiry Deliberation:*

The teacher should project a countdown timer to ensure the discussions are structured and equitable for both group pairs throughout the activity. Each 4-student group contains Group Pair A & Group Pair B. There will be multiple groups of 4 within the classroom conducting the HID at the same time.

* Step 1: Prepare Position Statements:

(15 minutes – project countdown timer to keep the groups on task)

o Each Group Pair should complete all sections of the HID Capture Sheet.

o While students have read all 4 documents, those listed below most closely support each pair’s position.

- Pair A (pro-manufacturing) should use documents 2 & 3 from Alexander Hamilton and Tench Coxe to formulate a persuasive 3-minute presentation citing evidence to support the pro-manufacturing position
Pair B (pro-agriculture) should use documents 1 & 4 from Thomas Jefferson to formulate a persuasive 3-minute presentation citing evidence to support the pro-agriculture position.

- **Step 2: Present Position Statements**
  
  (6 minutes total – project the countdown timer for each side)
  
  - Pair A presents to Pair B (3-min).
    - Pair B listens/takes notes – no challenges allowed.
  
  - Pair B presents to Pair A (3-min).
    - Pair A listens/takes notes – no challenges allowed.

- **Step 3: Reverse Positions:**
  
  (10 minutes total – preparation time for the first 6 minutes and then each pair will present to the opposing pair for 2 minutes each. Project countdown timer to class.)
  
  - Pairs within each group reverse their positions in this step of the HID and have a few minutes to develop an additional reason to support the other pair’s position.
    - In other words: Group Pair A now develops a pro-agricultural position and Group Pair B now develops a pro-manufacturing position.
  
  - After 6 minutes to develop additional support, both pairs have 2 minutes each to present their new ideas.

- **Step 4: Open Discussion / Deliberation (10 minutes)**
  
  - All participants drop any assigned roles and have free discussion and deliberation of the evidence.
  
  - Groups should consider the challenges each pair noted during the other pair’s original presentation.
Groups should also consider the broad implications the decision would have had for the development of the United States.

**Step 5: Finalize Consensus Statement (5 minutes)**

- Each group of 4 should come to an agreement and complete the corresponding section of the HID Capture Sheet.
- Groups might want to consider as they finalize their answer: Was there any common ground between the two perspectives concerning this issue?
- The group writes their consensus paragraph using textual evidence to support sound arguments.

**Step 6: Debrief (9 minutes)**

- Use this time for a whole class discussion to examine the various economic decisions facing the United States at the turn of the 19th century.
  - What consensus decision did each group develop?
  - Are there groups within the class with differing opinions?
  - What arguments were the most compelling?
  - Did anyone change their mind about the issue during the deliberation process?
- The teacher might also introduce students to the policies generated by the United States concerning economics. Topics that may come up in future lessons related to the decision made by leaders concerning this issue from the early years of the United States might include the development of the Bank of the United States in the 1790s and the regional specialization of the Market Revolution that emerged in the 1820s and 1830s.
The teacher should also use this time to discuss the idea of deliberation as being different from competition and debate. Nobody was right or wrong in the discussion process. Groups should recognize the importance of considering and weighing evidence from all sides to resolve an issue.

**Teacher Assessment of the HID:**

1. The HID Capture Sheet used by students to prepare their original position statements can be submitted for the teacher to assess understanding of the evidence presented in the document set.

2. The Final Group Consensus paragraph can be submitted to the teacher to assess the use of evidence to support an argument.

**Implications for Classroom Practice**

As social studies educators, we want our students to become engaged in their communities and become the problem solvers of the future. Utilizing the SAC approach builds student confidence, discussion skills, and understanding of the power multiple perspectives can bring to solving a problem. Adapting this technique for historical content can allow for a collaborative twist to the widely utilized Document Based Question assignment.

*** This lesson and the Historical Inquiry Deliberation approach are adapted from the work of Diana Hess and Paula McAvoy on Structured Academic Controversy. See reference list for further information.
Reference List


**HID - Capture Sheet**

*Which of the competing visions for America’s future was the best approach for the nation’s early development in the late 18th century?*

**PREPARATION:**
1. Highlight your assigned position
   - **Manufacturing:** The US should foster financial success through the promotion of manufacturing.
   - **Agriculture:** The US should foster commercial agriculture and the independence it affords farmers.

2. Read each document to obtain support for your assigned position. Use the documents to fill in the chart below. *(Hint: Not all documents support your side... identify those that do support your position.)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document #</th>
<th>What is the <strong>MAIN IDEA</strong> of this source?</th>
<th>What <strong>DETAILS SUPPORT</strong> your position?</th>
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Procedure:

3. Work with your partner to summarize the key points that support your assigned position and provide a rationale for this perspective based on information from the documents you reviewed.

4. You and your partner will present your position and rationale to the other pair in your group of four. When you are finished, you will then listen to the other pair’s position and rationale.
   - While you are listening to the other pair’s position, write down their key points of reasoning here.

   - What clarifying questions do you need the other pair in your group to answer about their position?

   - How did they answer your questions?

CONSENSUS BUILDING:

5. Starting now, you may abandon your assigned position and advocate for either side. Look at the evidence and reasoning presented to make the most fair, unbiased judgment possible as if you were living in the time period being investigated and do not know the actual future implications of the decision.

Use the space below to outline the rationale for your group’s answer. Your answer should include evidence and reasoning that considers the pros and cons of both sides. It is acceptable to write in bullet points.

   •
   •
   •

SUMMARIZATION

Directions:
Write a paragraph to answer the question below. Use at least 3 pieces of evidence from the HID sources.

Which of the competing visions for America’s future was the best approach for the nation’s early development in the late 18th century?
Document 1: Excerpt

Thomas Jefferson, Notes on the State of Virginia
Advertised by Prichard and Hall Printers – Market Street, Philadelphia

THE following Notes were written in Virginia in the year 1781,… in answer to Queries proposed to the Author, by a Foreigner of Distinction….He had a few copies printed, which he gave among his friends….They are now offered to the public in their original form & language.

Feb. 27, 1787.

THE present state of manufactures, commerce, interior and exterior trade?

We never had an interior trade of any importance. Our exterior commerce has suffered very much from the beginning of the present contest [The American Revolution]. During this time, we have manufactured within our families the most necessary articles of clothing….But those of wool, flax and hemp are very coarse, unsightly, and unpleasant: and such is our attachment to agriculture, and such our preference for foreign manufactures….Our people will certainly return as soon as they can, to the raising raw materials, and exchanging them for finer manufactures than they are able to execute themselves.

The political economists of Europe have established it as a principle that every state [nation] should endeavor to manufacture for itself: and this principle, like many others, we transfer to America, without calculating the difference of circumstance which should often produce a difference of result. In Europe the lands are either cultivated or locked up against the cultivator. Manufacture must therefore be resorted to of necessity not of choice, to support the surplus of their people. But we have an immensity of land courting the industry of the husbandman [farmer]. It is best then that all our citizens should be employed in its improvement, or that one half should be called off from that to exercise…handicraft arts for the other? Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God….It is the mark set on those, who not looking up to heaven, to their own soil and industry, as does the husbandman…. Dependance [on others] begets subservience and venality, suffocates the germ of virtue, and prepares fit tools for the designs of ambition…..[G]enerally speaking, the proportion which the …other classes of citizens bears in any state to that of its husbandmen, is the proportion of its unfound to its healthy parts, and is a good-enough barometer whereby to measure its degree of corruption. While we have land to labor then, let us never wish to see our citizens occupied at a workbench…. Carpenters, masons, smiths, are wanting in husbandry: but, for the general operations of manufacture, let our workshops remain in Europe. It is better to carry provisions and materials to workmen there, than bring them to the provisions and materials, and with them their manners and principles. The loss by the transportation of commodities across the Atlantic will be made up in happiness and permanence of government. The mobs of great cities add just so much to the support of pure government, as sores do to…the human body. It is the manners and spirit of a people which preserve a republic in vigor. A degeneracy in these is a canker which soon eats to the heart of its laws and constitution.

Full Text Linked here from the University of North Carolina “Documenting the American South” collection: https://docsouth.unc.edu/southlit/jefferson/jefferson.html
Document 2: Excerpt

Alexander Hamilton Report on Subject of Manufactures to the House of Representatives

December 5, 1791

The Secretary of the Treasury in obedience to the order of ye House of Representatives has applied his attention…to the subject of Manufactures; and particularly to the means of promoting such as will tend to render the United States, independent on foreign nations, for military and other essential supplies. And he…respectfully submits the following Report.....

It is now proper to…enumerate the principal circumstances, from which it may be inferred—That manufacturing establishments not only occasion a positive augmentation of the Produce and Revenue of the Society, but that they contribute essentially to rendering them greater than they could possibly be, without such establishments. These circumstances are—

I. As to the Division of Labor…. The separation of occupations causes each to be carried to a much greater perfection, than it could possibly acquire, if they were blended.

II. As to an extension of the use of Machinery…. Manufacturing pursuits are susceptible in a greater degree of the application of machinery, than those of Agriculture….Instead of manufacturing for itself, [a community] procures the fabrics requisite to its supply from other Countries. The substitution of foreign for domestic manufactures is a transfer to foreign nations of the advantages accruing from the employment of Machinery….

III. As to the additional employment of classes of the community, not ordinarily engaged in the particular business…. The husbandman himself experiences a new source of profit and support from…the demands of the neighboring manufactories. Besides this advantage…—the employment of persons who would otherwise be idle (and in many cases a burthen on the community), either from the bias of temper, habit, infirmity of body, or some other cause, indisposing, or disqualifying them for the toils of the Country….

IV. As to the promoting of emigration from foreign Countries…If it be true then, that it is the interest of the United States to open every possible [avenue to] emigration from abroad, manufactures… will have the strongest tendency to multiply the inducements to it.

V. As to the furnishing greater scope for the diversity of talents and dispositions, which discriminate men from each other….There is, in the genius of the people of this country, a peculiar aptitude for mechanic improvements, it would operate as a forcible reason for giving opportunities to the exercise of that species of talent, by the propagation of manufactures.

VI. As to the affording a more ample and various field for enterprise…. Every new scene, which is opened to the busy nature of man to rouse and exert itself, is the addition of a new energy to the general stock of effort.

VII. As to the creating, a new, and …steady demand, for the surplus produce of the soil….The establishment of manufactures contributes to an augmentation of the produce or revenue of a country and has an immediate and direct relation to the prosperity of Agriculture.

But it is also a consequence of the policy, which has been noted, that the foreign demand for the products of Agricultural Countries, is, in a great degree, rather casual and occasional, than certain or constant.

It merits particular observation, that the multiplication of manufactories not only furnishes a Market for those articles, which have been accustomed to be produced in abundance, in a country; but it likewise creates a demand for such as were either unknown or produced in inconsiderable quantities….Animals, Plants and Minerals acquire a utility and value, which were before unexplored.

The foregoing considerations seem sufficient to establish, as general propositions, That it is the interest of nations to diversify the industrious pursuits of the individuals, who compose them—That the establishment of manufactures is calculated not only to increase the general stock of useful and productive labor; but even to improve the state of Agriculture in particular; certainly to advance the interests of those who are engaged in it.

**Tench Coxe was the head of the Manufacturing Society of Philadelphia and served as Assistant Secretary of the Treasury under Alexander Hamilton**

....The lands of the United States, though capable of producing so great a variety of necessary and useful articles, are much cheaper than in Europe. Farms which lie in such of our states as have been longest settled and improved, can be purchased for less money than the medium value of farming lands in any civilized part of the world: and our new lands...are to be procured at very low prices....

....Laboring people in the farming, manufacturing, and mechanical trades, can have constant employment, and better wages, than in the dearest countries of Europe; because we have so much land, so many new dwelling-houses, work-shops, barns, and other buildings to erect, and so many new trades and manufactories to establish.

....There is a striking invaluable difference between the navigable waters of the United States and those of any country in the old world. The Elbe is the only river in Europe, which will permit a sea vessel to sail up it for so great a length as seventy miles. The Hudson’s, or North-River, between the states of New-York and New-Jersey, is navigated by sea vessels one hundred and eighty miles from the ocean; the Delaware, between Pennsylvania, New-Jersey and the Delaware state, one hundred and sixty miles; the Potomac, between Virginia and Maryland, three hundred miles: and there are several other rivers, bays, and sounds, of extensive navigation, far exceeding the great river Elbe. The inland boatable waters and lakes are equally numerous and great.

In a country thus circumstanced, producing the great raw materials for manufactures, and possessing unlimited powers by water and resources of fuel, subject also to considerable charges upon the importation of foreign fabrics, to neglect manufactures would have been highly criminal. These important ideas have taken full possession of the American mind....Master workmen in every manufacturing and mechanical art (except those of superfluous or luxurious kinds) with their journeymen and laborers, must succeed here. The freight, insurance, and other charges of a long voyage, of more than three thousand miles and the duties laid here, operate greatly in favor of American fabrics. Manufactures by fire, water, and emigrating workmen, must succeed even in the most agricultural of our states, and will meet every encouragement in the New England states, and others whose lands are nearly full. A regard for the republican manners of our country, renders it a duty to warn the manufacturers of very fine, superfluous, and luxurious articles, not to emigrate to these states. Gold and silver and other laces, embroidery, jewelry, rich silks and silk velvets, fine ceramics, fine lawns, fine muslins, and articles of that expensive nature, have yet few wearers here.

Full text of Tench Coxe’s “A View of the United States of America” 1794 linked here: [https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=evans;cc=evans;rgn=div2;view=toc;idno=N20452.0001.001;node=N20452.0001.001:7.1](https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=evans;cc=evans;rgn=div2;view=toc;idno=N20452.0001.001;node=N20452.0001.001:7.1)
Document 4

Thomas Jefferson - Constitution for Proposed Agricultural Society of Albemarle

Feb. 1, 1811

….Were practical and observing husbandmen [farmers] in each county to form themselves into a society, commit to writing themselves, or state in conversations at their meetings, to be written down by others, their practices & observations, their experience and ideas, selections from these might be made from time to time, by every one for his own use, or by the society, or a committee of it, for more general purpose. By an interchange of these selections among the societies of the different counties, each might thus become possessed of the useful ideas & processes of the whole….

In a country of whose interests Agriculture forms the basis,….everyone must have seen farms, otherwise equal, the one producing the double of the other, by the superior culture and management of its possessor; and every one must have under his eye numerous examples of persons setting out in life with no other possession than skill in agriculture, and speedily, by its sole exercise, acquiring wealth & independence. To promote therefore the diffusion of this skill, & thereby to procure, with the same labor now employed, greater means of subsistence & of happiness to our fellow citizens, is the ultimate object of this association; …. 

We are far from presuming to offer this organization, and these principles of constitution as complete and worthy the implicit adoption of other societies. They are suggested only as propositions for consideration & amendment; and we shall readily accede to any others more likely to affect the purposes we have in view. We know that Agricultural societies are already established in some counties: but we are not informed of their particular constitutions. We request of these to be admitted into their brotherhood, and to make, with them, parts of one great whole. We have learned that such a society is formed, or forming, at the seat of our government. We ask their affiliation and give them our suffrage for the station of Central society.

We promise to all our zealous co-operation in promoting the objects of the institution, and to contribute our might in exchange for the more abundant information we shall receive from others.

For these purposes we now constitute ourselves an Agricultural society of the county of Albemarle….

Full text of Jefferson’s Constitution for Proposed Agricultural Society of Albemarle linked here: https://www.loc.gov/item/mtjbib020516/