

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Period: \_\_\_\_\_

## Hamilton's "Cabinet Battle #1": Close Reading Activity

PREVIEW: Prior to reading/listening to the song, review Hamilton's financial plan.

**Summarize Hamilton's financial plan. How does he support this plan?**

**What do you think Jefferson might say against Hamilton's plan?**



DIRECTIONS: After listening to the Cabinet Battle #1, answer the questions in the right column and denote the historical context in the left column.

<p><b>WASHINGTON:</b> Ladies and gentlemen, you coulda been anywhere in the world tonight, but you're here with us in New York City. Are you ready for a cabinet meeting?</p> <p>The issue on the table: Secretary Hamilton's plan to assume state debt and establish a national bank.</p> <p>Secretary Jefferson, you have the floor, sir.</p> <p><b>JEFFERSON:</b> "Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." We fought for these ideals; we shouldn't settle for less. These are wise words, enterprising men quote 'em. Don't act surprised, you guys, cause I wrote 'em!</p>	<p>Mark up the lyrics providing brief historical context. [Use the few examples I have provided as a guide.]</p> <p><i>Jefferson is quoting the Declaration of Independence</i></p> <p><i>Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence</i></p>
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**JEFFERSON & MADISON:**

Oww!

**JEFFERSON:**

But Hamilton forgets

His plan would have the government assume states' debts.

Now, place your bets as to who that benefits - the very seat of government where Hamilton sits.

**HAMILTON:**

Not true!

**JEFFERSON:**

Ohh, if the shoe fits, wear it!

If New York's in debt, why should Virginia bear it?

Uh, our debts are paid, I'm afraid.

Don't tax the South cause we've got it made in the shade.

In Virginia, we plant seeds in the ground. We create.

You just wanna move our money around.

This financial plan is an outrageous demand

And it's too many pages for any man to understand.

Stand with me in the land of the free

And pray to God we never see Hamilton's candidacy.

Look, when Britain taxed our tea, we got frisky.

Imagine what's gon' happen when you try to tax our whiskey.

According to Jefferson, who does not benefit from Hamilton's plan to assume state debts?

How do Jefferson's lines here highlight the difference between Hamilton's and Jefferson's views of America?

**Summarize the main points of Jefferson's argument as described in the song.**

**WASHINGTON:**

Thank you, Secretary Jefferson.  
Secretary Hamilton, your response?

**HAMILTON:**

Thomas, that was a real nice declaration.  
Welcome to the present, we're running a real nation.  
Would you like to join us, or stay mellow doing whatever it is you do in Monticello?  
If we assume the debts, the union gets a new line of credit, a financial diuretic [allows for more flow]  
How do you not get it? If we're aggressive and competitive, the union gets a boost. You'd rather give it a sedative?

A civics lesson from a slaver. Hey neighbor, your debts are paid cause you don't pay for labor.  
"We plant seeds in the South. We create."  
Yeah, keep ranting  
We know who's really doing the planting.

And another thing, Mr. Age of Enlightenment - Don't lecture me about the war, you didn't fight in it.  
You think I'm frightened of you, man?  
We almost died in a trench while you were off getting high with the French.  
Thomas Jefferson, always hesitant with the President  
Reticent [tight-lipped] - there isn't a plan he doesn't jettison [throw out]  
Madison, you're mad as a hatter, son, take your medicine.  
You're in worse shape than the national debt is in.  
Sittin' there useless  
Hey, turn around, bend over, I'll show you where my shoe fits.

In addition to marking up the document for historical purposes, make connections between Hamilton's responses to Jefferson's points.

How does Hamilton support his financial plan?

What is Hamilton's view of slavery, according to the lines in this section? What makes you think that?

Summarize the main points of Hamilton's argument as described in the song.

**WASHINGTON:**

Excuse me? Jefferson, Madison, take a walk!  
Hamilton, take a walk! We'll reconvene after a  
brief recess.  
Hamilton!

**HAMILTON:**

Sir!

**WASHINGTON:**

A word...

**MADISON:**

You don't have the votes.

**JEFFERSON:**

Aha-ha-ha-ha!

**JEFFERSON & MADISON:**

You're gonna need Congressional approval and  
you don't have the votes.

**JEFFERSON:**

Such a blunder sometimes it makes me wonder  
why I even bring the thunder

**MADISON:**

Why he even brings the thunder...

**WASHINGTON:**

You wanna pull yourself together?

**HAMILTON:**

I'm sorry, these Virginians are birds of a feather

What do Jefferson and Madison mean when they  
say, "you don't have the votes...you're gonna  
need Congressional approval and you don't have  
the votes?"

Quick Research: What is Madison's role in  
government at this time?

**WASHINGTON:**

Young man, I'm from Virginia, so watch your mouth

**HAMILTON:**

So we let Congress get hold hostage by the South?

**WASHINGTON:**

You need the votes

**HAMILTON:**

No, we need bold strokes. We need this plan

**WASHINGTON:**

No, you need to convince more folks.

**HAMILTON:**

James Madison won't talk to me, that's a non-starter

**WASHINGTON:**

Winning was easy, young man. Governing's harder.

**HAMILTON:**

They're being intransigent [uncompromising]

**WASHINGTON:**

You have to find a compromise

**HAMILTON:**

But they don't have a plan, they just hate mine!

**WASHINGTON:**

Convince them otherwise...

**HAMILTON:**

What happens if I don't get Congressional approval?

**WASHINGTON:**

I imagine they'll call for your removal

**HAMILTON:**

Sir-

**WASHINGTON:**

Figure it out, Alexander. That's an order from your commander.

Why would Madison's support be needed to pass the financial plan?

Quick Research: What is the compromise that Hamilton eventually works out with Jefferson and Madison?

What parts of his financial plan does Hamilton get?