**Cultural & Theatrical Lesson Plan**

**Subject:** **United States History 1754-1877**

**Standard:** **C.S.4.2.A** Summarize the significance and impact of the Jacksonian Era in regards to the victory of the Common Man.

**Objective:** Students will gain a better understanding of how for the first time in the history of the United States that the right to vote was finally given to the average American citizen. No matter whether they owned property or not. Unlike in the previous election of 1824 when only three percent of the population passed the qualifications to vote. Furthermore, the previous 6 presidents were all born into wealthy Virginian and Boston families. Andrew Jackson was the first president to intentionally boast about how poor he had been. As a military hero, a frontiersman, and a POPULIST, Jackson enchanted the common people and alarmed the political, social and economic elite. Ultimately, the students will understand the political significance of the Jacksonian era as the era of the common man. Furthermore, this lesson plan will specifically target African American Males because they happen to learn kinesthetically. I believe that a reenactment of this particular event will help target that learning style.

**Materials:**

Smart Board & Video link

Copies of the Election of 1824 Script:

-Poster Board with the main voting requirements written on it (no women, African Americans, Native Americans, and meet property requirements)

Student Handout:

 -<http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/biographies/andrew-jackson/the-1828-presidential-election.php>

-<http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/biographies/andrew-jackson/the-peoples-inaugural-january---march-1829.php>

**Lesson Procedure:**

 **Engage (Before)**

1. The Students will first watch a short video on the smart board concerning the significance and importance of voting:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ucTLKmvCyUI>

1. The Students will then perform a brief journaling exercise to the following prompt:
	1. *“America prides itself for giving all of it’s citizens the right to vote. Why would it be more or less beneficial to the overall well-being of our country if only a small number of people had the ability to vote in the various government elections?”*

**Explore (During):**

The class will recreate a group of Americans from different backgrounds who are trying to vote for either John Quincy Adams or Andrew Jackson in the Election of 1824.

The students will not read a script word for word. However, the students (who have roles as citizens attempting to vote) are given a general description of their characters background and must defend their right to vote. These students are making their case to the character working at the voter registration booth. The reason for this type of format is to encourage each student to think critically and gain a perspective of different genders, ethnicities, and cultures. Furthermore, it caters to students with various exceptionalities who might struggle with reading. However, the student who is playing the role of the voting booth registration worker is given a simple and short answer that explains why that particular person cannot vote (Ex. because they are a woman, non-property owners, African Americans ect). The instructor will intervene once they realize that the argument between the two characters is not beneficial to the overall intellectual growth of the class or if they made the point that the teacher is trying to get across.

This type of dramatic lesson format not only educates the student in matters of history but also introduces them to the finer arts

 **Explain (During)**

At the end of the script. The instructor will explain how these various restrictions prevented the majority of the nation’s population from participating in the country’s electoral process. This would sow the seeds of resentment between the overall majority of the American population and the minority population in the upper class. These voting restrictions are removed prior to the election of 1828 and for the first time the average American plays a deciding factor. Simultaneously, there is a candidate in Andrew Jackson who came from a very humble background and sympathized with their struggle over the interests of the wealthy upper class.

**Extend (After)**

 Divide the students into pairs and give each pair a copy of the Student Handouts,

Have the students read and analyze *The 1828 Presidential Election* and *The People's Inaugural: January - March 1829*.As they read, students should identify and highlight various challenges that Andrew Jackson had to overcome in the election of 1828 and evidence of admiration by the American public.

If there are ELL learners (specifically Spanish speaking) then they can have the opportunity to receive a copy translated in Spanish.

 **Evaluate (After)**

After students have completed the reading and highlighting, discuss their observations of challenges that Andrew Jackson had to overcome in the election of 1828 and admiration by the average American. The teacher will record the student observations on the smartboard.

**Closure: (Student led – have the students tell you what they learned.)**

The teacher will ask the class the following concerning today’s lesson and how might it impact the future:

1. Why would it be more or less beneficial to the overall well-being of our country if only a small number of people had the ability to vote in the various government elections?
2. How did Andrew Jackson become this symbol of the common man?
3. How could these political development lead to problems for the nation in the future.

**Andrew Jackson 1767-1845 A brief biography**

**The 1828 Presidential Election**

The 1828 presidential election was one of the dirtiest ever, and Jackson believed, with some reason, that his wife Rachel was driven to an early grave by charges of immorality.

All of Jackson's high-handed actions as General were brought up. One notable example was the "Coffin Handbill" featuring pictures of 6 coffins, and describing one-sidedly the story of some soldiers that Jackson had court-martialed and executed. Naturally, Jackson's record of dueling made good print for the opposition.

The most remarkable thing about the Jackson's side though was an unprecedented level of political organization. The new democratic organization kept in close correspondence, built a network of party newspapers, and created all sorts of spectacles, parades and identifying devices.

Symbols of "Old Hickory" were everywhere. Large hickory poles erected in town squares or smaller ones attached to signs, steeples, and fore and aft on steam boats. In New York there was a parade a mile long. Hickory brooms also stood for 'Hickory' sweeping out the filth of corruption.

A different sort of campaigning went on in congress, where Jackson supporters played to the Northeastern manufacturing interests by passing high protective tariffs. Jackson favored tariffs for raising revenue, if kept within fairly modest bounds, as well as to protect industries vital to the country's defense. Jackson walked a thin line on this matter, saying he was for a "judicious tariff" and getting some ridicule for this.

The South was adamantly anti-tariff, and prominent South Carolinians were on the verge of proclaiming a right to "Nullify" offensive national laws, with a threat of succession if Washington intervened by force.

Yet they supported Jackson. Why? Southerners must have seen Jackson as the least of two evils against the Adams-Clay alliance. And Adams was the very stereotype of New England with its disdain for the slave states and the poorly educated South and West. The Democrats also expected Vice President Calhoun from South Carolina to wield great influence. Calhoun was secretly very deeply involved with the most extreme anti-tariff men, the "Nullifiers".

During the campaign, Jackson was mostly out of sight, as was thought proper for a presidential candidate. He was very much involved in the running of the campaign, corresponding with hundreds of local Jackson committees. He did appear at a New Orleans celebration of his victory over the British - the largest public demonstration ever in the US, and unsurpassed for many years.

On election day, in some places, Jackson men marched en masse to the polls, in a celebratory parade. An astonishing fact is that the number of voters counted nearly quadrupled over 1824. Four of the 24 states, including New York, took away property requirements for voting, so that basically all white males could vote. In addition, Jackson was saying "Vote for us if you believe the people should govern". In other words, Democrat meant just what the word implied. Adams' words about not being "palsied by our constituents" certainly reinforced this message.

In December, it had become obvious that Jackson won the election in a landslide. The count was 178 to 83 electoral votes, or 647,276 to 508,064 electoral votes.

Then tragedy struck. Rachel Jackson had heart pains all through 1828. She seemed to lose much of her will to live from what she knew of the vicious press attacks. One exceptionally bad attack, lead to a sharp decline, and death in a matter of days. Supposedly the attack was brought on by shock over a certain political pamphlet, causing her to collapse in hysterics. She died on December 23.

 **Andrew Jackson 1767-1845 A brief biography**

 **The People's Inaugural: January - March 1829**

After a month of seclusion, on January 18, Jackson began a three week trip to Washington. He was dressed in mourning, a 'weeper' of black crepe around his tall hat and hanging down his back. He was greeted by huge throngs of cheering people the whole way, and he slipped by the crowd near Washington to avoid the crush.

Washington's rooming houses were filled well beyond their normal capacity. Daniel Webster said people came from 500 miles away and seemed to think that the country had been "rescued from some dreadful danger".

The inaugural address was one of the shortest in history. An eminent South Carolinian called it "chaste patriotic ... and dignified", while the Democratic press said it "breathes throughout the pure spirit of republicanism of the Jefferson school". Jackson was praised for his stately composed dignity and elegant bearing. Even Daniel Webster had earlier called Jackson the most "presidential" looking of the presidential aspirants.

The inaugural reception was a riotous affair with thousands attending, and Jackson in need of protection against being crushed to death. Several thousand dollars worth of china and glassware were smashed and finally, to draw the crowd outside, it was necessary to bring the tubs of punch and other refreshments outside. The Argus of Western America said "It was a proud day for the people, General Jackson is their own president", and the Argus called him "plain in his dress, ... unaffected and familiar in his manners...".

It takes a rare man to be seen as "stately and elegant", and at the same time be seen by poor frontier farmers as "one of the people". That was much of the attraction of Andrew Jackson.

The personal make up of Jackson's cabinet was a problem from the start. Vice President John C. Calhoun was intensely ambitious at this stage of his career. He had done much to overthrow Adams, such as setting up Duff Green's Telegraph, the strongest national party organ seen up to the time. It is thought that there was some sort of agreement for Jackson to serve one term, and then support Calhoun for 1832.

He had feeling his influence wane, and his future threatened. The Secretary of State, that stepping-stone to the presidency did not go to Calhoun's ally Virginian Littleton W. Tazewell, as Calhoun wished. Instead it went to Martin Van Buren - as much a Northerner as Adams, also ambitious, and with a reputation for being a political "Magician", or the "Red Fox of Kinderhook".

Meanwhile, Calhoun's political orientation was changing. Before he had been a strong nationalist, but now he was leaning towards the most extreme states rights partisans - the Nullifiers.

He was the anonymous author of South Carolina Exposition and Protest, a lawyerly argument claiming the state had a right, under some circumstances, to declare a federal law null and to disregard it. This proclamation, aimed at the recent tariff bill, was the opening act of the Nullification Crisis. While Calhoun's partisanship was hidden, Jackson's total opposition to such measures was as yet unknown, and he too was seen as a states righter.

Then there was the old business of Calhoun, in 1818, being among those calling for Major General Jackson's disciplining for seizing the Spanish territory of Florida. Robert V. Remini argues persuasively that Jackson was encouraged in this by President Monroe, through broad but indirect hints. Thus Monroe got a fait accompli that lead to Florida's incorporation as a U.S. territory. Jackson, meanwhile "took the heat" when Henry Clay and others had Jackson called before Congress, and Monroe remained silen.

 **Before the Jacksonian Era Script**

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**Play Script**

**Physical Setting:** The year is 1824 and the citizens of Chesterfield Virginia line up outside of the the town's voting location.

**Narrator:** *Citizen (#1)* a 32 year old female enters the building and approaches the registration desk.

**Citizen (#1):** Hello, I would like to be able to cast my vote.

**Registration Worker**: I am sorry but Women are not allowed to vote.

**Citizen (#1) and Registration Worker:** Both debate their reason for why they can or cannot vote.

**Teacher:** Explains why women do not have the right to vote yet and tells the class when they actually do gain the right to vote.

* When a man cast a vote in any sort of election, the vote was cast on behalf of his family. Under the English common law doctrine of coverture, the husband covered his wife’s legal identity under the authority of their marriage.

***Citizen (#1) walks off the stage to the left***

**Narrator:** *Citizen (#3)* a 20 year African American male enters the building and approaches the registration desk.

**Citizen (#3):** Hello, I would like to be able to cast my vote.

**Registration Worker**: I am sorry but African Americans are not allowed to vote.

**Citizen (#3) and Registration Worker:** Both debate their reason for why they can or cannot vote.

**Teacher:** Explains why African Americans do not have the right to vote yet and tells the class when they actually do gain the right to vote.

* African Americans and Native Americans were excluded, and, at different times and places, the Protestant majority denied the vote to Catholics and Jews. In some places, propertied women, free blacks, and Native Americans could vote, but those exceptions were just that. They were not signs of a popular belief in universal suffrage.

***Citizen (#3) walks off the stage to the left***

**Narrator:** *Citizen (#4)* a 22 year old white male factory worker enters the building and approaches the registration desk.

**Citizen (#4):** Hello, I would like to be able to cast my vote.

**Registration Worker**: I am sorry but only white men who are property owners are not allowed to vote.

**Citizen (#4) and Registration Worker:** Both debate their reason for why they can or cannot vote.

**Teacher:** Explains that non property owning white males do not have the right to vote yet and tells the class when they actually do gain the right to vote.

* Property requirements were widespread. Some colonies required a voter to own a certain amount of land or land of a specified value. Others required personal property of a certain value, or payment of a certain amount of taxes. Examples from 1763 show the variety of these requirements. Delaware expected voters to own fifty acres of land or property worth £40. Rhode Island set the limit at land valued at £40 or worth an annual rent of £2. Connecticut required land worth an annual rent of £2 or livestock worth £40.
* Such requirements tended to delay a male colonist's entry into the voter ranks until he was settled down and established. They reflected the belief that freeholders, as property owners were called, had a legitimate interest in a community's success and well-being, paid taxes and deserved a voice in public affairs, had demonstrated they were energetic and intelligent enough to be trusted with a role in governance, and had enough resources to be independent thinkers not beholden to the wealthiest class. English jurist William Blackstone wrote in the 1700s:
* The true reason of requiring any qualification, with regard to property, in voters, is to exclude such persons as are in so mean a situation that they are esteemed to have no will of their own. If these persons had votes, they would be tempted to dispose of them under some undue influence or other. This would give a great, an artful, or a wealthy man, a larger share in elections than is consistent with general liberty.

***Citizen (#4) walks off the stage to the left***

**Narrator:** *Citizen (#5)* A 40 year old white male small farm owner walks into the building and approaches the registration desk.

**Citizen (#5):** Hello, I would like to be able to cast my vote.

**Registration Worker**:Can I see your proof of property please?

***Citizen #5 hands him a sheet of paper***

**Registration Worker:** I am sorry sir but you cannot vote because you do not own enough property to have the privilege to vote.

**Citizen (#4) and Registration Worker:** Both debate their reason for why they can or cannot vote.

**Teacher:** Explains that non property owning white males do not have the right to vote yet and tells the class when they actually do gain the right to vote.

* The same reason as stated above.

**THE TEACHER CONCLUDES THE LESSON WITH AN EXPLANATION OF HOW PRIOR TO THE ELECTION OF 1828. THE MAJORITY OF THE U.S. POPULATION DID NOT HAVE THE RIGHT TO VOTE. HOWEVER, THIS CHANGES JUST BEFORE THE ELECTION OF 1828 BETWEEN ANDREW JACKSON AND JOHN QUINCY ADAMS AND ULTIMATELY THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM AS A WHOLE.**