

Example CMD Activity Plan:

HS US History: Presidential Elections

See the lesson: [1800 "The Providential Detection" Cartoon](#)
Watch a 4 min. [demonstration video](#) of this activity

1) Teaching Context

- **Grade level:** 11
- **Subject area:** US History and Government
- **Unit:** 18th century US politics
- **What might come before or after this activity:** post Rev. War Unit, this will connect to the decoding we have been doing with Trump and Biden ads.
- **Other relevant contextual information:** This decoding will come early in the year when I will still be familiarizing them with evidence-based responses, particularly for historic documents. I will need to be prepared to do in person or online given the pandemic.

2) Content Objectives:

- Students will apply their knowledge about 19th century US politics to document-based analysis including identifying symbolism.
- Students will understand and identify historical context.

Literacy/Critical Thinking Objectives:

- Students will cite specific textual evidence to support analysis.

3) Document(s) description and link:

"The Providential Detection" cartoon – anti-Jefferson from PLS Elections kit: [1800 Doc #5](#).

4) Key Questions:

- *What are the messages about Jefferson in this cartoon? What is your evidence?*
- *What symbols do you recognize and what might they have meant in the election of 1800?*

5) Decoding Plan:

My main focus will be to reinforce evidence-based decoding from the document. Be prepared to ask "What makes you say that?" or "Where do you see that?" This should be short (e.g. 5 minutes) but get at some of the key symbols and their historical context.

Don't let Shahid or Lilly take us off track on a non-document based response.

Start by briefly reviewing some background info: why this election was so important, Adams vs Jefferson, and perhaps the French Revolution.

Start the questioning with the basics: Who is shown? Which campaign put this out (Adams or Jefferson)? Probe on that if necessary.

Begin deeper probing on the symbols: The Eye, Eagle, snake, skulls, alter, etc.

Try to engage David and Gabe who have been very quiet.

Where/if there are symbols they do not understand ask about why they don't understand the meaning or talk about historical context. Consider tying to contemporary cartoons (or other pop culture imagery such as memes) and the complexities of their contemporary contexts. Will future generations understand our context?

6) Post Decoding:

When we decode Trump and Biden election propaganda return to the concept of historical context (can reference this activity) and perhaps the media literacy concept: *different people may see/understand the same symbols and messages very differently.*