

Unit 5

Deconstructed DBQ Document Set and Teacher Context

Teacher Resource

Resource Overview

This document provides teacher support for implementing the Unit 5: Early Republic Deconstructed DBQ in the middle school classroom. It includes seven documents, each designed to help students explore connections to the DBQ question while understanding the relevant historical context.

Use the context in this document to guide your students in making these connections and help them engage with the primary sources effectively.

Scaffolding note: For students who need additional support, you can assign or allow them to choose 3-4 documents. For students who need more of a challenge, provide all seven documents and require them to use each source at least once in their analysis.

Document Exposure Table

This table shows where each primary source in the Deconstructed DBQ appears throughout the unit. Use this overview to help with lesson planning, reinforce key concepts, or activate prior-knowledge before students engage with the full DBQ.

Teacher note: As students move through the curriculum, they encounter more documents overall, but each one appears fewer times. This gradual decrease in exposure is intentional—it helps shift the responsibility for document analysis to the student, supporting the development of independent thinking and source analysis skills over time.

Document Exposure Table

Document	New or Repeated Exposure	Unit Resources Using the Document
Document A: Excerpt from Article I Section 8 of the Constitution (1787)	New	
Document B: Excerpt from Federalist #10 James Madison (1787)	New	

Document C: Excerpt from George Washington's First Inaugural Address (1789)	Repeated	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Early Republic Timeline</i> 2. <i>Understanding Washington: His First Inaugural and Farewell Address Lesson Plan</i>
Document D: Excerpt from Alexander Hamilton's Opinion on the National Bank (1791)	Repeated	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Party Lines: The Rise of Federalist and Democratic Republicans Timeline Lesson Plan</i>
Document E: Excerpts from Thomas Jefferson opinion on the National Bank (1791)	Repeated	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Party Lines: The Rise of Federalist and Democratic Republicans Timeline Lesson Plan</i>
Document F: Excerpt from George Washington's Farewell Address (1796)	Repeated	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Early Republic Timeline</i> 2. <i>Understanding Washington: His First Inaugural and Farewell Address Lesson Plan</i> 3. <i>Primary Source Essentials: Washington Farewell Address Viewing Guide</i>
Document G: Excerpt from the Sedition Act (1798)	Repeated	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Early Republic Timeline</i> 2. <i>Decisions in the Early Republic Lesson Plan</i>

Documents

Each Deconstructed DBQ document is accompanied by background information to enhance teacher understanding of each source. The information is organized by key concepts in the DBQ question.

Scaffolding note: You may choose to share some or all of this information with your students to support their understanding of the documents.

Document A: Excerpt from Article I Section 8 of the Constitution (1787)

[The Congress shall have Power . . .] To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for **carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers**, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers- putting the listed powers of Congress into action or making sure they are carried out effectively.

Historical Context and Significance

This clause, known as the Necessary and Proper Clause, grants Congress the flexibility to pass laws needed to carry out its enumerated powers. It became a foundational element of debates over the scope of federal power, especially in early disputes over the national bank and internal improvements.

Constitutional Connection

This clause expands the powers of Congress beyond those explicitly listed, allowing for implied powers. It became central to the debate between Federalists, who favored a strong national government, and Democratic-Republicans, who advocated for a stricter interpretation of the Constitution.

Constitutional Connection

This clause was at the heart of the debate over the creation of the First Bank of the United States (1791). Federalists, led by Alexander Hamilton, argued the bank was a necessary and proper means of taxing and growing the economy, while Thomas Jefferson and the Democratic-Republicans opposed it, believing it exceeded constitutional limits.

Document B: Excerpt from *Federalist* #10 James Madison (1787)

The **inference** to which we are brought is, that the causes of faction cannot be removed; and that relief is only to be sought in the means of controlling its effects.

inference- using what is known to make a judgement or understanding

Historical Context and Significance

Madison wrote *Federalist* #10 to argue that a large republic would be the best way to control factions (political divisions and special interest groups). He warned that factions were inevitable but could be managed through a well-structured government that prevented any single group from dominating.

Constitutional Connection

The Constitution's structure—especially its system of checks and balances and separation of powers—was designed to prevent factionalism from undermining national stability. Madison argued that the large size of the republic would make it difficult for any single faction to take over.

Influence on Early Republic Decisions

Federalist #10 was a part of a series of papers published to help convince Americans the Constitution would not threaten freedom. It built support that ultimately led to the ratification of the Constitution.

Document C: Excerpt from George Washington's First Inaugural Address (1789)

The **preservation** of the sacred fire of liberty, and the destiny of the republican model of government, are justly considered as deeply, perhaps as finally, staked on the experiment **entrusted** to the hands of the American people.

preservation-
maintenance, care, or
keeping

entrusted- to put into
someone's care

Historical Context and Significance

Washington, the first U.S. president, emphasized the fragility and importance of the new government. His words underscored that the success of the republic depended on the virtue and participation of the American people.

Constitutional Connection

Washington highlighted the Constitution as an experiment in self-government, reinforcing the idea that the document provided a framework that needed to be upheld by the people and their leaders.

Influence on Early Republic Decisions

His leadership set precedents for presidential authority and civic responsibility. Washington's emphasis on national unity influenced later policies, such as his handling of the Whiskey Rebellion (1794) to enforce federal law while maintaining order.

Document D: Excerpt from Alexander Hamilton's Opinion on the National Bank (1791)

It is not denied that there are implied, as well as express powers, and that the former are as **effectually** delegated as the latter. Then it follows, that as a power of [creating] a corporation is not expressly granted, so neither is it forbidden.

effectually- thoroughly

Historical Context and Significance

Hamilton, as Secretary of the Treasury, argued that the federal government had implied powers under the Constitution, supporting the creation of a national bank to stabilize the economy. His argument was part of the larger Federalist vision for a strong central government.

Constitutional Connection

Hamilton relied on the Necessary and Proper Clause (Article I, Section 8) to argue that the Constitution granted powers not explicitly listed but necessary for carrying out federal responsibilities.

Influence on Early Republic Decisions

His reasoning influenced *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819), where the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the national bank, reinforcing broad federal authority.

Document E: Excerpts from Thomas Jefferson opinion on the National Bank (1791)

I consider the foundation of the Constitution as laid on this ground: That 'all powers not delegated to the United States, by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states or to the people.' To take a single step beyond the boundaries thus specially drawn around the powers of Congress, is to take possession of a boundless field of power, no longer **susceptible** of any definition.

susceptible- capable or open to

Historical Context and Significance

Jefferson opposed the national bank, arguing for a strict interpretation of the Constitution. He feared that allowing implied powers would lead to unchecked federal authority. His stance became a defining principle of the Democratic-Republican Party.

Constitutional Connection

Jefferson cited the Tenth Amendment, emphasizing that powers not delegated to the federal government were reserved to the states. He viewed Hamilton's argument as a dangerous expansion of federal power.

Influence on Early Republic Decisions

This debate shaped the early two-party system, with Federalists supporting broad federal authority and Democratic-Republicans advocating for state powers. It also foreshadowed later conflicts over state powers vs. federal power, such as the Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions (1798).

Document F: Excerpt from George Washington's Farewell Address (1796)

The unity of government, which constitutes you one people, is also now dear to you. It is justly so; for it is a **main pillar in the edifice** of your real independence, the support of your tranquility at home, your peace abroad; of your safety; of your prosperity; of that very liberty which you so highly prize.

main pillar in the edifice- key support in the structure

Historical Context and Significance

Washington's Farewell Address warned against sectionalism, political factions, and disunity. It reflected his experience leading the new republic and his concerns about its future stability.

Constitutional Connection

Washington emphasized national unity as essential to preserving the Constitution and preventing internal divisions that could weaken the republic.

Influence on Early Republic Decisions

His warning against political parties was ignored, as the U.S. quickly developed into a two-party system. Washington's leadership became a precedent for future presidents.

Document G: Excerpt from the Sedition Act (1798)

That if any person shall write, print, utter or publish... any **false, scandalous and malicious** writing or writings against the government of the United States, or either house of the Congress... or the President... with intent to **defame... or to bring them into contempt or disrepute...** then such person shall be punished by a fine not exceeding two thousand dollars, and by imprisonment not exceeding two years.

false, scandalous and malicious- untrue, offensive, immoral or otherwise improper

defame or to bring them into contempt or disrepute- make them look bad or bring them into low status

Historical Context and Significance

Passed during the Adams administration, the Sedition Act criminalized criticism of the federal government, reflecting fears of internal dissent and foreign influence during the Quasi-War with France.

Constitutional Connection

The act challenged First Amendment rights, particularly freedom of speech and the press. Federalists justified it as a measure for national security, while Democratic-Republicans saw it as a violation of civil liberties.

Influence on Early Republic Decisions

The backlash led to the Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions (1798-99), where Jefferson and Madison expressed strong concerns about the Alien and Sedition Acts. Jefferson went so far as to argue that states could nullify unconstitutional federal laws in his Kentucky Resolution. This debate over states' powers vs. federal power resurfaced in future conflicts, such as the Nullification Crisis (1832-33).

