

Think-Pair-Share Activity: U.S. History Through 1865

 **Topic this Week: The American Revolution and the Constitution**

 **Assigned Readings:**

- Chapter on the causes of the American Revolution
 - Selections from the Declaration of Independence
 - Excerpts from the Federalist Papers (e.g., No. 10 and No. 51)
 - Chapter on the Constitutional Convention and ratification debates
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Pre-Class Prompts (Think)

As you complete the readings, take brief notes addressing the following:

Prompt 1: *What were the most significant grievances colonists had against the British crown, and how were those grievances reflected in the Declaration of Independence?*

Prompt 2: *How did differing views on the role of government influence the debates between Federalists and Anti-Federalists during the Constitutional Convention? Which side do you think presented a stronger case based on the readings?*

Before beginning each reading, look over the titles, headings, visuals, and any bold words in the text.

When taking notes, try to convey your thoughts in concise phrases or by making lists. You do not need to compose full sentences or paragraphs. For a sense of the kinds of concise notes you should take, here is [an example of notes a student took for a different reading](#).

Bring your notes to class for use during discussion.

In-Class Activity Steps

1. Think (5 minutes)

- Students silently review and refine the notes they brought with them.
- They may underline key phrases or jot down new thoughts that occur to them.

2. Pair (10–12 minutes)

- Students are paired (or grouped in threes if needed).
- Each student shares their thoughts on both prompts with their partner.
- Pairs discuss where they agree or differ, clarify interpretations of historical texts, and refine their understanding together.

3. Share (10–15 minutes)

- Instructor facilitates a class-wide discussion.
 - Selected pairs share insights or disagreements they had about one or both prompts.
 - Instructor synthesizes the key themes and ties them to the broader historical narrative (e.g., the roots of American political thought).
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Learning Objectives

- Develop the ability to connect primary sources with broader historical trends.
 - Practice articulating and defending interpretations using textual evidence.
 - Engage collaboratively in historical analysis and discussion.
 - Deepen understanding of foundational American political debates.
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