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 CollegeBoard

ANALYTICAL READING ACTIVITIES
Topic 1.1–Teacher Version

AP United States Government and Politics

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Plan

Analytical Reading

Students will read and analyze the following:

- **Required Reading:** Excerpts from the Declaration of Independence
- **Paired With:** Excerpts from John Locke's *Second Treatise of Civil Government*

In this lesson, students will study:

Enduring Understanding LOR-1: A balance between governmental power and individual rights has been a hallmark of American political development.

To be able to:

Learning Objective LOR- 1.A: Explain how democratic ideals are reflected in the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution.

Building Understanding

In this early lesson, both documents provide students with the opportunity to read arguments. Political scientists work to identify the perspective of the author and how that perspective influences the argument. These documents also provide practice in identifying multiple claims and the supporting evidence the author uses to substantiate those claims.

In these closely related documents, students are tasked with uncovering the reasoning processes of an Enlightenment philosopher and a Founding Father. The importance of these texts in helping the political scientist understand how terms and ideas like natural rights and social contract theory were understood by Jefferson and others supports a deeper understanding of those ideas today.

Disciplinary Practice:
Source Analysis Describe the author's claim(s), perspective, evidence, and reasoning.

Reasoning Process:
Definition Describing characteristics, attributes, traits, and elements in defining terms and concepts.

Developing the Disciplinary Practices

This early required document can set the stage for future readings. To ensure that your students can identify claims and supporting evidence in these readings, these activities provide many opportunities for students to practice these skills and for you to assess their progress.

Consider the merits of a mini-lesson that can surface and refine what students already know about the structure of an argument and how the reader can identify claim(s), evidence, and the reasoning employed by the author. A discussion of how perspective influences the point of view and resultant argument made by the author can also be valuable. Carefully assessing student responses to the questions provided both in margins and at the end of each document can provide information about your students' needs and abilities.

Topic 1.1: Ideals of Democracy

Source Analysis

Before You Read

Political scientists analyze founding documents for ways that they relate to our government today. They focus less on the historical situation and more on how the principles established in the documents were used to create our governmental structures.

As you prepare to read the Declaration of Independence from a political science perspective, take a moment and think about what some of the main themes in the Declaration mean to you. When you think about our government, how do you think these principles relate?

What individual rights should a government protect for its people?	
What should a government provide for its people?	
How can people hold their government accountable?	

Required Document: Excerpts from The Declaration of Independence by Thomas Jefferson (for a committee)

Paired with: Excerpts from Second Treatise of Civil Government by John Locke

Related Concepts:

- Purpose of Government
- Natural Rights
- Social Contract Theory
- Balance Between Liberty and Order

Definition

Describe characteristics, attributes, traits, and elements in defining terms and concepts.

Source Analysis

Describe the author's claim(s), perspective, evidence, and reasoning.

The Declaration of Independence

As you read the text, consider how the author develops an argument for independence that reflects his perspective on the nature and purpose of government. Try to identify the evidence he uses to support his argument. Think about how Jefferson defines rights and how government relates to those rights.

The questions you see in the margin will guide your note-taking and help you see the evidence and reasoning Jefferson uses. Definitions for some non-academic vocabulary words and phrases can be found at the bottom of the page.

Second Continental Congress, July 4, 1776

In Congress, July 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

When a group of people find it necessary to break away from another group that they have been connected to politically, they should explain to the world the reasons they are doing this.

dissolve: bring to an end

entitle: establish a right to

impel: force or urge

Check Your Understanding

Use the space below the first paragraph to rewrite what Jefferson is saying in your own words.

Academic Vocabulary

Find the phrase "Laws of Nature and of Nature's God" in this paragraph. Use context clues within the text to determine what Jefferson means.

Answers may vary. Students may respond that "Laws of Nature" refer to the kind of rules that everyone, including governments, have had to follow throughout human history. Students may explain that by referring to "Nature's God" that Jefferson is stating that some rights are given by God.

Source Analysis

Highlight or underline the phrase in this paragraph that explains why Jefferson wrote this document.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness

Check Your Understanding

Circle the specific rights that Jefferson outlines in this section.

Connect to Content

Describe one way in which Jefferson's description of rights relates to your understanding of the American governmental system.

Answers may vary but might include the idea that we are born or entitled to certain rights. Students might discuss rights and/or limitations. Be sure that they are connecting their responses to what is in the text.

Academic Vocabulary

What does Jefferson mean by liberty in this context?

Answers may vary but students should equate liberty with freedom. Students may expand on what freedom means to Jefferson - free speech (especially to speak out against one's government, freedom of religion, ...)

self-evident: evident without proof or reasoning

unalienable: incapable of being given up

—That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, —That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed.

Check Your Understanding

Describe one characteristic of government that Jefferson mentions.

Answers may vary but could include the idea that government gets its powers from the people or by the "consent of the governed." This introduces the idea of popular sovereignty as an underlying principle of our government.

Source Analysis

Explain one claim Jefferson makes about the purpose of government.

Claim should include the idea that government's purpose is to protect the natural rights (life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness) of the people. Another claim might be that the people have the right of rebellion when the government fails to protect their natural rights and to form a new government.

But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. —Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government.

The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

Source Analysis

According to Jefferson, under what conditions are the people justified in throwing off a government?

When a government abuses the rights of people or seeks to oppress them ("reduce them under absolute Despotism"), the people have a duty or responsibility to revolt and form a new government.

Source Analysis

What does the text on this page tell us about Jefferson's perspective on government?

Answers may vary but look for the development of Jefferson's idea of popular sovereignty -- people create governments by their consent and can withdraw their consent when a government abuses their natural rights.

evinces: reveals or shows clearly

usurpations: to take or make use of without right

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them....

...

In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people....

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the World for the Rectitude of our Intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly Publish and Declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political Connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved . . .

Check Your Understanding

Here, Jefferson names a series of grievances or complaints against the King. How does this list relate to Jefferson's earlier assertions about the nature and purpose of government?

Look for students to make the connection by expressing that the purpose and nature of government is that it governs by the consent of the people and is charged with protecting natural rights. This list provides evidence that Great Britain is violating those rights.

Source Analysis

How does Jefferson use these grievances as evidence to support his claim?

Answers may vary but in reading the Declaration as an argument for independence, look for students to identify in some way the grievances as supporting evidence that Great Britain has violated the colonists' natural rights. This supports the claim that the people have a duty to "throw off" such a government.

After You Read

Thinking Like a Political Scientist

Reasoning Process: Describe

Based on the reading, describe two characteristics Jefferson applies to a government.

Students may include the characteristic of popular sovereignty or the idea that the government gets its consent to govern from the people.

Students may also describe the idea that the chief role of government is to protect natural rights of the people. If the government fails, the people have the right, even duty, to rebel.

What traits does Jefferson use to describe bad government?

Jefferson uses the terms tyranny, repeated injuries and usurpations - he names traits of repeated oppression of the people (denial of natural rights).

Political Science Disciplinary Practices

Source Analysis

What was Jefferson's claim?

Answers may vary somewhat. Look for the claim that the Americans are justified in declaring independence from the British because the natural rights of the American people have been violated by the King.

What evidence did he use to support his claim?

Answers may vary but look for Jefferson's defining legitimate government as derived from the consent of the people (popular sovereignty) and charged with protecting natural rights. He then uses a list of grievances as evidence to support the claim that the Americans are justified in declaring independence.

What line of reasoning is Jefferson using to structure his argument - causation or comparison? How do you know?

Causation. Students may cite the idea that the cause of the separation was Great Britain's violation of the natural rights of the colonists. Students may say that the government of Great Britain was no longer legitimate due to its violation of the social contract (the use of the term social contract might be invoked if students did prior reading from a textbook or other source before reading the Declaration).

How does the evidence used by Jefferson relate to and support the claim?

Jefferson's claim that the colonists were compelled to separate from Great Britain (declare independence because the Americans' natural rights were violated) is supported by the list of grievances against the king. Those grievances support the violation of the rights of Americans.

Second Treatise of Civil Government

In John Locke's *Second Treatise*, the Enlightenment philosopher explains his theory of natural rights and the social contract. Aspects of Locke's work can be found in the Declaration of Independence. A political scientist reads and analyzes the *Second Treatise* in an effort to deepen his or her understanding of our founding principles.

This text, like the Declaration of Independence, is a primary source document. It is a challenging read. As a reader, consider what this may mean in terms of your pacing and stamina.

As you read the text, consider how the author develops an argument about people's rights and government. Make notes in the margin of the text where you see evidence being used to advance the argument.

As you respond to the questions both in the margins and those that follow the reading, it is often useful to cite the specific text that formed the basis on your response.

Source Information: *The Second Treatise of Government* (1690), by John Locke

Of the State of Nature.

Sec. 4. To understand political power right, and derive it from its original, we must consider, what state all men are naturally in, and that is, a state of perfect freedom to order their actions, and dispose of their possessions and persons, as they think fit, within the bounds of the law of nature, without asking leave, or depending upon the will of any other man.

Check Your Understanding

According to Locke, what is the natural state of men?

Answers may vary but students should indicate that this condition is one of absolute freedom, in which people can do what they want within the limits of the law of nature. Another way of putting this idea is that this was the state people were in prior to the development of government.

A state also of equality, wherein all the power and jurisdiction is reciprocal, no one having more than another; there being nothing more evident, than that creatures of the same species and rank, promiscuously born to all the same advantages of nature, and the use of the same faculties, should also be equal one amongst another without subordination or subjection unless the lord and master of them all should, by any manifest declaration of his will, set one above another, and confer on him, by an evident and clear appointment, an undoubted right to dominion and sovereignty. . . .

Answers may vary but might arrive at an idea of equality as each man is born with more or less the same features and/or abilities. Locke references that idea that we are more or less the same because we belong to the same species.

Check Your Understanding

Paraphrase in the space below the first paragraph on this page what Locke says about equality.

Check Your Understanding

According to Locke, what could set one man above another?

Answers may vary but include the idea that it may be the will of God that sets one person apart --something that speaks to a "manifest declaration" of God's will. This idea is revisited as Locke has already argued against the divine right of kings theory in his First Treatise.

reciprocal: shared or felt by both sides

faculties: inherent functions; natural ability

Sec. 6. . . . The state of Nature has a law of Nature to govern it, which obliges every one, and reason, which is that law, teaches all mankind . . . that being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty, or possessions.... Every one, as he is bound to preserve himself, and not to quit his station wilfully [sic], so by the like reason, when his own preservation comes not in competition, ought he, as much as he can, to preserve the rest of mankind, and not unless it be to do justice on an offender, take away or impair the life, or what tends to the preservation of the life, the liberty, health, limb, or goods of another.

Source Analysis

What is Locke's claim regarding the "state of Nature" in this paragraph?

*The "state of Nature" is not _____
without any laws as there is a _____
Law of Nature to govern the _____
behavior of men in this condition.*

Academic Vocabulary

Underline the text in Sec. 6 that explains what Locke means by the "law of Nature."

Of the Beginning of Political Societies.

Sec. 95. MEN being, as has been said, by nature, all free, equal, and independent, no one can be put out of this estate, and subjected to the political power of another, without his own consent.

The only way whereby any one divests himself of his natural liberty, and puts on the bonds of civil society, is by agreeing with other men to join and unite into a community for their comfortable, safe, and peaceable living one amongst another, in a secure enjoyment of their properties, and a greater security against any, that are not of it. . . . When any number of men have so consented to make one community or government, they are thereby presently incorporated, and make one body politic, wherein the majority have a right to act and conclude the rest....

Sec. 131. But though men, when they enter into society, give up the equality, liberty, and executive power they had in the state of Nature, into the hands of the society, to be so far disposed of by the legislative as the good of the society shall require, yet it being only with an intention in every one the better to preserve himself, his liberty and property (for no rational creature can be supposed to change his condition with an intention to be worse),

the power of the society, or legislative constituted by them, can never be supposed to extend farther, than the common good,

but is obliged to secure every one's property, by providing against those three defects above mentioned, that made the state of Nature so unsafe and uneasy. ... by indifferent and upright judges, who are to decide controversies by those laws; and to employ the force of the community at home only in the execution of such laws, or abroad to prevent or redress foreign injuries and secure the community from inroads and invasion. And all this to be directed to no other end but the peace, safety, and public good of the people.

Source Analysis

Highlight or underline the reasons Locke gives for why people agree to give up living in a state of nature and to form a political society.

Check Your Understanding

According to Locke, what do men give up in leaving a state of nature when they consent to be governed? What do they gain by entering into society (social contract)?

Men give up the kind of freedom to do as they wish without having to live under the "bonds of civil society," or in other words, not having to live under a government. They gain greater security (safety) for their most important rights - life, liberty, and property.

Connect to Content

According to Locke, what are the limits of governmental power? How are these limits reflected in the U.S. Government?

Government is primarily created by people (through the social contract) to protect the people's property and to protect them against domestic (within the society) and foreign threats. The power of the government is limited to pursuing the "common good" or the public interest.

Source Analysis

Circle the details Locke provides about the responsibility a government has to the people.

Of Tyranny.

Sec. 199. As usurpation is the exercise of power which another hath a right to, so tyranny is the exercise of power beyond right, which nobody can have a right to; and this is making use of the power any one has in his hands, not for the good of those who are under it, but for his own private separate advantage.

Tyranny is exercising unauthorized power that only serves the interest of the ruler(s) exercising it, not in the interest of the people.

When the governor, however intitled, makes not the law, but his will, the rule; and his commands and actions are not directed to the preservation of the properties of his people, but the satisfaction of his own ambition, revenge, covetousness, or any other irregular passion.

Of the Dissolution of Government.

Sec. 222. The reason why men enter into society, is the preservation of their property; and the end while they choose and authorise a legislative is that there may be laws made, and rules set, as guards and fences to the properties of all the members of the society, to limit the power, and moderate the dominion of every part and member of the society. ...

covetousness: desire for wealth; greed

Check Your Understanding

In Sec. 199, Locke gives examples of tyranny. Use the space below the text to summarize his position in your own words.

Source Analysis

How does Locke's argument about tyranny compare to Jefferson's argument?

Students should note the similarities of the two men's arguments. Both define tyranny as exercising power in a way that is not legitimate, or that does not serve the public good. Both men see the purpose of government as protecting the natural rights of the people.

Source Analysis

Circle the text in Sec. 222 where Locke explains why men enter into society.

...whenever the legislators endeavour to take away and destroy the property of the people, or to reduce them to slavery under arbitrary power, they put themselves into a state of war with the people, who are thereupon absolved from any farther obedience, and are left to the common refuge, which God hath provided for all men, against force and violence. ... by this breach of trust they forfeit the power the people had put into their hands for quite contrary ends, and it devolves to the people, who have a right to resume their original liberty, and by the establishment of a new legislative (such as they shall think fit) provide for their own safety and security, which is the end for which they are in society.

Source Analysis

What does Locke argue is the consequence when government threatens the rights of the people?

*They forfeit, or give up, the
power the people granted them
and that power returns to the
people who may then form
a new government to better
preserve their rights to safety
and property.*

After You Read

Thinking Like a Political Scientist

Reasoning Process: Describe

How did John Locke define equality? What rights were all men entitled to in his state of nature?

Locke defined equality as something men were born into - the state in which no one is set above another. The rights people were entitled to in a state of nature consist of life, liberty, and property.

What, according to Locke, are the elements of the social contract?

People enter into civil society, or form a government, and give up the kind of freedom they had in a state of nature in order to have greater security for themselves and their property.

Political Science Disciplinary Practices

Source Analysis

In the *Second Treatise*, how did Locke come to the conclusion that men are equal in a state of nature?

Answers might include the idea that all men belong to the same species and are roughly equal to one another in their abilities.

Describe Locke's reasoning regarding how governments were formed from a state of nature. Do you find his argument compelling? Explain.

Answers may vary -- the description should include the idea that natural rights were better secured in a state of nature against those who would not follow nature's law. People were willing to exchange the absolute freedom they had in a state of nature for the kind of security of their rights they might better enjoy under a government.

Students should explain why they agree or disagree with Locke's ideas.

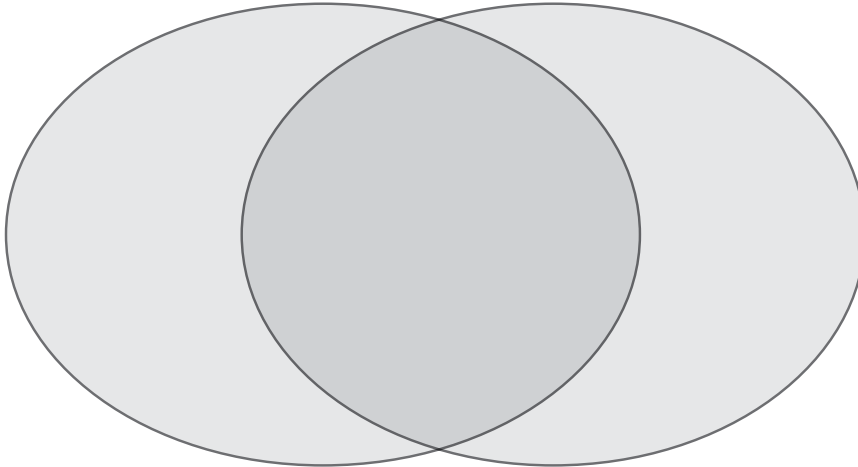
What evidence was most useful to the author in supporting this claim?

Answers will vary but evidence should be drawn from the text. For example, student might cite the evidence from Sec. 95, "agreeing with other men to join and unite into a community for their comfortable, safe, and peaceable living one amongst another, in a secure enjoyment of their properties, and a greater security against any, that are not of it . . ."

Making Connections

Let's now analyze the two readings in this lesson.

Use the graphic organizer below to identify and describe similar characteristics, traits, or elements between Jefferson's argument about the purpose of government in the Declaration of Independence and Locke's argument in the *Second Treatise*.



Student entries in the Venn Diagram should reflect how closely related the words and ideas of the Declaration are to some of the excerpts here. Answers should include the ideas of equality of man, natural rights, purpose of government, popular sovereignty, and the social contract.

Some differences might include Jefferson's use of "pursuit of happiness" where Locke uses "property."

According to what you read in Jefferson and Locke, how are liberty and order balanced in the social contract?

Answers may vary but student responses should reflect the idea that people, according to the social contract theory, gave up some of their freedoms in exchange for having greater security of both their lives and their property. The people's most important rights are more secure and a government that exceeds its powers breaks the social contract.