

DISCOVER AMERICA

Course 25 - Teacher Guide



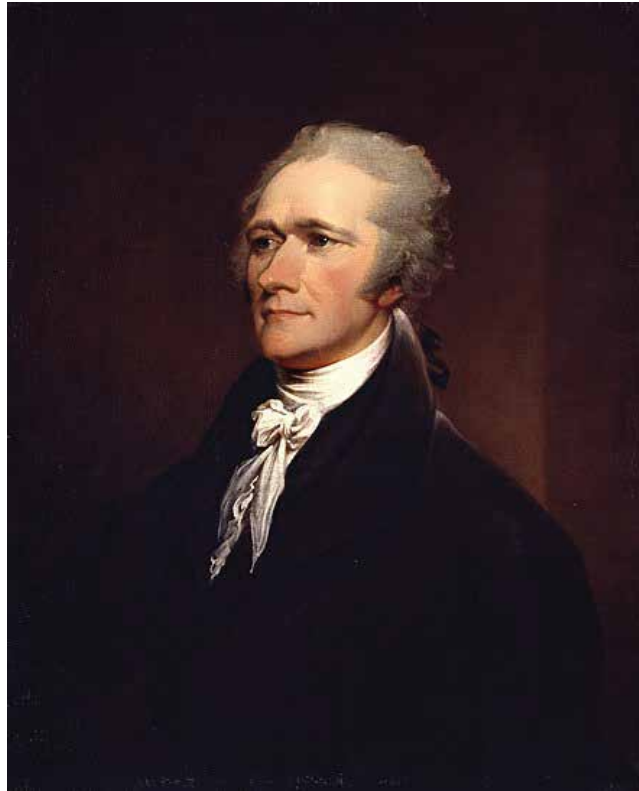
**From Struggle to Statesmanship:
The Remarkable Journey
of Alexander Hamilton**

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Key Themes

- Resilience and Perseverance
- Social Mobility and Opportunity
- Ambition and Leadership
- Impact of Education
- Legacy and Controversy

Core Values

- Community
- Liberty

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to

- Identify Alexander Hamilton as a key Founding Father who played a significant role in shaping the United States.
- Explain that Alexander Hamilton authored the Federalist Papers.
- Define Alexander Hamilton's pivotal role in establishing the U.S. Treasury and recognize how it serves to manage the country's financial health.



Alexander Hamilton - First Grade

Key Terms

- 01 **aide-de-camp:** a leader's top personal assistant, acting as their right-hand person. They are trusted with important tasks and ensuring messages are delivered quickly and accurately.
- 02 **clerk:** a bookkeeper who keeps track of payments, shipping details, and records important messages for ship captains and their crews.
- 03 **Department of the Treasury:** the agency responsible for promoting economic growth and ensuring the financial security of the United States.
- 04 **economy:** the way a certain place (often a country) makes things, offers services, and divides things between people, usually using money.
- 05 **Federalist Papers:** a series of 85 essays written by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay to explain why the new Constitution would be good for the United States.
- 06 **Founding Fathers:** The special people who helped America become a country and made important decisions during the American Revolution.
- 07 **politics:** the work or study of government.
- 08 **The Articles of Confederation:** the first constitution of the United States that explained how the government should work. It set up a confederation (group of states) in 1781.

Alexander Hamilton - First Grade

Introduction

TELL Students

Before the activity, tell students they are going to interview a special guest. Encourage them to come up with questions they would like to ask the guest during the interview. Tell students they will interview one of our Founding Fathers, Alexander Hamilton. Remind students that the special people who helped America become a country and made important decisions during the American Revolution are called the **Founding Fathers**. Gather students in a designated area where "Alexander Hamilton" (played by a teacher or volunteer) is waiting to meet them. Set the scene by explaining that students have traveled back in time to meet one of America's Founding Fathers. Invite students to take turns asking "Alexander Hamilton" questions about his life, challenges, and accomplishments. Encourage them to ask open-ended questions that require more than just a yes or no answer. As "Alexander Hamilton" responds to the students' questions, encourage interactive dialogue and follow-up questions to delve deeper into specific topics of interest.

ASK Students

Who was Alexander Hamilton? What do you know about him?

TELL Students

That is right! Alexander Hamilton is one of our Founding Fathers. He wrote a lot of important papers called the Federalist Papers and even started the first unofficial political party in our country, called the Federalist Party. The **Federalist Papers** are a series of 85 essays written by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay to explain why the new Constitution would be good for the United States.

ASK Students

What did the Federalist Papers suggest would be good for the United States?

Alexander Hamilton - First Grade

Introduction

TELL Students

Alexander Hamilton also helped set up the U.S. Department of the Treasury. The **Department of the Treasury** is the agency responsible for promoting economic growth and ensuring the financial security of the United States.

ASK Students

What is the U.S. Department of the Treasury?

TELL Students

The Department of the Treasury is the money manager for the government. They do a lot of important jobs, like collecting taxes, paying bills, and making sure money is used wisely. They also keep track of how much money the government has and how much it owes. Plus, they make sure everyone follows the rules when it comes to money and taxes.

ASK Students

How do you think Alexander Hamilton used his skills to establish the U.S. Department of the Treasury?

TELL Students

Alexander Hamilton was really good with money, organization, and leading people. He used these skills to start the U.S. Department of the Treasury. He knew a lot about the economy and made rules for how the Treasury Department should work. The **economy** is the way a certain place (often a country) makes things, offers services, and divides things between people, usually using money. Hamilton also talked to people and convinced them that the Treasury Department was important. Thanks to his hard work and ideas, the Treasury Department was created.



U.S. Department of the Treasury

Alexander Hamilton - First Grade

Introduction

ASK Students

Why were good communication skills so important for Alexander Hamilton?

TELL Students

Alexander Hamilton is important because he served our country in many ways. Let's watch another episode of Star Spangled Adventures to learn more about Alexander Hamilton.

WATCH

Star Spangled Adventures Cartoon Ep. 25: Alexander Hamilton



Alexander Hamilton - First Grade

Lesson

TELL Students

Alexander Hamilton grew up on the Caribbean island of Nevis, part of the West Indies. While living on a tropical island might sound pleasant, Nevis in the 1750s was far from a vacation destination. The weather was hot and unpredictable. Most people spent their days working hard outdoors, farming sugar cane to sell in Great Britain and the colonies.

ASK Students

What was life like in Nevis for Alexander Hamilton?

TELL Students

Adding to Hamilton's challenges, he did not have his parents around to guide him. This left Hamilton and his older brother to be raised by a cousin who tragically died a few years later. With no money, no parents, and no clear path forward, Hamilton and his brother faced difficult challenges in rebuilding their lives.

ASK Students

What are some of the challenges faced by Alexander Hamilton?

TELL Students

Fortunately, Alexander Hamilton knew how to read and write. He also worked very hard and started his first job at the age of 11 as a clerk. A **clerk** is a bookkeeper who keeps track of payments, shipping details, and records important messages for ship captains and their crews. This meant Hamilton got plenty of practice reading, writing, and doing math. This education turned out to be the key to him getting away from the Caribbean and starting a new life in America.

ASK Students

What did Hamilton learn from his position as a clerk?

TELL Students

In his spare time, Alexander Hamilton enjoyed writing poems and articles for his local newspaper in St.

Alexander Hamilton - First Grade

Lesson

Croix. Many of his pieces were published, sparking his lifelong passion for writing. In 1772, a hurricane hit St. Croix and caused a lot of damage. Hamilton wanted to tell his father about it, so he wrote him a letter. His father lived on another island called St. Kitts. Unfortunately, the letter got lost and never made it to his father. But someone who found the letter liked it so much that he sent it to his friend, who was the editor of a famous newspaper, the *Royal Danish American Gazette*. The editor thought Alexander's letter was really good, so he decided to publish it in his newspaper.

ASK Students

What happened to the letter that Hamilton wrote to his father?

TELL Students

Alexander Hamilton wrote a detailed description of the hurricane that struck St. Croix, and his writing was so good that it was published in a local newspaper. The people in St. Croix were very impressed with his skills. They saw a lot of promise in him and decided to help him get a better education. They collected money to send Hamilton to the North American British colonies for school. This allowed Hamilton to leave the hardships of the Caribbean behind and start a new life. It also set him on the path to becoming one of the Founding Fathers of the United States.

ASK Students

How did the community of St. Croix support Alexander Hamilton? What does their support reveal about both Hamilton's potential and the character of the people in St. Croix?

TELL Students

Hamilton seized the opportunity to attend college in the United States and enrolled at King's College, which is now known as Columbia University, in late 1772. This was a very important time because the American colonies were thinking about becoming independent from Great Britain, and the Revolutionary War was about to start. Even though Hamilton had just left behind his tough life in the Caribbean, he did not sit back and relax. Instead, he wanted to help the colonies win their freedom. Even before he finished college, Hamilton started writing papers and pamphlets to support the colonies' fight against British rule.

Alexander Hamilton - First Grade

Lesson

ASK Students

How did Alexander Hamilton support the colonies' fight against British rule?

TELL Students

When the Revolutionary War began, Hamilton also did not hesitate to join the fight. He became a part of the Continental Army and led soldiers in important battles like Princeton, Trenton, and Yorktown. His bravery and leadership skills made him stand out, and soon General George Washington asked Hamilton to be his right-hand man. As Washington's aide-de-camp, Hamilton worked hard and earned a reputation as a dedicated patriot with a strong sense of right and wrong. An **aide-de-camp** serves as a leader's top personal assistant, acting as their right-hand person. They are trusted with important tasks and ensuring messages are delivered quickly and accurately.

ASK Students

What is an aide-de-camp?

TELL Students

Even after the war ended, Hamilton continued to serve his country. He went back to studying and taught himself about law. Hamilton stayed involved in politics and worked with James Madison to organize the Constitutional Convention in 1787. **Politics** is the work or study of government.

ASK Students

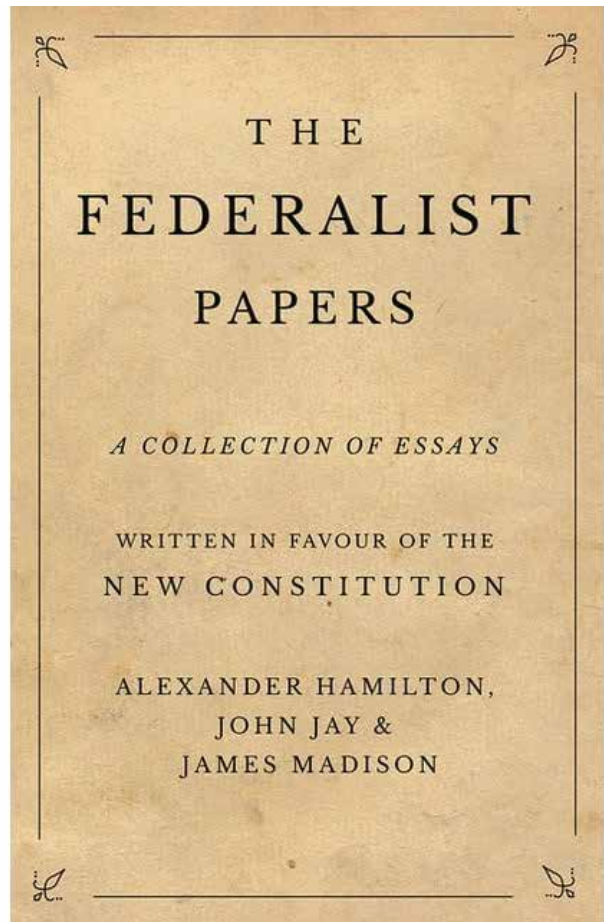
What do you think Hamilton did to teach himself about law? Why would this be important to him?

TELL Students

Hamilton was worried that the government set up under the Articles of Confederation was not strong enough to keep America safe and united. The **Articles of Confederation**, the first constitution of the United States, was a document that explained how the government was to work. It set up a confederation (group of states) in 1781. He thought that if the states argued with each other, it could weaken the country, especially when other countries wanted America's land and resources. So, Hamilton helped plan the Annapolis Convention in 1786, where leaders decided to meet again in Philadelphia to write a new Constitution.



Young Alexander Hamilton



Federalist Papers



Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay

Alexander Hamilton - First Grade

Lesson

ASK Students

What were the Articles of Confederation?

TELL Students

Even though Hamilton was one of the younger members, he played a big role in writing the Federalist Papers with James Madison and John Jay. These papers explained why the new Constitution was important, and they helped convince people to support it. Hamilton's hard work and ideas helped shape the future of the United States of America.

ASK Students

What contributions did Alexander Hamilton make to our country? What contributions will you make to our country?

WATCH

Learn More With Liberty: Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson's Competing Views



Alexander Hamilton - First Grade

My Little Treasury

Objective

Teach first grade students about money, its value, and the U.S. Treasury's role in handling money through a playful and interactive "store" setup in the classroom.

Materials Needed

- Play money (coins and bills)
- Printable items for purchase (pictures of toys, books, fruits, etc.)
- Small baskets or shopping bags
- "Price tags" with simple numbers (1, 2, 5, 10)
- Posters or flashcards showing the U.S. Treasury and Alexander Hamilton
- A designated "bank" area where kids can exchange items for money
- Costumes for the banker and shoppers (optional)
- Play cash register

Introduction to Money

- Start by showing different types of play money (coins and bills) to the children. Discuss the numbers on them and what they might mean in terms of buying things like snacks or toys.
- Review Alexander Hamilton as the person who helped start the place where all this money comes from—the U.S. Treasury.

Setting Up My Little Treasury

- Transform part of the classroom into a small "store" where items (toys, books, fruit pictures) are displayed with price tags.
- Set up another area as the "bank" where a selected student or teacher acts as the banker, handling money exchanges.

Role-playing Shopping

- Give each child a small amount of play money in a basket or bag.
- Let them "shop" by choosing items and paying for them using their money at a play cash

register. Teach them to count their money and ensure they have enough to pay for the items they want.

- Encourage polite manners like saying "please" and "thank you" during transactions.

Visit the Bank

- After shopping, children can visit the bank to "deposit" any leftover money or "withdraw" more if they need it. This introduces basic concepts of banking.

- The banker can explain simple ideas, like saving money at the bank so it's safe.

Learning about the Treasury

- Using posters or flashcards, show images of the U.S. Treasury and explain in simple terms what happens there—like keeping the country's money safe and making sure there is enough for everyone.

- Relate this back to the bank in the classroom, illustrating how the bank is a mini-version of the Treasury.

Craft Time

- As a creative wrap-up, have the kids make their own paper money or coins with craft supplies. They can draw what they think \$1, \$5, or \$10 should look like, adding colors or small pictures.

Reflection and Discussion

- End the activity by gathering the children to discuss what they learned about money and the Treasury. Ask questions like, "What would you buy if you had ten dollars?" or "Why do we keep money at the bank?"

- Reinforce the idea that the Treasury helps take care of everyone's money in the country, just like the bank in our class.

This activity encourages active learning and helps first grade students grasp basic financial concepts in a fun, engaging environment, laying the groundwork for understanding more complex ideas in the future.

Alexander Hamilton - First Grade

Matching Activity

Instructions: Draw a line to match each fact to either Alexander Hamilton or the U.S. Treasury.



- Where money is managed
- Wrote the Federalist Papers
- Keeps the country's money safe
- A Founding Father
- Aide-de-camp to George Washington

Alexander Hamilton - First Grade

Resource List

<https://www.history.com/topics/american-revolution/alexander-hamilton>

<https://www.varsitytutors.com/earlyamerica/early-america-review/volume-6/alexander-hamilton-childhood>

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/alexander-hamilton>

<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Hamilton/01-01-02-0042>

<https://www.college.columbia.edu/alumni/content/alexander-hamilton-cc-1778>

<https://www.alexanderhamiltonexhibition.org/about/objects/a166.html>

<https://law.marquette.edu/facultyblog/2017/03/alexander-hamilton-as-attorney/>

<https://billofrightsinstitute.org/activities/handout-e-excerpts-from-the-annapolis-convention-report>

