

Lesson Plan
John Locke - Thomas Jefferson Parallels

This lesson is part of a larger theme regarding our Founding Fathers and “**What Were They Thinking?!**” when they rebelled against England, wrote a Declaration of Independence, created a confederacy, and, ultimately, created The Constitution of the United States of America.

Prior Knowledge: Students will have previously completed class notes regarding major philosophical influences on the Founding Fathers and an assignment analyzing philosophies of John Locke and John Jacques Rousseau.

Lesson Objectives:

To further examine the philosophies of John Locke.

To examine the influences of John Locke on Thomas Jefferson.

To analyze the Declaration of Independence.

Materials:

Access to the web links provided (or printed copies of the information there).

Access to or printed copies of the assignment, “John Locke - Thomas Jefferson Parallels”.

Procedure:

1. **Discussion:**

- a. What classes are you required to take in order graduate from high school? (list on board)
- b. Why have we determined that these are important courses to study?
- c. Do you think our Founding Fathers studied the same thing? Why (not)?
- d. Where do the students think our Founding Fathers went to school? What do you think they studied? (list on board, compare lists)

2. Examine education of George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. **Students read:**

- a. George Washington’s Mount Vernon: Education at <http://www.mountvernon.org/digital-encyclopedia/article/education/>
- b. George Washington Biography, History and Facts: George Washington’s Education at <http://www.georgewashington.org/education.jsp>
- c. Th. Jefferson Monticello: Jefferson’s Formal Education at <https://www.monticello.org/site/research-and-collections/jeffersons-formal-education>

3. **Discussion:**

- a. How do you compare Washington’s education to Jefferson’s?
- b. Do you believe the person you become is influenced by your education?
- c. How did Washington’s education influence the person he became?
- d. How did Jefferson’s education influence the person he became?
- e. We’ve examined John Locke’s and his philosophies. His work “Two Treatises on Government” was first published in 1689. Based on the degree of Jefferson’s education, do you think he read John Locke?
- f. Do you think Locke influenced Jefferson?

4. **Assignment:** “John Locke - Thomas Jefferson Parallels”.
 - a. Pair the students to complete the written assignment.
 - b. Discuss responses.
5. **Wrap up:** Based on the parallels between Locke’s quotes from “Two Treatises” and Jefferson’s Declaration of Independence, how influential was Locke on Jefferson? This could be a quick discussion OR you could have students complete a writing assignment to this end.
6. This lesson meets the following standards of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills:

§113.20. Social Studies (Middle School)

- (2) To support the teaching of the essential knowledge and skills, the use of a variety of rich primary and secondary source material such as the complete text of ... the Declaration of Independence,
- (7)(A) Each social studies class shall include ... appropriate instruction concerning the intent, meaning, and importance of the Declaration of Independence ... The study of the Declaration of Independence must include the study of the relationship of the ideas expressed in that document to subsequent American history, including the relationship of its ideas to ... the American Revolution ...
- (1)(A) identify the major eras and events in U.S. history through 1877, including colonization, revolution, drafting of the Declaration of Independence, ... and describe their causes and effects;
- (1)(C) explain the significance of the following dates: ... 1776, adoption of the Declaration of Independence;
- (15)(C) identify colonial grievances listed in the Declaration of Independence ...
- (20)(A) explain the role of significant individuals such as ... John Locke, ... in the development of self-government in colonial America;
- (20)(B) evaluate the contributions of the Founding Fathers as models of civic virtue; ...

§113.42. World History (High School)

- (20)(B) The student is expected to identify the impact of political and legal ideas contained in the Declaration of Independence;
- (20)(C) The student is expected to explain the political philosophies of individuals such as John Locke, ... (and) Thomas Jefferson ...;

§113.41. United States History (High School)

- (7)(A) Each social studies class shall include ... appropriate instruction concerning the intent, meaning, and importance of the Declaration of Independence ... The study of the Declaration of Independence must include the study of the relationship of the ideas expressed in that document to subsequent American history, including the relationship of its ideas to ... the American Revolution

§113.44. United States Government (High School)

(c)(1) History. The student understands how constitutional government, as developed in America and expressed in the Declaration of Independence, ..., has been influenced by ideas, people, and historical documents. The student is expected to:

- (A) explain major political ideas in history, including the laws of nature and nature's God, unalienable rights, divine right of kings, social contract theory, and the rights of resistance to illegitimate government;
- (B) identify major intellectual, philosophical, political, and religious traditions that informed the American founding, including Judeo-Christian (especially biblical law), English common law and constitutionalism, Enlightenment, and republicanism, as they address issues of liberty, rights, and responsibilities of individuals;
- (C) identify the individuals whose principles of laws and government institutions informed the American founding documents, including those of ... John Locke, ...;
- (D) identify the contributions of the political philosophies of the Founding Fathers, including ... Thomas Jefferson, ...;

John Locke – Thomas Jefferson Parallels

Thomas Jefferson was a scholar and a number of the ideas expressed in the Declaration of Independence were previously expressed in the works of John Locke. Some quotations from John Locke are provided below. Find a complementary quotation in the Declaration of Independence.

John Locke said ...	Declaration of Independence
“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, who will but consult it, that being all equal and independent, ...”	
“Man ... hath by nature a power, not only to preserve his property, that is, his life, liberty and estate, against the injuries and attempts of other men; ...”	
“The reason why men enter into society, ... and the end why they chuse and authorize 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, ...”	
“For when any number of men have, by the consent of every individual, made a community, they have thereby made that community one body, with a power to act as one body, which is only by the will and determination of the majority: ...”	
“There is, ... another way whereby governments are dissolved, and that is, when the legislative, or the prince either of them, act contrary to their trust.” “... if the unlawful acts done by the magistrate be maintained ... they have a right to defend themselves, and to recover by force what by unlawful force is taken from them; ...”	
But if a long train of abuses, prevarications, and artifices, all tending the same way, make the design visible to the people, and they cannot but feel what they lie under and see whither they are going, ...”	
“... it is not be wondered that they should then rouse themselves, and endeavour to put the rule into such hands which may secure to them the ends for which government was at first erected; ...”	
“Just and moderate governments are everywhere quiet, everywhere safe; ...”	
“... oppression raises ferments and makes men struggle to cast off an uneasy and tyrannical yoke.”	

Possible Responses (there may be others):

John Locke said ...	Declaration of Independence said ...
“The State of Nature has a Law of Nature to govern it, which obliges every one: ...”	“... to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God entitle them.”
“And Reason, which is that Law, teaches all Mankind, who will but consult it, that being all equal and independent, ...”	“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, ...”
“Man ... hath by nature a power, not only to preserve his property, that is, his life, liberty and estate, against the injuries and attempts of other men; ...”	“... that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”
“The reason why men enter into society, ... and the end why they chuse and authorize 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, ...”	“That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, ...”
“For when any number of men have, by the consent of every individual, made a community, they have thereby made that community one body, with a power to act as one body, which is only by the will and determination of the majority: ...”	“... Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, ...” People create 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. “
“There is, ... another way whereby governments are dissolved, and that is, when the legislative, or the prince either of them, act contrary to their trust.” “... if the unlawful acts done by the magistrate be maintained ... they have a right to defend themselves, and to recover by force what by unlawful force is taken from them; ...”	“... whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, ...”
But if a long train of abuses, prevarications, and artifices, all tending the same way, make the design visible to the people, and they cannot but feel what they lie under and see whither they are going, ...”	“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 not be wondered that they should then rouse themselves, and endeavour to put the rule into such hands which may secure to them the ends for which government was at first erected; ...”	it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.”
“Just and moderate governments are everywhere quiet, everywhere safe; ...”	“Prudence indeed will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; ...”
“... oppression raises ferments and makes men struggle to cast off an uneasy and tyrannical yoke.”	“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, ... “
“For he that thinks absolute power purifies men's blood, and corrects the baseness of human nature, need read but the history of this, or any other age, to be convinced of the contrary. He that would have been insolent and injurious in the woods of America, would not probably be much better in a throne; ...”	“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.”