

Virginia Studies VS.6

A New Nation - (new 2023 standards)

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VS.6A – FAMOUS VIRGINIANS WHO HELPED CREATE A NEW NATION

a) explain the roles of George Washington (known as the “Father of Our Country”), James Madison (known as the “Father of the Constitution”), and Patrick Henry (known for his “Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death” speech)

Many important **leaders from Virginia** helped start and shape the United States. Let’s learn about three of them:

George Washington – “Father of Our Country”

- Led the American army during the Revolutionary War
- Became the **first President** of the United States
- Known for his **honesty, leadership, and courage**

James Madison – “Father of the Constitution”

- Helped **write** the Constitution
- Took **detailed notes** at the Constitutional Convention
- Helped create the **Bill of Rights**, which protects our freedoms

Patrick Henry – “Give me liberty or give me death!”

- Gave a famous speech that **inspired people** to fight for freedom
 - Was Virginia’s first elected **governor**

These Virginians helped the **colonies break away** from British rule and **build a new country** based on freedom and self-government.

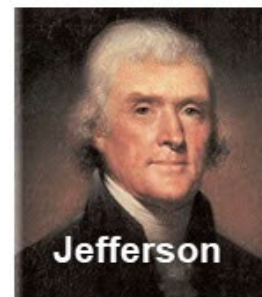
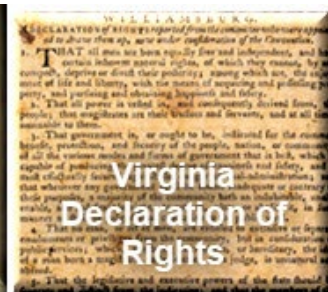
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VS.6B – FOUNDING VIRGINIA DOCUMENTS

b) explain the development of founding Virginia documents, including the Virginia Declaration of Rights (written by George Mason) and the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom (written by Thomas Jefferson)



 Two **important documents** written by Virginians helped shape American ideas about freedom and rights:

Virginia Declaration of Rights

-  Written by **George Mason** in 1776
- Said all people have **natural rights** like life and liberty
- Inspired the **Bill of Rights** in the U.S. Constitution

Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom

-  Written by **Thomas Jefferson** in 1786

- Said people can **choose their religion** freely
- Helped protect **freedom of religion** for everyone

These documents were early examples of American democracy and helped shape the country we live in today.

VS.6C – HOW THESE DOCUMENTS INSPIRED OUR NATION

c) describe how principles of these founding Virginia documents inspired the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of Virginia, the Constitution of the United States, and the Bill of Rights

The ideas in **Virginia's founding documents** helped influence:

-  The **Declaration of Independence**
-  The **Constitution of Virginia**
-  The **United States Constitution**
-  The **Bill of Rights**

For example:

- The **Virginia Declaration of Rights** → inspired the **U.S. Bill of Rights**
- The **Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom** → led to **freedom of religion** in the **Constitution**

The **Preamble** to the United States Constitution states the **reasons** for our country's plan for **government** and the **rights** of its **citizens**.



Preamble to the Constitution
"We the People of the United States of America, in order to form a more perfect union..."

- It includes the words **"We the People of the United States of America, in order to form a more perfect union..."**



Did you know?

- **Constitution Day**, also known as **Citizenship Day**, is an American **holiday** honoring the day 39 delegates to the Constitutional Convention **signed** the United States **Constitution** on **September 17, 1787**.
- The United States is a **representative democracy**, which means the people **vote for leaders** to make laws and decisions.
- Governments exist at the **local (community)**, **state (Virginia)**, and **national (United States)** levels to protect the **rights** and **property** of individuals.

VS.6D – WESTERN MOVEMENT AND GEOGRAPHY

d) explain how geographical features and technological advances impacted the western movement in the first half of the 1800s

As the United States grew, many people **moved west** in search of land, work, and new opportunities. This was called **westward expansion**.



 **Geography** and **technology** made this possible:

- **Mountains** and rivers guided travel routes
- **Canals, railroads**, and **wagons** helped people travel faster and farther

- **New tools** helped grow more crops and clear land for farming



Why did people move?

- To find **better farmland**
- For **new jobs**
- Sometimes, because they were **forced to move** (like many enslaved people)

Many enslaved **African Americans** were **sold and sent** to work in other states, which tore families apart.

VS.6E – NAT TURNER’S REBELLION

e) explain the causes and events of Nat Turner’s Rebellion and how it impacted the institution of slavery



Nat Turner was an enslaved man living in Southampton County, Virginia. Enslaved people lived in **terrible conditions**. In 1831, Turner led a **rebellion against slavery**.

What happened?

- **Nat Turner** and a group of followers **tried to fight back** against their enslavers
- Many people were killed, and the **rebellion was stopped**



After Nat Turner's rebellion, things got **even worse**.

- Virginia passed **stricter laws** controlling both enslaved and free Black people
- **Fear of rebellion** made slavery even harsher
- Nat Turner's rebellion showed how **desperate and dangerous** life was for enslaved people



Nat Turner led a rebellion against slavery



Many **enslaved people resisted** in everyday ways, like:

- Working slowly
- Breaking tools
- Pretending to be sick
- Running away for short periods

But open **rebellions were rare and risky**, because people in power had weapons and soldiers to stop them.



Summary

- **George Washington, James Madison, and Patrick Henry** helped lead the new country.
- Virginia’s **founding documents protected freedom and rights** and influenced national laws.
- **Geography and technology** helped Virginians **move west**—but not always by choice.
- **Nat Turner’s rebellion** showed the harsh reality of slavery but led to even **stricter laws**.