



## Learning Project 4 Reading a Long Passage: Social Studies

### Inquiry Activity 4-2: Bringing Knowledge From Outside the Passage

The question in this Inquiry Activity refers to the reading passage presented at the beginning of this Learning Project.

*(Note: Italicized portions should be directed to the students.)*

#### 1. Identifying the Problem (Item 11 Social Studies PA)

*Scan the passage and the question.*

Question 11 refers to the passage introduced in Inquiry Activity 4-1.

11. Which best describes the way President Jackson responded to the 1831 Supreme Court decision about Cherokee territory?

President Jackson

- (1) disregarded constitutional law
- (2) enforced separation of powers
- (3) played party politics
- (4) enforced judicial review
- (5) supported democracy for all

#### 2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

*Scan the passage and ask yourself questions like the following as your first step to understanding the passage.*

*Is there anything about the question you do not understand?*

The passage states that Jackson rejected the decision of the Supreme Court and defied Congress. You may need to discuss with the class the idea of the three branches of government and the roles that each plays. This is an excellent place for the concept map.

*What do you know about the topic of this passage from your own experience or reading?*

This is a question where prior knowledge will be necessary to answering the question, as well as understanding the extent of the wrongdoing by President Jackson. Learners will need to know about separation of powers.

*Are you interested in knowing about the ways the various Native American tribes were treated by the government?*

*Now, read the question. What are you being asked to find out?*

#### 3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

*Planning:* You may decide to work by yourself, in a pair, or a small group to do this Activity.

*Assigning:* Decide who will review the passage and who will lead the discussion.



**Doing the Work:** As you read the passage, do the following:

**Clarify:** Find and mark any words you might not know. Does the passage give enough information to clarify the words you do not know? If not, find the meaning by asking someone or looking it up.

**Analyze:** Remind yourself what the question is asking you to do.

Read each answer choice, and decide if the information in the answer is:

- Not in the passage
- The opposite of what is in the passage
- Not accurate

You may prefer to use a graphic organizer for this step.

What parts of the passage support your answer?

Find your answer to the question.

The correct answer to question 11 is (1) disregarded constitutional law. By defying the Supreme Court decision and the protests of Congress, his actions were unconstitutional. The President cannot overturn the Court or the Congress. In fact, he was also probably playing some party (or at least popular) politics, although this is not in the passage. The other three choices: separation of powers, judicial review, and supporting political democracy are the opposite of the statements of his actions in the passage.

Be able to defend your answers and the ways you found them.

#### 4. Sharing with Others

**Telling people what you know helps you understand the material better. Take this opportunity not only to share the knowledge, but also to learn it more completely.**

**Small groups:** Compare the answer you found with others in the group. Discuss the methods you used to find the answer, the support for your answer in the passage, and the reasons each learner thinks his/her answer and support are correct.

Agree on the correct answer and the strategy you would use for answering questions that ask you to draw conclusions from what you have read.

**Whole class:** Share with the whole class the steps you used to answer the question. Take notes on any different ways of answering the question other groups gave.

#### 5. Reflecting, Extending, Evaluating

**Reflecting:** Think about what you have learned.

**Here are some questions to start your thinking about the experiences you just had. Thinking about what you have learned and experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what was learned.**

1. What knowledge did you have that helped you to answer the question?
2. Earlier, you indicated whether or not you were interested in the topic. How did your interest affect your reading and answering the question?
3. Was this an easy or difficult passage for you to read and understand? Explain.



### **Extending: Extend what you learned to new situations.**

*In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information presented in this Inquiry Activity to other information or situations.*

If your assessment of your class is that they do not know about the three branches of government, with its built-in checks and balances, this would be an excellent opportunity to present this basic fact of U. S. government, focusing on the specific functions of each branch: the legislative branch makes laws, the executive branch enforces the laws, and the judicial branch interprets the laws. A copy of the Bill of Rights is included in Appendix D. Then, have the class discuss Jackson's actions in light of the role of the three branches. Did Jackson overstep the role of his branch of government?

1. *What issues of constitutional law have you heard of?*

Every administration has had issues with constitutionality. Watergate was about the Nixon administration subverting the Constitution. During the Reagan administration, some members of the Defense Department undertook unconstitutional activities in the Iran-Contra scandal. Current concerns about national security have led to attempts by the Justice Department to establish oversight of individual freedoms. These attempts have caused some constitutional authorities and members of Congress to raise serious concerns.

2. *What are some of the freedoms and responsibilities that the U. S. Constitution guarantees all citizens?*
3. *What are some rulings of the Supreme Court that you know of?*

Two decisions that are often prominent in the news are Brown vs. Board of Education, and Roe vs. Wade.

4. *Write an essay explaining about the rights guaranteed to all citizens by the Constitution.*
5. *Use a graphic organizer or make a chart to show the checks each branch of government has upon the other two.*

### **Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.**

*In this last step, you get a chance to review the content of what you learned and the methods used to learn. These questions have no right or wrong answers. This is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or did not benefit from the content and/or the methods presented in this IA.*

1. *What parts of the activity worked best for you? Explain.*
2. *What parts did not work well for you? Explain.*
3. *What ideas in this Inquiry Activity will you use when taking the GED test? Why?*
4. *How does following this 5-step format make you feel?*