

Louisiana Purchase Lesson Plan

Central Historical Question:

Why did Federalists oppose the Louisiana Purchase?

Materials:

- Copies of Louisiana Purchase Timeline
- Copies of Louisiana Purchase Documents A and B
- Transparency of Document A
- Louisiana Purchase Graphic Organizer

Plan of Instruction:

1. Introduction: Hand out Louisiana Purchase Timeline and ask students to answer the questions:
 - a. What was the Louisiana Purchase?
 - b. How do you think Americans felt about it?
2. Elicit student answers. Most students will say that Americans were probably happy about the Louisiana Purchase.

Explain: *In fact, the Federalists were quite unhappy about the Louisiana Purchase and today we're going to discover why.*

Remind students about the differences between Jefferson and Hamilton, and how the Federalists did NOT like Jefferson.

3. Pass out Document A and put transparency on overhead.

Sourcing: Cognitive Modeling

This is written by Alexander Hamilton in July 1803. So it's before Congress ratified the treaty. Hamilton is writing an editorial, so he's probably going to explain whether he supports it or not. I'm going to predict that he opposes the treaty because he and Thomas Jefferson do not get along.

Now, as I read I'm going to try to notice what is going on at the time and what people were thinking. . .

[Read through document and notice 3 things]:

- a. *Express surprise that he likes the idea of purchasing New Orleans. Note that the Federalists are in the Northeast and support business, so they would support having a port city, but maybe not into the rest of the land.*
 - b. *Notice that Hamilton criticizes Jefferson's administration—doesn't want them to take credit.*
 - c. *Notice that the country really isn't populated. So this land isn't necessary for settlement; in fact, it seems really far away to Hamilton. He doesn't see how they would govern over so much land.*
4. Give students time to fill out Graphic Organizer for Document A. Review student answers.
 5. Pass out Document B and lead students in guided practice.

Ask students the following questions:

Sourcing: What position do students predict these Federalists will take?

Context: Read through document and help student see the following:

- a. Federalists were concerned about whether it was constitutional for the Executive to acquire land through treaty.
 - b. Federalists were concerned that the new states would be slave states, and that would upset the balance between free and slave states.
 - c. Federalists REALLY hated Jefferson.
6. Give students time to complete Graphic Organizer for Document B. Review student answers.
 7. Preparation for discussion:

Students should write three sentences in response to the prompt:

Did Federalists oppose the Louisiana Purchase for practical or political reasons? (In other words, did the Federalists have real concerns, or did they just hate Jefferson?)

8. Students share answers. Insist that they support their claims with evidence.

Citations:

Alexander Hamilton, "Purchase of Louisiana," *New York Evening Post*, 5 July 1803. Lance Banning, *Liberty and Order: The First American Party Struggle*, ed. and with a Preface by Lance Banning (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2004). http://oll.libertyfund.org/?option=com_staticxt&staticfile=show.php%3Ftitle=875&chapter=64024&layout=html&Itemid=27

Rufus King, letter to Timothy Pickering, November 4, 1803. *The Life and Correspondence of Rufus King*. Edited by Charles R. King. 6 vols. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1894-1900. http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/a4_3_1s11.html

Timothy Pickering, letter to Rufus King, March 4, 1804. *Documents relating to New-England Federalism*. Ed. Henry Adams, John Quincy Adams. Boston: Little, Brown, & Company, 1877. P. 351. <http://books.google.com/books?id=f48FAAAAMAAJ&pg=PR10>

The Louisiana Purchase Timeline

1763:

France gave Louisiana to Spain.

March 1801:

Napoleon wanted a French empire in North America. So, under pressure, Spain returned Louisiana to France.

Federalists in the United States were alarmed that France now owned Louisiana. They wanted to use force against France. But Jefferson (a Democratic-Republican) sent Robert R. Livingston, the U.S. minister to France to attempt to buy New Orleans.

January 1803:

U.S. sent James Monroe to join Livingston and try to buy New Orleans and West Florida from France.

April 1803:

Napoleon gave up his dream of an American empire because he was overwhelmed by the slave revolt in Haiti and also wanted to go to war with Britain.

The French offered Livingston and Monroe all of Louisiana (not just New Orleans). Livingston and Monroe signed a treaty. For roughly \$15 million, the U.S. acquired some 828,000 square miles of land, doubling the national territory of the United States.

October 1803:

The Senate ratified the treaty and in December the United States acquired the Louisiana Purchase.

Document A: Alexander Hamilton (Modified)

The purchase of New Orleans is essential to the peace and prosperity of our Western country, and opens a free and valuable market to our commercial states.

This purchase will probably make it seem like Mr. Jefferson is brilliant. Any man, however, who possesses any amount of intelligence, will easily see that the purchase is the result of lucky coincidences and unexpected circumstances and not the result of any wise or thoughtful actions on the part of Jefferson's administration.

As to the vast region west of the Mississippi, it is a wilderness with numerous tribes of Indians. And when we consider the present territory of the United States, and that not one-sixteenth is yet under occupation, the possibility that this new purchase will be a place of actual settlement seems unlikely.

If our own citizens do eventually settle this new land, it would weaken our country and central government. On the whole, we can honestly say that this purchase is at best extremely problematic.

Source: Alexander Hamilton wrote an editorial called "Purchase of Louisiana" for the New York Evening Post, July 1803.

Document B: Letters by Federalists (Modified)

Rufus King to Timothy Pickering, November 4, 1803

According to the Constitution, Congress may admit new states. But can the President sign treaties forcing Congress to do so?

According to the Louisiana Treaty, the territory must be formed into states and admitted into the Union. Will Congress be allowed to set any rules for their admission? Since slavery is legal and exists in Louisiana, and the treaty states that we must protect the property of the inhabitants, won't we be forced to admit the new states as slave states? Doing so will worsen the problem of unequal representation from slave and free states.

Timothy Pickering to Rufus King. March 4, 1804

I am disgusted with the men who now rule us. The coward at the head [Jefferson] is like a French revolutionary. While he talks about humanity, he enjoys the utter destruction of his opponents. We have too long witnessed his general wickedness—his cruel removals of faithful officers and the substitution of corruption and immorality for honesty.

Source: The two letters above are written between two Federalists. Rufus King was a Senator from New York and Timothy Pickering was a Senator from Massachusetts.

Louisiana Purchase Graphic Organizer

Name _____

	Document A	Document B
Based on this document, why did Federalists oppose the Louisiana Purchase? (List 2 reasons)		
Provide evidence from the document to support your claims.		