

Windows on America

Common Core Curriculum Standards

RH 2: Main Ideas

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

As *Windows on America* is filled with primary sources, students will have many opportunities to understand the arguments of the documents, such as Franklin Roosevelt’s views on the separation of church and state, or, of course, the reasons in the Declaration Independence for why the colonies are breaking off from Britain.

RH 3: Text Relationships

Identify key steps in a text’s description of a process related to history/social science (e.g. how a bill becomes a law, how interest rates are raised or lowered)

Students will find that many of the historic documents in *Windows on America* relate to such processes. For example, students can explore how laws are written and how constitutional amendments are passed when studying the Thirteenth Amendment.

RH 4: Vocabulary

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

The documents in *Windows on America* from the colonial era present a delightful challenge with deciphering the meaning of phrases that are pertinent to history and social studies. Other documents like the Atlantic Charter and the Potsdam resolutions give insights into modern diplomacy.

RH 5: Text Structure

Describe how a text presents information (e.g. sequentially, comparatively, casually)—analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.

The use of a syllogism in the Declaration of Independence is a key example of how the order of information contributes to the document’s meaning. The order of the articles in the Atlantic Charter offers an opportunity for analysis as well.



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RH 6: Author Perspective

Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g. loaded language, inclusion, or avoidance or particular facts)

Certainly documents like South Carolina's Scroll of Treason and Harry Truman's letter about dropping the atomic bomb artfully reveal the author's point of view, with information being omitted for the good of the argument.

RH 8: Argument and Support

Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

Documents like the Declaration of Independence, Teddy Roosevelt's letter about the sinking of the Lusitania, and the Amendment to the Treasury Act all wonderfully show the interplay between straight facts and impassioned arguments.

RH 9: Multiple Texts

Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

Students can discuss secondary sources in class and then come compare those to the primary sources in *Windows on America*. For example, secondary sources can present arguments and interpretations about Thomas Jefferson's political philosophy, and students can compare those to the Jefferson letter featured in the exhibit that discusses the structure of the republic.

