

# DISCOVER AMERICA

## Course 25 - Teacher Guide



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

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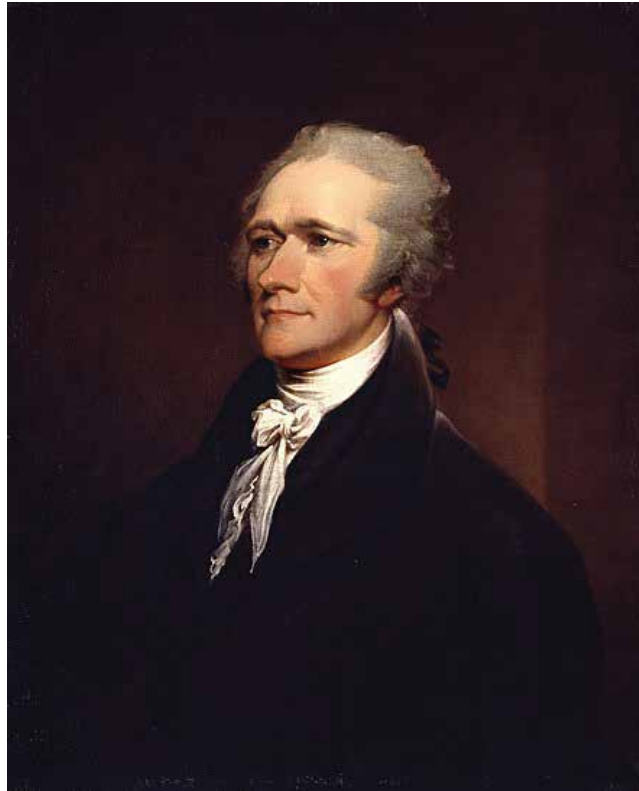
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# Third Grade Teacher Guide



## 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, which were crucial in explaining and supporting the need for a strong set of rules, or Constitution, for the nation.
- Define Alexander Hamilton's pivotal role in establishing the U.S. Treasury and recognize how it serves to manage the country's financial health.
- Examine the challenges Alexander Hamilton encountered and discuss how he successfully navigated these difficulties.
- Students will recognize the skills and values that Hamilton exhibited, such as leadership, perseverance, and strong communication skills, and discuss how these were important in his successes.



# Alexander Hamilton - Third 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 - Third 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 - Third 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 - Third 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 - Third 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. Croix. Many of his pieces were published, sparking his lifelong passion for writing. In 1772, a

# Alexander Hamilton - Third Grade

# Lesson

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 - Third 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

After bravely serving and contributing to the victory in the Revolutionary War, Hamilton continued his dedication to our country. Upon leaving the military, he resumed his education and embarked on a journey to comprehend and write laws. Alongside his fellow founding fathers, John Jay and William Paterson, who later became U.S. Supreme Court Justices, Hamilton gained valuable knowledge and insights.

## ASK Students

What do you think Hamilton decided to learn about law? Why would this be important to him?

## TELL Students

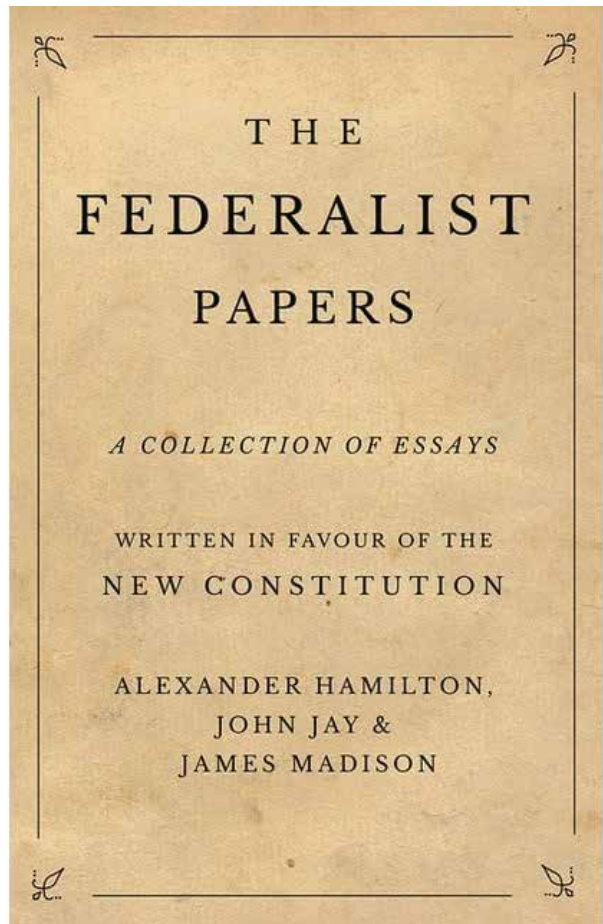
Hamilton stayed involved in politics and worked with James Madison to organize the Constitutional Convention in 1787. **Politics** is the work or study of government.

## ASK Students

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



*Young Alexander Hamilton*



*Federalist Papers*



*Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay*

# Alexander Hamilton - Third Grade

# Lesson

## 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.

## 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?

## TELL Students

Hamilton's story is truly remarkable among all the Founding Fathers. As you've discovered, he was born into challenging circumstances far from the United States of America. However, through perseverance and hard work, he became one of the most significant and influential figures in American history.

## WATCH

Learn More With Liberty: The Duel with Aaron Burr



# Alexander Hamilton - Third Grade

## Alexander Hamilton's Political Journey

### Objective

To introduce third graders to Alexander Hamilton's political career, focusing on his roles as the first Secretary of the Treasury and co-founder of the Federalist Party.

### Materials Needed

- Pictures or illustrations of Alexander Hamilton
- Poster board or large paper
- Markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- Informational resources about Alexander Hamilton's political career (books, websites, etc.)

### Introduction

- Begin by introducing the concept of politics to the students in simple terms, explaining that it involves making decisions and running the government.
- Show pictures or illustrations of Alexander Hamilton and briefly mention that he was an important figure in American politics a long time ago.

### Group Discussion

- Engage the students in a discussion about Alexander Hamilton's political career. Ask questions such as:
  - "Who can tell me what Alexander Hamilton did in the government?"
  - "Why do you think his role as the first Secretary of the Treasury was important?"
  - "What do you think a political party is? Why did Alexander Hamilton help start one?"

### Poster Creation

- Divide the students into small groups and provide each group with a piece of poster board or large paper and art supplies.
- Instruct the groups to create a poster illustrating Alexander Hamilton's political career. Encourage them to include:
  - Drawings or pictures of Alexander Hamilton in different political roles (e.g., as

Secretary of the Treasury, as a Federalist Party leader)

- Simple captions or labels explaining each role or contribution
- Any other relevant information they have learned about Hamilton's political career

### **Presentation**

- After the posters are completed, have each group present their poster to the class.
- Encourage students to explain what they have included on their poster and why it is important.
- As each group presents, facilitate a brief discussion about Alexander Hamilton's political career, highlighting key points and clarifying any misconceptions.

### **Reflection**

- Wrap up the activity by asking students to reflect on what they have learned about Alexander Hamilton's political career.
- Prompt them to share one new thing they learned or found interesting.

### **Extension**

- Encourage students to further explore Alexander Hamilton's political career through additional reading or research.
- Consider incorporating related activities, such as creating a timeline of Hamilton's life or writing a short story about one of his political achievements.

# Alexander Hamilton - Third Grade

# Multiple Choice Quiz

**Instructions:** Circle the correct answer for each question. Discuss your answers with your classmates to learn more about Alexander Hamilton and his contributions!

## 1) Who was Alexander Hamilton?

- A) A Founding Father of the United States
- B) A famous musician
- C) A British King
- D) A Roman Emperor

## 2) What job did Alexander Hamilton start at the age of 11?

- A) Teacher
- B) Clerk
- C) Farmer
- D) Sailor

## 3) Where did Alexander Hamilton grow up?

- A) Nevis in the Caribbean
- B) London, England
- C) New York, USA
- D) Paris, France

## 4) What is the U.S. Department of the Treasury responsible for?

- A) Making laws
- B) Managing the country's money
- C) Building roads
- D) Educating children

## 5) What were the Federalist Papers?

- A) A series of musical compositions
- B) Essays supporting the new U.S. Constitution
- C) A collection of poems
- D) A series of scientific articles



**6) Which one of these skills was NOT mentioned as one Hamilton used to establish the Treasury?**

- A) Cooking
- B) Organization
- C) Leadership
- D) Knowledge of economy

**7) What was Alexander Hamilton's role during the Revolutionary War?**

- A) He was a general
- B) He was a writer
- C) He was a spy
- D) He was an aide-de-camp

**8) Why is the Department of the Treasury important?**

- A) It produces movies
- B) It collects taxes and manages government finances
- C) It makes laws
- D) It trains athletes

**9) What challenges did Alexander Hamilton face in his early life?**

- A) No challenges, he was very wealthy
- B) He had no parents around and no clear path forward
- C) He had too many video games to play
- D) He was a famous child actor

**10) How did Alexander Hamilton contribute to the Revolutionary War?**

- A) By cooking for soldiers
- B) By designing flags
- C) By writing influential papers and fighting in key battles
- D) By singing patriotic songs

**11) What did Hamilton do after the war?**

- A) Became a farmer
- B) Studied and wrote about law
- C) Moved back to the Caribbean
- D) Started a dance school

**12) What was the purpose of the Annapolis Convention that Hamilton helped plan?**

- A) To celebrate the end of the war
- B) To draft a new U.S. Constitution
- C) To start a new school
- D) To plan a party

**13) How did the community of St. Croix support Alexander Hamilton?**

- A) They ignored him
- B) They gave him a boat
- C) They collected money for his education
- D) They bought him a house

**14) What did Hamilton help to start after the Revolutionary War?**

- A) An art school
- B) A new political party
- C) A music festival
- D) A chain of restaurants

**15) Why were good communication skills so important for Alexander Hamilton?**

- A) They helped him argue effectively
- B) They were not important
- C) They made him a great dancer
- D) They helped him make friends

# Alexander Hamilton - Third Grade

## Answer Key

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1. A - A Founding Father of the United States
2. B - Clerk
3. A - Nevis in the Caribbean
4. B - Managing the country's money
5. B - Essays supporting the new U.S. Constitution
6. A - Cooking
7. D - He was an aide-de-camp
8. B - It collects taxes and manages government finances
9. B - He had no parents around and no clear path forward
10. C - By writing influential papers and fighting in key battles
11. B - Studied and wrote about law
12. B - To draft a new U.S. Constitution
13. C - They collected money for his education
14. B - A new political party
15. A - They helped him argue effectively

# Alexander Hamilton - Third 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>

