

Lesson 1: Virginia's Declaration of Rights (part 1)

Time Estimated: 1 day

Objectives:

Students will:

1. Connect main ideas in Virginia's Declaration of Rights to its author (George Mason)
2. Place this document in its historical context.

Materials:

- Virginia Declaration of Rights as an online primary source http://www.archives.gov/national-archives-experience/charters/virginia_declaration_of_rights.html
- Picture of George Mason www.gunstonhall.com/georgemason
- Hard copies of Declaration of Rights available for each student
- Student copies of the timeline that they can adapt from the timeline for teacher reference included after the historical background.

Strategies:

1. **Hook:** Display picture of George Mason www.gunstonhall.com/georgemason via LCD projector.
2. Ask students what they already know about Mason (prior knowledge).
3. Teacher provides a summary description of the colonies during the American Revolution (based on historical background and earlier lessons), and points out the need for a listing of rights and freedoms guaranteed to all.
4. Ask why George Mason is important to Virginia (see historical background).
5. Ask what important world event was taking place at this time (American Revolution)? Why would it be important for Virginians to have a guarantee of free speech and religion? (That's partly what the war was being fought over).
6. Ask students what was going on in America at the same time as Virginia is making its own government and writing a Declaration of Rights (the Revolutionary War, Declaration of Independence). Students may refer to their own copies of the timeline they're making, using one column for America and a separate column for Virginia.
7. Students add the Declaration of Rights to their Virginia section of timeline notice that the Declaration of Independence is written only one month later.
8. Direct students to the actual declaration (review what a declaration is-an important statement), found at http://www.archives.gov/national-archives-experience/charters/virginia_declaration_of_rights.html, displayed via LCD projector.
9. Read aloud Section 1, and demonstrate think-aloud reasoning as teacher answers these questions and writes answers on the board:
 - What are the key words?
 - What does this section say?

- What does that mean?
- What does this look like? **For this, students may either act it out or draw a picture on poster board.

10. Divide class into five groups. Students are to read one section of the Declaration, then report back to the class. Assign these sections of the Declaration, one to each group: Sections 9, 11, 12, 13 and 16. Students are to read only their section and answer the questions above.

Teacher's Note: Virginia Declaration of Rights section main points:

Section 9: Excessive bails, cruel and unusual punishment

Section 11: Trial by jury

Section 12: Freedom of the press

Section 13: Well-regulated militia is the proper and safe defense of a free state

Section 16: Religion can be directed only by reason and conviction.

11. Teacher circulates throughout class, making sure that students understand what to do, based on teacher's modeling before.

12. Closing: Call for students' attention, reassure those who haven't finished that tomorrow we will finish the group work, and present our Sections of the Declaration to the class. "Today we read a section of the Virginia Declaration of Rights by George Mason, and we illustrated what that right looks like."

Differentiation:

Hard copies of Declaration will also be on hand for students to analyze up close and write on and highlight. Students may either act out or draw a picture of the Section of the Declaration as they finish their group work.

Lesson 2: Virginia's Declaration of Rights (part 2)

Time Estimated: 1 day

Objectives:

Students will:

1. Connect main ideas in Virginia's Declaration of Rights to its author George Mason
2. Connect main ideas in Virginia's Declaration of Rights to its place in historical context

Materials:

- Virginia Declaration of Rights online primary source http://www.archives.gov/national-archives-experience/charters/virginia_declaration_of_rights.html
- Picture of George Mason www.gunstonhall.com/georgemason

- Hard copies of Declaration of Rights available for each student.
- Student copies of timeline (self-made), as well as teacher version of timeline
- Student group work-answers to questions from Lesson 1
- Poster or skit of the group's Section of the Virginia Declaration of Rights

Strategies:

1. **Hook:** Display picture of George Mason www.gunstonhall.com/georgemason displayed via LCD projector.
2. Ask a group to come forward as teacher reads aloud the group's Section of the Virginia Declaration of Rights. Teacher continues to model thinking-aloud strategies and defines unfamiliar vocabulary by using context clues in the sentence.
3. The group will tell the class what their Section means, and will illustrate it either by acting out or through presentation of a poster.
4. Continue calling each group forward, discussing and acting out each section of the Virginia Declaration of Rights. Goal is to steer students' answers towards the following summaries of the sections, and students should have a similar title at the top of their poster, or as title of their skit.
 Section 9: Excessive bails, cruel and unusual punishment
 Section 11: Trial by jury
 Section 12: Freedom of the press
 Section 13: Well-regulated militia is the proper and safe defense of a free state
 Section 16: Religion can be directed only by reason and conviction.
5. While students are acting out or presenting posters, the rest of the class is taking notes on their printouts of the Virginia Declaration of Rights. This way, each student will leave the class period having a clear idea of the summaries of five of the Rights and what they look like.
6. **Closing:** Call for students' attention, reassure those who haven't finished that tomorrow we will finish the group work, and present our Sections of the Declaration to the class. "Today we read a section of the Virginia Declaration of Rights by George Mason, and we illustrated what that right looks like."

Differentiation:

Students may either act out or draw a picture of the Section of the Declaration as they finish their group work. Students who are not good at note taking may copy the teacher's summaries off of the chalkboard, so they don't have to come up with their own summaries.

Lesson 3: Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom (part 1)

Time Estimated: 1 day

Objectives:

Students will:

1. Connect main ideas in the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom to its author Thomas Jefferson
2. Connect main ideas in the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom to its place in historical context. (See timeline and historical Background)

Materials:

- <http://www.worldpolicy.org/globalrights/religion/va-religiousfreedom.html>
- Picture of Thomas Jefferson www.monticello.org/jefferson/biography.html or <http://etext.virginia.edu/jefferson/biog/lpic.htm>
- Hard copies of Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom available for each student.
- Student copies of the timeline (self-made), as well as teacher version on board

Strategies:

1. **Hook:** Display online picture (via LCD projector) of Thomas Jefferson.
2. Ask students what they already know about Jefferson (prior knowledge). It is hoped that students will connect Jefferson as important to the nation as a whole as the author of the Declaration of Independence.
3. Now ask what important national event was taking place at this time (Constitutional Convention).
4. Define statute for students (a law).
5. Why would it be important for Virginians to have a guarantee of religious freedom? (Use the historical background to give students the main points of the historical context surrounding early Americans' assumptions about religion, such as: before the war each colony supported the 'state' church; usually the Anglican Church, or the Church of England; laws and tax money helped to support this church; many people thought this was a bad use of money and implied only one church was right or good; and other relevant points.
6. Students add the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom to the Virginia section of timeline; notice that the Constitutional Convention is held only one year later.
7. Direct students' attention to the actual Statute (or law) found at <http://www.worldpolicy.org/globalrights/religion/va-religiousfreedom.html> Display this via LCD projector.
8. To help students through the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, teacher reviews the thinking out loud strategies from the past two days, and defines unclear vocabulary using context clues in the sentence, as she takes the first sentence of paragraph one and answers these questions on the board:
 - What are the key words?
 - What does this section say?
 - What does that mean?
 - What does this look like? **For this, students may either act it out or draw a picture on poster board.
9. Divide class into three groups. Students are to focus on one section of the Statute, then report back to the class. Assign these sections of the Statute, one paragraph to each group: Paragraphs 1, 2, and 3.

Teacher's note: For further clarification of what this important but somewhat difficult document means, please refer to

<http://www.vahistorical.org/sva2003/vsrf.htm>

Paragraph main ideas are as follows:

Paragraph 1: God has granted individuals freedom of conscience in religious matters. Any attempt to limit or restrict it is wrong.

Paragraph 2: No person can be made to attend any church or support it with taxes.

Paragraph 3: The people have the right, through voting, to change any law, even this one, though it would be "an infringement of natural right".

10. Students are to read only their section and answer the questions above.

11. Closing: Call for students' attention, reassure those who haven't finished that tomorrow we will finish the group work, and present our Sections of the Declaration to the class. "Today we read a section of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom by Thomas Jefferson, and we illustrated what those rights look like."

Differentiation:

Hard copies of Statute will also be on hand for students to analyze up close and write and highlight on.

Students may either act out or draw a picture of the paragraph of the Statute as they finish their group work.

Lesson 4: Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom (part 2)

Time Estimated: 1 day

Objective:

Students will:

1. Connect main ideas in the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom to its author, Thomas Jefferson
2. Place the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom in historical context

Materials:

- <http://www.worldpolicy.org/globalrights/religion/va-religiousfreedom.html>
- Picture of Thomas Jefferson www.monticello.org/jefferson/biography.html or <http://etext.virginia.edu/jefferson/biog/lpic.htm>
- Hard copies of Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom available for each student
- Student copies of timeline (self-made), as well as teacher version on board.

Strategies:

1. **Hook:** Display online picture of Thomas Jefferson displayed via LCD projector.
2. Ask a group to come forward as teacher reads aloud the group's paragraph of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom. Teacher begins by modeling thinking-

- aloud skills to define difficult vocabulary using context clues. Each group will tell the class what their paragraph means, and will illustrate it either by acting out or through presentation of a poster.
3. Continue to call each group forward, discussing and acting out each section of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom. The goal here is to steer students' answers towards the following summaries of the sections, and students should have a similar title at the top of their poster, or as title of their skit.
Paragraph 1: God has granted individuals freedom of conscience in religious matters. Any attempt to limit or restrict it is wrong.
Paragraph 2: No person can be made to attend any church or support it with taxes.
Paragraph 3: The people have the right, through voting, to change any law, even this one, though it would be "an infringement of natural right".
 4. While students are acting out or presenting posters, the rest of the class is taking notes on their printouts of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom. This way, each student will leave the class period having a clear idea of the summaries of the Statute and what they look like.
 5. **Closing:** "Today we read paragraphs of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom by Thomas Jefferson, and we illustrated what that right looks like."

Differentiation:

Students may either act out or draw a picture of the paragraphs of the Statute as they finish their group work. Students who are not good at note taking may copy the teacher's summaries off of the chalkboard, so they don't have to come up with their own summaries.

Lesson 5: Virginia and the Bill of Rights

Time Estimated: 1 day

Objective:

Students will:

1. Connect the main ideas in the Virginia Declaration of Rights and the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom to the Bill of Rights (written by James Madison) by comparing and contrasting selected sections of these documents.
2. Place the Bill of Rights in its historical context.

Materials:

- Bill of Rights online primary source
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/help/constRedir.html>
- Picture of James Madison
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/history/presidents/jm4.html>
- Hard copies of Bill of Rights available for each student,

- Student copies of the timeline as well as teacher of the timeline

Strategies:

1. **Hook:** Display picture of James Madison
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/history/presidents/jm4.html> via LCD projector.
 2. Ask what they know about James Madison (prior knowledge).
 3. Use the historical background to provide key points about Madison, noting his skills and connections to both Thomas Jefferson and George Mason.
 4. Ask what connection James Madison has with the Bill of Rights? (Model thinking-aloud skills here.) Note that he played several important roles at the Constitutional Convention: coming well prepared with key ideas, taking careful notes, and – when the Convention was over – was very active in convincing people to ratify (or vote for) the Constitution in their states, particularly in his state of Virginia.
 5. Why was this so important to George Mason (he wrote the VA Declaration of Rights)? How would Thomas Jefferson have felt (had written the VA Statute for Religious Freedom)?
 6. Students should add the Bill of Rights (1788) to their timeline.
 7. Direct students' attention to the actual Bill of Rights
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/help/constRedir.html> (displayed via LCD projector).
 8. Teacher reviews with the students the think aloud strategies from the past few days.
 9. Divide class into five groups. Students are to focus on one section of the Bill of Rights, and then will report back to the class.
 10. Assign these sections of the Bill of Rights, one to each group: Amendments 1, 1, 2, 7, and 8**.
Teacher's Note: Virginia Declaration of Rights Section key points:
Amendment 1: Religious Freedom
Amendment 1: Freedom of the press
Amendment 2: Well-regulated militia is the proper and safe defense of a free state
Amendment 7: Trial by jury
Amendment 8: Excessive bails, cruel and unusual punishment
- Students are to read only their section and answer these questions:
- What are the key words?
 - What does this section say?
 - What does that mean?
 - What does this look like? **For this, students may either act it out or draw a picture on poster board.
11. At conclusion of group work, direct students' attention to their notes from the previous days' discussions. Based on their discussions, do they see any similarities between the two Virginia documents we've presented and the Bill of Rights? (Students *should* see this, as the amendments I've chosen to compare are almost identical to the ones we studied in the Virginia Declaration of Rights.)

Does it surprise you to know that James Madison took many ideas for the Bill of Rights from Mason's Declaration of Rights? Why do you think he did that?

12. Closing: "Today we read portions of the *Bill of Rights* by James Madison, and we illustrated what those rights looks like."

Differentiation:

Hard copies of Bill of Rights will also be on hand for students to analyze up close and write and highlight on. Students may either act out or draw a picture of the Amendments as they present their group work.