

## **The Genesis of Oregon and our Constitution**

### **By Portia Hall**

**Teaching Objective:** This lesson is designed to bring early Oregon history and the creation of the Oregon constitution to Oregon classrooms. The construction of the United States and the U.S. Constitution are regularly examined in our schools, but the creation of Oregon as a state and the Oregon system of government is underrepresented. This unit is designed for students to explore the myths and truths about the founders of the State of Oregon. This group of lessons is designed to help students learn about Oregonians in 1857, the process of writing the Oregon Constitution, and how both helped shape Oregon into the unique place it has become.

**Subject and Grade Level:** This is recommended for 9<sup>th</sup> –11<sup>th</sup> grade in a law or U.S. History class.

#### **Student Outcome Objectives:**

1. Students will understand historical documents and historical analysis on early Oregon.
2. Students will analyze different perspectives on the same historical period.
3. Students will understand the various perspectives of those who lived in Oregon at the writing of the Oregon Constitution.
4. Students will analyze the original Oregon Constitution and understand what kinds of decisions were made.
5. Students will understand the impact of the decisions of the Oregon Constitution on Oregon history.

#### **Student Assignments, Activities and Creations:**

1. Students will work in a group.
2. Students will give an oral presentation.
3. Students will use Parliamentary Procedure.
4. Students will demonstrate their understanding of early Oregonians by representing them in a role-play.
5. Students will write an essay about the impact of the original Oregon Constitution.
6. Students will work in groups in order to create a historical newspaper reflecting the important decision of the Oregon Constitution and the political view of the editorial staff
7. Students will write articles, editorials and cartoons to reflect the impact of the Oregon Constitutional Convention

#### **Materials Included:**

- Student Handout – “Who was Oregon?” (Page 4)
- Student Handouts - “Oregon Constitution Roles” (Page 9-15)
  - Abigail Scott Duniway
  - Old Joseph and Joseph
  - Thomas Jefferson Dryer
  - Asahel Bush

- Mathew Deady
- Gin Lin
- George Washington
- Student Handout - “Burning Issues of the Day” (Page 16)
- Student Handout - “Parliamentary Procedure” (Page 17)
- Student Handout – “How to Write a Formal Position Essay” (Page 20)
- Student Handout – “Essay Outline Form” (Page 21)
- Student Handout – “CIM Persuasive Essay Scoring Guide” (Page 22)
- Student Handout - “Writing a Newspaper” (Page 24)
- Student Handout - “Analyze the Oregon Constitution” (Appendix A)
- Excerpt from *Northwest Black Pioneers* (Appendix B)
- Excerpt from *History of Oregon* by Terrence O’Donnell (Appendix C)
- Excerpt from *A Short History of Portland* by Gordon DeMarco (Appendix D)
- Copy of original Constitution and vote from the Journal of the Constitutional Convention (Appendix E)
- “The Politics of Statehood” from *Sense, Sentiment and the Oregon Constitution* by The League of Women Voters (Appendix F)
- Excerpt from *A Peculiar Paradise: A History of Black in Oregon, 1788-1940* by Elizabeth McLagan (Appendix G)

**Materials Needed:**

- ❖ Materials for a Poster (Construction paper, Pens)
- ❖ Newspaper publishing supplies: computers OR paper and pens

**Time:** About 10 -15 school days.

**Activities:**

- Activity #1 – Who was Oregon? (Page 3-6, Appendix B, C, D, G)
- Activity #2 – Oregon Constitution Role Play (Page 7- 17)
- Activity #3 – Analyze the Constitution (Page 18, Appendix A, E, F, G)
- Activity #4 – Essay Assignment (Page 19 – 22)
- Activity #5 – Writing a Newspaper (Page 23-24)

**Assessment:** Students will be graded on their participation in a group poster project, and in a role-play. They will also be assessed on their understanding of the Constitution and the CIM Writing Standard can be used to grade their writing.

**Further Resources:** The inspiration for the Oregon Constitutional Role Play was taken from the "Constitutional Role Play" by Bill Bigelow on the writing of the Federal Constitution. The format is very similar and could be used in conjunction with this assignment.

## Activity #1 – Who was Oregon?

**Teaching Objective:** To have students examine the diverse groups of people residing in Oregon in 1857 when the Oregon Constitution was written. Students will understand three prevalent attitudes from early Oregon history, a time in which many white Americans came to Oregon on the Oregon Trail. Students will examine the perspectives of the God-fearing pioneer spirit, the character of the wild west and inherent and rampant racism.

**Timeline Estimate:** 2 class periods.

### Materials:

- Excerpt from *Northwest Black Pioneers*
- Excerpt from *History of Oregon* by Terrence O'Donnell
- Excerpt from *A Short History of Portland* by Gordon DeMarco
- Student Handout – “Who was Oregon?”
- Materials for a Poster (Construction paper, Pens)

### Procedures:

1. Anticipatory Set: Have students brainstorm in groups on what they learned about early Oregon history in grade school. They can include important people, events and an overall sense of early Oregon History. Have the groups share what they came up with to the class. (This activity can also be done individually)
  
2. Have the students divide into 6 groups. Each group needs to work independently because they will be reading different and possibly conflicting materials. Each group will get the Handout “Who was Oregon?” and follow the instructions. They will read their particular excerpt, answer the questions, and then prepare a poster to present to the class. On the second page of the worksheet is a way to divide up roles within the groups if that is needed.
  - Groups #1 and 2 will be reading the most well known history of Oregon as a group of pious pioneers. This excerpt is taken from *A History of Oregon* by Terrence O'Donnell.
  - Groups #3 and 4 will be reading about the strong sense of racism that affected the early Oregonians and what they did. This excerpt is taken from *Northwest Black Pioneers*. (An option to this reading is Chapter 3 from *A Peculiar Paradise*, however, this is very high level and might be hard for students to understand)
  - Groups #5 and 6 will be reading about the “wild west” sense of early Oregon, especially in the City of Portland. This excerpt is taken from *A Short History of Portland* by Gordon DeMarco.
  
3. Have each group present their poster and answers to the class.

4. During the presentations obvious questions will come up. As a follow-up, lead a discussion or have the students write about these questions and others:

- What is similar in these three stories?
- What is different?
- Why are their different histories of Oregon?
- What is Oregon?
- Who were the people here?
- How did the different people who came on the Oregon Trail interact with those who were already here?
- How important are Native Americans to early Oregon history?
- As Oregon becomes a state, how will these people affect it?

## Who was Oregon?

In a group you will be reading an excerpt about the people who were living in the Oregon Territory before it became a state. When you are done reading, your group will answer the following questions and preparing a poster to explain about the early Oregonians.

1. What kind of people moved to the Oregon Territory?
2. How did these people get along with the Native Americans that already lived in the Oregon Territory?
3. What kinds of concerns did the settlers have? What about the Native Americans?
4. What kind of society did the settlers create for themselves?
5. What important historical events happened during this time?
6. How is what you read different or the same as what you learned when you were younger?

Please assign the following roles to the people in your group.

- Timekeeper: You will have about 45 minutes to do everything. That could be 15-20 minutes to read, 10-15 minutes to answer the questions and 15-20 minutes to make the poster. Keep your group on track.
- Recorder: You will write down the answer to the questions for the group.
- Artists (2): You will be drawing on the posters to display what you read.
- Manager: You will be making sure that everyone does his or her job.

## Activity #2 Writing the Oregon Constitution

**Teaching Objective:** Students will take on the roles of Oregonians from 1857 and write parts of the Oregon Constitution. Students will gain an appreciation of the different backgrounds and political perspectives of early Oregonians and experience the complexities of finding common ground among diverse people and ideas. Students will be able to identify key concerns debated at the Oregon Constitutional Convention, utilize the parliamentary procedure effectively, and reach a collective conclusion as a class.

**Timeline estimate:** 3 – 4 class periods

### Materials:

- Student Handouts - “Oregon Constitution Roles”
  - Abigail Scott Duniway
  - Old Joseph and Joseph
  - Thomas Jefferson Dryer
  - Asahel Bush
  - Mathew Deady
  - Gin Lin
  - George Washington
- Student Handout - “Burning Issues of the Day”
- Student Handout - “Parliamentary Procedure”

### Procedures:

1. Have the students get into 7 groups that will represent the people that lived in Oregon in 1857. Each student will get a handout describing their group role, a copy of the “Burning Issues of the Day” and “Parliamentary Procedures” (Thanks to Bill Bigelow for this work) handouts.
  - a. These profiles are real people who lived in the Oregon Territory at the time of the Constitutional Convention. However, only Deady, Bush and Dryer were actually at the Convention. The other people will create some differences in what decisions are made from the real Oregon Constitution. Some license has been taken with the other profiles: Abigail Scott Duniway did not move to Portland and become a women’s activist until 1859, Gin Lin did not move to Oregon until 1860 and George Washington actually lived in what became the Washington Territory after 1853. But I wanted to include actual historical figures in the process (and those that can be further researched for what they accomplished after this time).
2. Each group will read their roles and the Burning Issues of the Day. They will then answer the following questions (individually or as a group);
  - a. What important experiences have you had in your life?
  - b. How old are you?
  - c. Where did you come from?
  - d. What issues are the most important to you?
  - e. What issues are you willing to compromise on?

3. As a class they need to go over the parliamentary procedures. This is a simplified version and is fairly easy to understand. (I have shown the movie 1776 and parliamentary procedure is used in the movie. This can help students understand how it is used.)
4. When they are ready, with the teacher acting as the president and recorder of the meeting, the Oregon Constitutional Convention can begin. Representatives ask to be recognized, offer proposals (motions) and debate can occur until the question is called and the delegates vote. The teacher calls on representatives, and writes on the board their motions. When the group passes a motion, have the students write it down – they will be comparing this with the real thing in the next activity.
5. If the students would like to confer within and among groups, a caucus can be called (they love this). Depending on the debate and whether alliances can be made, this can be a lengthy process.
6. After the Constitution has been written, the students need to make a ballot for the people of Oregon to vote on. (Burning Issue #4b) The convention can follow the same method to vote what will appear on the ballot. This will be compared with the ballot from the original convention. Originally in 1857, the constitution itself, the question of slavery, and the exclusion of Negroes from the state were all referred to the voters.
7. After the ballot has been created, the students will vote individually on their approval of the constitution and any other issues put on the ballot. The tally will be compared with the original as well.

## Oregon Constitutional Convention Role

### Abigail Scott Duniway

Abigail Jane Scott was born in Illinois in 1834. When she was seventeen years old in 1852, her life changed dramatically with the death of her mother and brother during the family's grueling trek on the Oregon Trail in an ox-drawn cart. Abigail's family settled in Lafayette, Oregon, where she began a career as a schoolteacher. Just one year later, she married Benjamin C. Duniway.

Abigail and her husband homesteaded land obtained through the Oregon Land Donation Act of 1850, and Abigail wrote her first book; *Captain Gray's Company, or Crossing the Plains and Living in Oregon* — a fictionalized account of her family's trek west. The Duniways had six children. Unfortunately Benjamin suffered a crippling accident and lost the farm. Abigail became the breadwinner of the family, writing novels, teaching, and running a hat shop in Albany.

Abigail and her family now live in Portland. The women's rights movement is small but active in Portland, and she started a women's newspaper that would offer income as well as a valuable outlet for her writing talents. She founded the *New Northwest* during her first year in Portland, after an inspiring visit from national suffrage leader Susan B. Anthony. Politics, fiction, fashion, and domestic advice fill the pages of the popular new publication. She finds time to lecture on temperance and women's rights as well, and is active in the Portland Women's Club.

## Oregon Constitutional Convention Role

Tuekakas and Heinmot Tooyalakekt  
(Old Joseph and Joseph)

Tuekakas was born about 1786 near Wawawai, Washington. In 1839, he converted to Christianity and coexisted with missionaries peacefully for a period of time before becoming dissatisfied. His son who was later called Joseph was born in 1840.

He is chief of the Wallamotkin band of the Nez Perce (The Nimi'ipuu), which inhabit seven villages in the area of Eastern Oregon known as the Wallowa Valley.

Old Joseph signed a treaty with the United States government in June of 1855 with 58 other prominent headmen from the Cayuse, Umatilla, Walla Walla, Nez Perce, and Yakama Tribes and Washington Territory Governor Isaac Stevens and Superintendent for Indian Affairs of the Oregon Territory Joel Palmer.

The 1855 Treaties resulted in the United States attaining ownership of Tribal land -- the Tribes gave up 31 million acres in what would become southeastern Washington and northeastern Oregon. The Treaties were critical in opening up land for settlement by non-Indian emigrants. Three reservations were created -- Umatilla, Nez Perce and Yakama - which serve as the permanent homeland for members of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Nez Perce Tribe and the Yakama Nation. The treaty set aside 7 million acres for the Nez Perce in their traditional homeland.

Tribal ancestors reserved rights for themselves and their future generations - rights which would help preserve some elements of their lifestyle and culture. These rights were already present for the Tribal people residing here before the Treaties; they are not rights that were *given* to the Tribal people.

The federal government has indicated that they would like to renegotiate the treaties to cede more land to the thousands of people coming along the Oregon Trail. Old Joseph and his son, who is going to become Chief Joseph the Younger are unhappy with this. The Nez Perce believe that and the United States coexist as two independent sovereign nations.

## Oregon Constitutional Convention Role

Thomas Jefferson Dryer

Dryer was born in 1808 in northern New York. He immigrated to California and became the city editor of the *San Francisco Courier*. In 1850, when Portland merchants were looking for a newspaper to promote Portland, they recruited Dryer to publish and edit the new paper. When he arrived in Portland in November 1850, the *Oregon Spectator* described him as “sharp as a steel trap.” The first issue of the *Weekly Oregonian* was published on December 4, 1850.

In 1850 the Oregon Territory was heavily Democratic and still is. This political climate is causing Dryer some difficulty. Dryer is known for his outspoken editorials and reporting. As a Whig, he is the leading public critic of the Democratic Party. (He also resents the new Republican Party, which is adopting many of the political views of the Whigs)

As one of Portland's leading citizens, he is a member of the Territorial Legislature, a member of the prestigious Trinity Episcopal Church, and a Mason. He also organized Portland's bucket brigade, which served as the city's only fire protection until 1853.

A colorful character, Dryer reportedly challenged Portland merchant Daniel Lownsdale to a duel with rifles after Lownsdale failed to pay an advertising debt. Both were heavy drinkers and probably inebriated at the time. Dryer was the first recorded person to climb Mt. St. Helens in 1853 and claimed to have climbed Mt. Hood in 1854 (since disputed).

Dryer is very skeptical of the pro-slavery advocates in Oregon. Not because of a moral or ethical opposition of slavery, but rather a strong belief in local control. He believes that the Democratic Party is trying to control Oregon from outside the territory. He regularly gets into squabbles with the leading Democrats of the state, especially his rival Asahel Bush at the other leading newspaper of the state; the *Oregon Statesman*. They both regularly insult each other's politics and characters in their respective editorial pages.

He denounced the group of Democrats known as the “Salem Clique” who he sees as puppets of the Democratic Party in an editorial in 1856.

*Let us have a state government and make the issue at once. If we are to have slavery forced upon us, let it be by the people here and not by the slavery propagandists at Washington City. If the majority of the people in Oregon, fairly expressed, desire slavery, we are too much of a democrat to further oppose introduction.*

## Oregon Constitutional Convention Role

Asahel Bush

(Anti-Slavery Democrat)

Asahel Bush II was born in Massachusetts in 1824. Bush apprenticed as a printer in Saratoga Springs, New York at age 17. From there he moved back to Massachusetts and studied law. In 1850 he was encouraged to come to Oregon to publish a Democratic paper in the new territory. Bush came to Oregon by boat after crossing the Isthmus of Panama by train and donkey.

After arriving in Portland, Bush decided to move to Oregon City, then the largest city in the territory. At Oregon City Bush established the *Oregon Statesman* in 1851, after his printing press arrived from the East. He moved the paper to Salem when it became the territorial capital in 1853.

In 1854, he married Eugenia Zieber, the daughter of one of his printers. They have four children.

The *Oregon Statesman* has been the most influential paper in the territory in the 1850's. Only Democrats have been elected to office since the paper began.

During the 1850s, as editor of Salem's the *Oregon Statesman* Bush's vitriolic editorials have earned him the derisive nickname "Bushy Bush" and the enmity of rival editor Thomas Jefferson Dryer (a Whig) of Portland's the *Weekly Oregonian*. The two toss insults back and forth in the columns of their papers during the decade. In 1854, for example, Bush wrote:

*A bar in a pulpit would not be more inappropriate than Dryer in a temperance meeting. He has been publicly and disgracefully inebriated on several occasions, and privately so times too numerous to mention.*

Despite his personal attacks, Bush is a leading Oregon journalist, politician, and banker.

As editor of the *Statesman* he gives voice to the Democratic Party. Bush is visibly racist and defends slavery in the South, but he condemns the idea of slavery coming to the territory of Oregon, for economic considerations, not moral ones. Bush was active in politics as a member of an influential group of Salem Democrats (the "Salem Clique"), which favor the location of the territorial capital in Salem and favor the prohibition of slavery in Oregon. He is the official territorial printer, a member (and one time chair) of the Democratic state central committee. Bush is also a regent of the University of Oregon and a trustee of Willamette University.

## **Oregon Constitutional Convention Role**

Mathew Deady  
(Pro-Slavery Democrat)

Matthew Deady was born in Maryland on May 12, 1824 to parents of Irish descent. He attended public schools in West Virginia; trained as a blacksmith; studied at Barnesville Academy in Ohio; and passed the bar in 1847.

Deady came to Oregon in 1849 where he taught and practiced law in Lafayette, Oregon before being elected to the legislature in 1851.

He gained an appointment as associate judge of the Territorial Supreme Court in 1853.

In the election for delegates to the Oregon Constitutional Convention, Deady ran on a pro-slavery ticket. He has strongly stated that he is anti-black and anti-Chinese as well.

He is a popular public speaker and a prolific writer on the law and other subjects. He is a gifted and dedicated jurist with a national reputation who, like many other early Oregonians, has practiced several professions during his lifetime. Among them are teacher, blacksmith, lawyer, gentleman farmer, and judge.

In part, because his income as a judge was paid in depreciated currency during much of his career, Deady has never matched his wealthy friends' monetary accomplishments. Instead, he has sometimes been forced to accept financial assistance from them in order to maintain adequate appearances.

## **Oregon Constitutional Convention Role**

### **Gin Lin**

Gin Lin is a prominent Chinese mine boss who lives and works in southern Oregon. He is one of thousands of Chinese sojourners who are coming to Oregon the nineteenth century to seek their fortunes. He was born in China in the early 1840's.

Anti-Chinese sentiment was widespread on the Pacific Coast when Gin Lin came to Oregon. Chinese workers were singled out for special taxes. These included a mining tax in Jackson and Josephine counties, first levied in the 1850s.

Despite the institutionalized discrimination against them, Chinese men came by the thousands to work in Oregon's mines, salmon canneries, and agricultural fields. Many of them plan to return home with their fortune because of the anti-Chinese sentiment here.

Gin Lin has recruited many of his fellow countrymen to work his mine. He has gradually acquired more land over the years and had his men build miles of ditches to serve the newly established mines. One of the largest is known as China Ditch. He is gaining in wealth. He has a mining operation in the Applegate Valley close to Jacksonville, Oregon.

## Oregon Constitutional Convention Role

### George Washington

Named for the first President, George was born in Virginia to a white woman and a black slave in 1817. Shortly after his birth, his father was sold to another master far away, and Mr. and Mrs. James Cochran agreed to raise George until he was 21. As a young boy growing up in Missouri, he learned to tan hides, sew, knit, and cook. When he reached school age, he was denied formal training because of his color. But Mrs. Cochran taught him to read and write. She and her husband tutored George in arithmetic.

In 1841, when he was 24, George Washington left his adoptive parents to make his own way. In St. Joseph, Mo. he rented a small sawmill and ultimately sold some lumber to one Jeremiah Coyle, a white man. Coyle refused to pay, and Washington sued. His debtor, in turn, took advantage of an old law and had George arrested on the grounds that as a "free man of color" he had no rights in the State of Missouri. When a flood destroyed the sawmill, he purchased a patent for making whiskey in Illinois, but he had to abandon the distillery because blacks were forbidden from manufacturing or selling alcohol and a new law in Illinois necessitated his posting a bond of \$6,000 to guarantee his good behavior.

Bitterly angered by this condition, George Washington returned to the Cochrans and told them that he was going to Oregon "to find a place in the world, if there was any, where a Negro would be treated like a man." The Cochrans decided to join him.

Washington and the Cochrans traveled by wagon over the Oregon Trail, eventually settling near Cowlitz Landing, where George built a cabin for the Cochrans. He then staked his own claim upriver from the mouth of the Skookumchuck River.

However, prejudice had marched westward with him! The Oregon legislature had approved a law making the settlement of Negroes and mulattoes in the territory illegal. George then got Jim Cochran to file his name on the choice land to protect it for him. Together they raised cattle, operated an inn and a river ferry.

Although it was illegal for a black man to own land, in 1852 the Oregon Territorial legislature passed a bill that read:

**"...Be it enacted. . .that George Washington, a man of color,. . .be hereby exempt from the provisions of the act. . .to prevent Negroes and mulattoes from coming into or residing in the Oregon Territory."**

This new law made an exception for only George Washington to live and make his fortune in the Oregon Territory – no other blacks are allowed.

### **Burning Issues of the Day (1850-1859)**

The following issues were in hot debate during the Oregon Constitutional Convention of 1857.

1. Slavery: The United States is in the middle of a violent debate about whether new states entering the country will be slave states (allowing slavery) or free states. In 1854, the Kansas-Nebraska Act ruled that states would be able to decide on their own the slavery question. In the territory of Kansas people on both sides of the slavery moved in to influence the slavery decision and many of these people fought (“Bloody Kansas”). In the territory of Oregon, this question needs to be decided. Slavery has never existed in the territory.
  - a. **Will slavery be allowed in the state of Oregon?**
  
2. The status of non-white people: the territory legislature passed laws not allowing “Negroes” to live in the territory. Chinese people have been immigrating to Oregon to work and mine. Native Americans were obviously the first inhabitants in the area and still live here. Other non-white people who might have been in Oregon were native Hawaiians, called “Kanakas.”
  - a. **Should non-whites be allowed in the new state? What should be their status?**
  
3. Individual liberties: the delegates will need to address questions of how much freedom citizens of Oregon receive and how similar they are to the rights given by the Federal Constitution.
  - a. Religion: the Federal Constitution has some protection of the separation of church and state. **Do Oregonians want more protection of religion?**
  - b. Rights of Women: under the Oregon Donation Land Act of 1850 women could own their own land. **Should women be allowed rights to own land in the new state?**
  - c. The Federal Constitution leaves it up to the states to decide who can vote. **How will the state of Oregon decide who can vote?**
  
4. Becoming a State/Independence:
  - a. For many years people have been voting on whether to become a state. Oregonians had voted against becoming a state several times on the fear that they would lose power over their own destiny. If Oregon is to become a state, then they need to have a Constitution that reflects what the citizens want.
    - i. **How will the new government be organized? Will it be similar the decisions of the Federal Constitution or other states?**
  - b. The delegates have to decide the ratification process. The voters will be making the final decision on the new constitution, but some issues may need to be voted on directly.
    - i. **As the citizens of Oregon vote on the new constitution, what questions should be put on the ballot?**

## **Parliamentary Procedure: Modified Meeting Guidelines**

The teacher will act as the “Chair” of the meeting and call on representatives from the various constituencies. The chair will “recognize” those who raise their hands and allow them to speak on a motion (topic) already on the floor, or say one of the following.

1. **Make a Motion:** To try and pass a motion on a particular issue, say: “Be it resolved that . . .”
2. Someone needs to **second the motion:** “I second the motion.” Now the motion is the only issue that may be discussed. For the motion to pass requires a simple majority of those voting.
3. **Amendment:** If you want to make a change in the motion: “I’d like to amend that motion to read . . .”
4. The **amendment needs a second:** “I second the amendment.” At this point, the only issue to be discussed is the amendment to the main motion. For the amendment to pass requires a simple majority of those voting. If the amendment fails, the discussion returned to the main motion on the floor.
5. **Point of information:** If at any time you have a question, are confused, or want to bring something up, raise your hand and say “point of information.” Your questions cannot interrupt anyone, but must be answered before others can speak on the motion.
6. **Point of order:** If you think that someone is speaking out of turn, or is not speaking about the motion on the floor, you may raise your hand and call “point of order.” When you raise a point of order you may interrupt another speaker.
7. **Call the question:** If you think that a discussion has gone on long enough, you may to cut off debate by raising your hand and when called on, saying, “I call the question.” This motion does not need a second and is not debatable. The group takes an immediate vote on whether to stop debating. It requires a simple majority of those voting. If it passes, the group votes on the motion on the floor.
8. **Call for a caucus:** There may come a time in the Constitutional Convention when you want to talk over an issue with members of your group or other groups. You may raise your hand and when called on say, “I call for a caucus.” Requires a majority of those voting. If it passes, the chair may allow for a five to ten minutes caucus.

### Activity #3 Analyzing the Oregon Constitution

**Teaching Objective:** The students will use their interest in the decisions of the Oregon Constitutional Convention sparked by the role-play to research what decisions the actual delegates made.

**Timeline Estimate:** 1 to 2 class periods

**Materials:**

- Copy of original Constitution and vote from the Journal of the Constitutional Convention
- “The Politics of Statehood” from *Sense, Sentiment and the Oregon Constitution* by The League of Women Voters
- Student Handout - “Analyze the Oregon Constitution”

**Procedures:**

1. Have the students get into 6 groups. Each group will look at the Oregon Constitution and “The Politics of Statehood” from *Sense, Sentiment and the Oregon Constitution* by the League of Women Voters. (Optionally as well, Chapter 4 from *A Peculiar Paradise: A History of Blacks in Oregon 1788-1940* by Elizabeth McLagen focusing solely on the slavery and exclusion issues)
2. Each group will receive a matrix on the Constitution (there are 3 different worksheets and so there will be 2 groups working on the same questions). Each one asks them to look for three specific pieces of information. They must put down what happened in the class role-play, what was found in the real Oregon Constitution, any differences or surprises that they found, and predictions about this decision for the future.
3. When they are done, they will report to the class what they found. A class discussion on the differences and surprises can follow. Why were there differences? How did the differences in delegates affect things?

(This activity can also be done as an individual assignment.)

## Activity #4 Essay Assignment

**Teaching Objective:** To have students individually show what they understand about the creation, decisions and impact of the Oregon Constitution through a Persuasive Writing sample.

**Timeline Estimate:** varies per grade level.

### Materials:

- Student Handout – “How to Write a Formal Position Essay”
- Student Handout – “Essay Outline Form”
- Student Handout – “CIM Persuasive Essay Scoring Guide”

### Procedures:

1. The students can use the articles and matrices from the earlier assignments.
2. Each student will receive a copy of “How to write a Formal Position Essay.” (Thanks to Pamela Hall for this work)
3. Go over the steps. Depending on the ability of the students, it may be necessary to work on the steps together. For instance:
  - a. A sample brainstorm on another topic as a class, then working individually on their own.
  - b. Go around the room to double check on their theses. It may be important to give examples:
    - i. The Oregon Constitution was an example of incredible racism that we still haven’t gotten rid of to this day.
    - ii. The fact that the delegates to the Oregon Constitution chickened out and referred the hardest questions to the voters instead of making the decisions themselves is a trend that the Oregon Legislature still continues.
    - iii. The Oregon Constitution was as example of how most of the country was thinking in 1857 and was not unique.
4. The Outline Form included is an example that can be filled in by the students. This can be turned in earlier to check the students’ work.
5. The essays can be graded using the Oregon CIM writing score. Included is a shortened version of the Oregon CIM standards for writing. This focuses primarily on the Persuasive Essay Sample. It is convenient because it fits on one page and so students can grade each other.
6. Students can turn in a packet: Brainstorm, Outline, Rough Draft, Final Draft and finally Scoring Guide (in reverse order)
7. Essay Topics:
  - a. What did the decisions made in the Oregon Constitutional Convention say about who was seen as an Oregonian and who wasn’t? What was important to Oregonians?
  - b. How did the Oregon Constitution affect the development of Oregon as a state? What still affects to this day?

- c. What made Oregon special and different from other places in the country as it became a state?

## How to write a Formal Position Essay

- I Brainstorm** (or free write)
  - Jot down all of your ideas on the topic
  - Keep writing until you have put down everything that you can think of
  - You may use a graphic organizer, a list, or whatever other method works for you
- II Take a position**
  - Decide on your thesis; what do you believe about the subject?
  - Create a thesis statement; the clear position that your paper is trying to prove
  - Make sure that the statement does not have “I think,” “me,” or “in my opinion”
- III Outline** (or organize)
  - Put the thesis statement at the top
  - Look through your brainstorming and find at least three things that support your thesis
  - Decide in what order you will write your support
  - Figure out how your conclusion says your thesis again in such a way that really convinces the readers that no other position should be taken
- IV Write a rough draft**
  - Write an introduction to the subject
  - Explain thoroughly each of the facts in your outline
  - Assume your reader does not know anything about the subject
- V Read through the first draft and edit**
  - Read it out loud
  - Clean up any unclear language
  - Take out any I’s, you’s, me’s or in my opinion’s
  - Check spelling
- VI Write second draft with corrections**
- VII Have yourself and two other people use the Essay Scoring Guide**
  - Evaluate your essay according to the Guide
  - Make any further corrections
- VIII Write (or type) the final draft**
- IX Turn it in** (and relax)

## Essay Outline Form

**My Introduction:** (An interesting engaging way of explaining what the essay is about)

**My Thesis:** (A clear, concise, bold statement without *you, I, or in my opinion*. This is the point the essay is trying to prove)

**My support:** (Evidence that proves my thesis)

1.

2.

3.

4. (Optional usually)

**My Conclusion:** (A different way of stating the thesis and anything else important)

## CIM Persuasive Essay Scoring Guide

### Ideas/Content

<b>Level 6-</b>	Exceptionally clear arguable bold focused, interesting thesis, Develops at least 3 strong supporting detail with such vivid, powerful relevant facts which clearly support the thesis. Thorough balanced in-depth explanation/exploration of topic.
<b>Level 5-</b>	Level 4 plus more interesting and focused.
<b>Level 4-</b>	Clear thesis. Develop at least 3 supporting details with relevant facts, might be general or limited.
<b>Level 3-</b>	No clear thesis, limited detail.
<b>Level 2-</b>	No thesis, insufficient or irrelevant details.
<b>Level 1-</b>	Too short to have enough content.

### Organization

<b>Level 6-</b>	Level 5 with more creative sequencing. Strong introduction and conclusion.
<b>Level 5-</b>	Clear, coherent and strong order and structure, with smooth transitions, inviting introduction and good conclusion.
<b>Level 4-</b>	Clear and coherent order and structure, although may be simplistic. Has an introduction and conclusion, although may be choppy.
<b>Level 3-</b>	An attempt has been made to organize, however inconsistent. No introduction or no conclusion.
<b>Level 2-</b>	Writing is too jumpy to follow.
<b>Level 1-</b>	Even after several readings, reader is confused.

### Voice

<b>Level 6-</b>	Formal academic voice (no personal references). Strong clear opinion, deeply committed to thesis, very engaging and convincing.
<b>Level 5-</b>	No personal references, strong opinion, committed to thesis, engaging and convincing.
<b>Level 4-</b>	Opinion present, some commitment, no personal references, sometimes engaging, somewhat convincing.
<b>Level 3-</b>	Some personal references, inconsistent commitment.
<b>Level 2-</b>	Little commitment, stiff, mechanical.
<b>Level 1-</b>	Flat and lifeless.

### Word Choice

<b>Level 6-</b>	Words are exceptionally accurate, strong, specific, powerful and original. A rich, broad range of words is used to make the points in a natural and striking way.
<b>Level 5-</b>	Words are accurate, strong and specific. A broad range of words is used to make the points in a natural way.
<b>Level 4-</b>	Words are functional, appropriate and effective. A variety of words is used, although perhaps awkwardly.
<b>Level 3-</b>	Words are ordinary and sometimes inappropriate. No variety is used; even though the words may work, they are repeated.
<b>Level 2-</b>	Words are monotonous or misused.
<b>Level 1-</b>	Words are so few and so misused that the meaning is unclear.

### Sentence Fluency

<b>Level 6-</b>	Easy and pleasant to read with an effective flow and rhythm. Sentences are consistently strong with varied structure.
<b>Level 5-</b>	Easy to read with a nice flow and rhythm. Sentences are strong and varied.
<b>Level 4-</b>	Sentences are varied and natural, and they mostly flow in the writing.
<b>Level 3-</b>	Mechanical writing with awkward constructions that may force rereading.
<b>Level 2-</b>	Writing is choppy or rambling.
<b>Level 1-</b>	Writing is difficult to follow because sentences are incomplete, rambling or very awkward.

### Conventions

<b>Level 6-</b>	Writing has exceptionally strong control and range of conventions (punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage). Errors do not affect the reading.
<b>Level 5-</b>	Writing has strong control of conventions. Errors do not affect the reading.
<b>Level 4-</b>	Writing has control of conventions. Minor errors do not distract from reading.
<b>Level 3-</b>	Writing has limited control of conventions. Errors impede readability sometimes.
<b>Level 2-</b>	Writing has little control of conventions. Frequent, major errors impede readability.
<b>Level 1-</b>	Severity and frequency of errors are so overwhelming that the reader finds it difficult to focus on the message.

## Activity #5 Writing a Newspaper

**Teaching Objective:** The students will demonstrate their understanding of the creation, decisions and impact of the Oregon Constitution through a newspaper that they will produce as a group. They will also show their understanding of the lives and culture of early Oregonians.

**Timeline Estimate:** 3 – 6 class periods.

### Materials:

- Student Handout - “Writing a Newspaper”
- Newspaper publishing supplies: computers OR paper and pens

### Procedures:

1. Have the students look at copies of newspapers (both old and new, hopefully from different cities) and have them identify common features.
2. Have the students use all of the handouts and articles about the people and issues of Oregon in 1857, and the copy of the Oregon Constitution.
3. Divide the students into 4 groups and assign them to either write the *Oregon Statesman* or the *Weekly Oregonian*. Hand out “Writing a Newspaper”
4. Give the students time to investigate the Constitution and what decisions were made and then write their newspaper. Remember that the *Statesman* and the *Oregonian* were bitter rivals and their editors (Bush and Dryer respectively) regularly denounced each other in editorials. As well, the editors were both part of the Constitutional Convention and will want to make sure that their contribution is well appreciated. (The chapters from *A Peculiar Paradise* have excerpts from this rivalry)
5. Explain to the class that every good news article answers essential questions: who, what, when, where, why, and how. These questions are sometimes referred to as the five Ws and an H. Write these words on the board. Choose one of the news stories and read the first couple of paragraphs to the class. After you’ve finished reading, ask students to explain how those five questions were answered. Tell students that they’ll be writing news stories about events that happened in the Oregon Constitutional Convention. Their stories should answer these five questions about the event they cover.
6. If you have the resources to allow students to work on a computer they can manipulate fonts and columns in order to print a newspaper, otherwise they need to write it by hand and organize it by cutting and pasting.
7. Access to the Internet will also help them to investigate the rivalry between the two newspapers and their political beliefs. Historically, these two newspapers reportedly regularly on the Constitutional Convention and both painted their own editors as the heroes.

## Writing a Newspaper

Two competing newspapers; the *Weekly Oregonian* of Portland and the *Oregon Statesman* of Salem reported on the big events in Oregon in the 1850's. These two newspapers were divided along partisan lines. The *Oregonian* spoke for the Whigs which were more powerful in the nation at the time, while the *Statesman* spoke for the Democrats, who were more powerful and numerous in the state. (The Whigs faded out as political party very soon as the Republicans were created) The two editors: Thomas Dryer for the *Oregonian* and Asahel Bush for the *Statesman* regularly wrote about each other in their editorials.

As you write your newspaper you will write about the issues and decisions of Oregonians. Please choose at least 3 of the "burning issues" to write about in your newspaper.

You will be divided into 4 groups. Two groups will be writing the *Oregon Statesman* and the other groups will be writing the *Weekly Oregonian*. Each group should have people fulfilling the following roles:

- Editor (1)
- Reporters (2-3)
- Features (2-3)
- Political Cartoonist (1)

The newspaper will need to have the following required elements:

1. 3 Lead Stories about the Constitution
2. Profile of famous people at the time (Interview)
3. Editorial of events
4. Political Cartoon on events

And choose at least 3 of the following optional elements (Features):

1. Sports (what were people playing in the 1850's?)
2. Entertainment (what did people do for fun? Plays? Saloons?)
3. News from other parts of the world (Gold Rush in California, etc)
4. Advertisements (Farm implements for sale?)
5. Weather Report
6. Gossip Column
7. Astrology
8. Obituaries
9. Advice Column
10. Real Estate/Classified/Help Wanted

Be creative and make the newspaper as fun and accurate as you can. Make sure that your editorials accurately reflect the political views of the editorial staff of your paper.