

## Exploring Federalist Paper 10 in “Translation”

Recommended Grade/Ability Level: Grades 9-12

Recommended Lesson Length: Two 45-minute class periods, or one 90-minute block

Central Engagement Question/Essential Question: How can a democracy best protect the interests of all its citizens?

### Overview:

In this lesson, students read a version of Madison’s famous Federalist Paper 10 that has been “translated” into more modern, comprehensible language. Through a series of scaffolded steps, students read, analyze, and draw connections to this complex yet vital text. Finally, students are asked to consider to what extent Madison’s arguments explored in Federalist Paper 10 apply to 21st century America.

### Materials:

- Copy of “Student Answer Sheet” for each student (Appendix A)
- Rubrics (Appendix B)
- Copy of “translated” Federalist Paper 10 for each student (Appendix C)

### Objectives:

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to...

- Summarize key portions of Federalist Paper 10, using a version of the Paper “translated” into modern terminology
- Analyze quotations from Federalist Paper 10
- Examine political vocabulary in context
- Apply Madison’s reasoning to current political examples

### NCSS Standards:

- Standard 5: Individuals, Groups and Institutions
- Standard 6: Power, Authority and Governance
- Standard 8: Science, Technology and Society
- Standard 10: Civic Ideals and Practices

### Background Information/Homework/Pre-Learning:

Prior to this lesson’s activities, students should be introduced to the general history of America’s founding era. Students should also know about the role of the Federalist Papers and their authors in shaping public opinion about the Constitution.

### Anticipatory Activity/Bell-Ringer:

As students enter the room, have them do a quick write on the following questions: “Is it possible to keep all members of a group happy all the time? Why or why not?” Discuss students’ answers as a class.

### Activities:

**1) Reading.** Distribute a copy of the “translated” version of Federalist Paper 10 (Appendix C) to each student. Assign students to mixed-ability pairs. Have the pairs read this “translated” paper, taking turns reading aloud to one another.

**2) Analyzing.** Distribute a copy of the “Student Answer Sheet” (Appendix A) to each student. Have student pairs work together to summarize selected paragraphs on Part A of their “Student Answer Sheets.” Each summary should be one sentence long and focus on the main idea of the paragraph.

**3) Connecting.** Have student pairs consider the selected quotations from Federalist Paper 10 using Part B of their “Student Answer Sheets.” For each quotation, have students review the “translated” paragraph it came from. Then have students answer the questions regarding each quotation. The questions will scaffold students’ understanding of each quote, then ask them to apply the ideas to life today.

### Wrap-Up:

Applying: Today, we have communication technology and media outlets the Founders could never have imagined. How might these new technologies change Madison's argument? Have students write a short script for a "debate" between themselves and Madison over Madison's arguments in paragraph 35 of Federalist Paper 10 using Part C of their "Student Answer Sheets."

### Assessment:

- Short-term/class work/homework: During class, students will complete Part A-C of their "Student Answer Sheets."
- Long-term/extension: Let students try translating part of the Federalist Papers. Have students read the paragraph below from Federalist Paper 51. Sentence by sentence, have them rewrite the paragraph in more easily understood language. Finally, have students summarize the paragraph they wrote in a one sentence summary.

*But the great security against a gradual concentration of the several powers in the same department, consists in giving to those who administer each department the necessary constitutional means and personal motives to resist encroachments of the others. The provision for defense must in this, as in all other cases, be made commensurate to the danger of attack. Ambition must be made to counteract ambition. The interest of the man must be connected with the constitutional rights of the place. It may be a reflection on human nature, that such devices should be necessary to control the abuses of government. But what is government itself, but the greatest of all reflections on human nature? If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself. A dependence on the people is, no doubt, the primary control on the government; but experience has taught mankind the necessity of auxiliary precautions.*

### Additional Resources:

- The Library of Congress has the full text of all the Federalist Papers available through their THOMAS database:
  - <http://thomas.loc.gov/home/histdox/fedpapers.html>
- Our Documents offers students the invigorating opportunity to view an original printing of Federalist Papers 10 and 51. This site includes some background information as well.
  - <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=10>
- Bantam Classic offers an excellent print compilation of the Federalist Papers, originally published in 1982 and re-published in 2003. This edition includes an excellent introduction to the Papers written by Garry Wills, a useful glossary, a thorough index, and the text of the Federal Constitution.

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**APPENDIX A:  
STUDENT ANSWER SHEET**

**The Federalist 10 by James Madison: Analyzing, Connecting, and Applying**

The Federalist Papers helped convince voters to ratify (approve) the new US Constitution. The Federalist 10, written by James Madison, is one of the most famous of the Papers. It discusses how the proposed government is equipped to handle all the different groups (“factions”) the American people would inevitably break into.

Part A: Analyzing

Read the “translated” version of Federalist 10. Summarize the following paragraphs in one sentence, focusing on the main idea of each. Record your summary below.

Paragraph 4:

Paragraph 8:

Paragraph 18:

Paragraph 23:

Paragraph 32:

### Part B: Connecting

There are some very famous quotes from Federalist 10. These un-translated quotes highlight how Madison's argument from 1787 still make sense in life today. For each, review the "translated" paragraph it came from. Then answer the questions that follow it. The questions will scaffold your understanding of each quote, then ask you to apply the ideas to life today.

1. "No man is allowed to be a judge in his own cause." (paragraph 11)

a. What do you think this means?

a. Give a modern example when it would be a bad idea for a person to "judge in his own cause."

1. "Enlightened statesmen will not always be at the helm." (paragraph 15)

a. What is a "statesman"?

a. What does it mean to be "enlightened"?

a. What do you think this quote means as a whole?

a. Give an example from American history when "enlightened statesmen" have not been in charge.

1. "In the extent and proper structure of the Union, therefore, we behold a Republican remedy for the diseases most incident to Republican Government." (paragraph 36)

a. What does "Republican" mean in this context?

a. What does "remedy" mean?

a. Give an example of a "disease" that could happen in a Republic today.

a. Give an example of a "Republican remedy" from recent times.

Part C: Applying

Today, we have communication technology and media outlets the Founders could never have imagined. How might these new technologies change Madison's argument? Write a short script for a "debate" between you and Madison over his arguments in paragraph 35. Use at least two examples of modern technology in your argument, and employ at least three quotations from paragraph 35 in your script. Make sure you and "Madison" respond directly to one another's comments.

You:

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**APPENDIX B:  
RUBRICS**

Rubric for Part A: Analyzing

| <u>Requirement</u>                            | <u>Points Each</u> | <u>Total Points</u> |
|---|--------------------|---------------------|
| Summaries are one complete sentence long each | 10                 | 50                  |
| Summaries are relevant and reasonable         | 10                 | 50                  |
| TOTAL   |                    | 100                 |

Rubric for Part B: Connecting

| <u>Requirement</u>   | <u>Points Each</u> | <u>Total Points</u> |
|--|--------------------|---------------------|
| Provides reasonable definitions for the context (2a, 2b, 3a, 3b) | 5                  | 20                  |
| Explains quotations adequately (1a, 2c)                          | 10                 | 20                  |
| Provides relevant modern examples (1b, 2d, 3c, 3d)               | 15                 | 60                  |
| TOTAL  |                    | 100                 |

Rubric for Part C: Applying

| <u>Requirement</u>   | <u>Points Each</u> | <u>Total Points</u> |
|--|--------------------|---------------------|
| Quotes paragraph 35 at least 3 times                               | 10                 | 30                  |
| Madison speaks at least 3 times                                    | 5                  | 15                  |
| Gives at least 2 modern examples, mentioning specific technologies | 5                  | 10                  |
| Student speaks at least 3 times                                    | 5                  | 15                  |
| The two speakers respond directly to one another                   |                    | 30                  |
| TOTAL  |                    | 100                 |

Rubric for Extension:

| <u>Requirement</u>                             | <u>Points Each</u> | <u>Total Points</u> |
|--|--------------------|---------------------|
| 10 sentences "translated" into modern language | 8                  | 80                  |
| One sentence summary of your paragraph         | 20                 | 20                  |
| TOTAL  |                    | 100                 |

**APPENDIX C:  
TRANSLATED FEDERALIST PAPER 10**

| P # | Argument   |
|-----|--|
| 1   | One of the most important things a well-thought-out government can do is stop and control the violence of factions (they're like cliques). If you support popular governments – those based on the opinions and needs of the people—then you may be worried about how easily they can break into these biased and dangerous groups. So you'll appreciate any plan that can control factions while still keeping popular government. I mean, the reason other countries' popular governments have failed is because of the confusion and unfairness biased groups have brought to the legislatures. People who hate the freedom that popular governments bring citizens keep bringing up the failures in other countries.   |
| 2   | Even though the new American Constitution has huge improvements over other countries', many people still see the danger of factions in it. They claim the government it creates is too unstable and that what's best for everybody will get left behind in the fights between different cliques. They even complain that laws will be made based on the force of the majority (a group made up of over half the population), so these laws will not be fair and will hurt minority groups (those with less than half the population).  |
| 3   | We wish that we could just say that all those fears are made-up, but they do have some points. If we look at things honestly, we'll see that some of the problems we're having can be blamed on the popular governments in the states. We especially need to address people's fear for personal rights and distrust of the things the governments have been doing.   |
| 4   | <b>Let's start at the beginning. What is a faction? It is a group of citizens – and it doesn't matter if they are a majority or minority of the population – who are working together based on some shared frenzy or shared stake in something that would be bad for the rights of other citizens or that would hurt the community.</b>  |
| 5   | Obviously, factions are bad for the community. There are two possible ways to fix them:<br>1. Removing their causes, or<br>2. Controlling their effects.   |
| 6   | Let's look at the first one first – removing the causes of factions, those partisan groups. There are two ways we could do it:<br>1. Factions need freedom in order to get together. If we got rid of freedom in our country, the factions would have to go away! or<br>2. Make everybody have the same feelings about everything.   |
| 7   | Let's look at the first option. Getting rid of freedom in our country in order to get rid of factions is a terrible idea. That solution would be worse than the problem it was meant to fix! Have you ever seen what happens when you cover a candle with a glass jar? The flame quickly runs out of the air it needs to keep burning, so it goes out. That's a lot like factions and liberty. Factions need liberty just like fire needs air, or else they just disappear. But liberty is vital in political life. It would be as bad an idea to get rid of liberty to fight factions as it would be to get rid of air to fight fire. We'd be left with no fire -- but no air to breathe either!  |
| 8   | <b>So, let's move on to the second option for removing the causes of factions: making everyone feel the same what about everything. Just as removing liberty would be bad, giving everyone the same opinions is just not practical! Nobody's perfect, so everybody makes mistakes when thinking about some subject or another. And since people all have pride in themselves and their ideas, they'll always be convinced that all their opinions are right! Plus, people naturally have different strengths and weaknesses. Some say that these different strengths lead to different amounts of success in life – what makes some people rich and others poor. Of course, protecting the things people own or care about is an important function of government. And to bring our argument full circle, people owning different types and amounts of property gives people different opinions and interests. Rich people almost certainly have different opinions about government aide programs, for example, than do people who have to work three jobs just to feed their families!</b> |

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| 9  | <p>Some of the causes of people having different views and forming different factions just occur naturally as part of being a human. What's going on in the community brings out these differences in various ways. People divide themselves into different groups that fight and oppress one another over things like differences in religions, politics, and beloved leaders. All these things keep people from working together to create the best life for everyone. This temptation to divide into opposing groups is very strong, and people will sometimes do it over really meaningless issues if they don't have anything better to do!</p>  |
| 10 | <p>But one of the biggest causes of people breaking off into opposing groups is economic position – the different types of jobs people have, money they make, and things they own. In most societies, the people who own lots of things are opposed to the people who don't. The people in banking who loan money are opposed to the people who must borrow and owe money their whole lives. Then there are farmers and manufacturers and business people and rich people and many other types of people with different amounts of money and property. These different types of people are going to have different opinions! In fact, the main job of modern laws is to balance these different opinions, interests, and factions.</p>  |
| 11 | <p>There's an old saying, <b>"No man is allowed to be a judge in his own cause."</b> What this means is that people cannot be completely neutral while making decisions about things that affect them. Deep down, a little part of each of us will always want to make things work out in the way that benefits us the most. Having a stake in an issue necessarily makes you a little biased, and it might compromise your ethics, too. If a single person shouldn't be a judge on issues that affect her or himself, the same is true of a group of people. There's no guarantee that the group that's supposed to be leading everyone and upholding the law won't side with an oppressive majority over the rights of a minority group. They, too, might get swept away in aggregate interests that don't necessarily protect the common good.</p> |
| 12 | <p>For example, let's say there were a bill – that is, a potential law – about people having debts they need to pay. The two major opposing sides here are the bankers that loaned the money and the people who borrowed the money. The best decision is one that is just and fair, that upholds the original agreement made, and that protects the smaller group from abuse. But all the representatives will be representing one of those two groups based on their districts! So, then, the two sides have to be the ones to write the law! That doesn't line up with the old saying we just considered.</p>   |
| 13 | <p>Here's another example: there are American businesses that are trying to get started or stay afloat. But other countries might be able to produce the same goods more cheaply. Should we restrict the amount of good from foreign countries we import or make people pay huge taxes on foreign products? This would help the American businesses. But the American business people have much different opinions on this topic than the people who only buy products; most of them just want the cheapest stuff. But no matter which of these sides decide about this issue, their choice might not be what's fair and best for everyone, but just what's best for them.</p>  |
| 14 | <p>Taxes are a really messy example. Congress has to decide how much to tax all sorts of different things: income, real estate, businesses, estates or huge gifts being passed on to other people, etc. To make these decisions about taxes, the decision-makers need to be fair and unbiased. But the debate over taxes is one of the debates in which representatives are most likely to be biased. The majority in the Congress has the opportunity to be really unfair here. Just think about it: every dollar they charge the other groups in taxes is a dollar they don't have to pay. No wonder factions can corrupt people!</p>   |
| 15 | <p>Some people say not to worry about this stuff – there will always be politicians to make these decisions that are nothing but fair and focused on the good of everybody. These good, pure politicians will be able to balance all the competing groups fairly and make sure they all serve the public good, they say. But I think this is a huge assumption. <b>"Enlightened statesmen will not always be at the helm."</b> Even if they were, it is not always possible to make all the different groups happy at once. In order to make the best decisions for the whole country, you must think ahead about all the consequences of your decisions. But people caught up in some sort of hype or frenzy don't want to listen to such calm talk about what will happen three steps down the road.</p>  |
| 16 | <p>So, earlier we talked about how we could deal with factions. We came up with two options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Removing their causes, or</li> <li>2. Controlling their effects.</li> </ol>  |



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| 17 | Now we've looked at all the different ways we could try to remove the causes and found that none of them worked. So, in order to fight against the bad results of factions, we'll have to work toward controlling their effects.  |
| 18 | <b>Let's start by looking at factions that consist of less than half of the population. These are pretty easy to control the effects of because of the idea of "majority rule." Whatever group has the most votes or the most support generally wins. Yes, large groups of people caught up in a shared frenzy can slow down the majority in the Congress and make their job harder. Such groups can even interfere with the peaceful functioning of the community. But under the rules of the new Constitution, they will not be able to take control, as a minority, and hurt other people's rights.</b>  |
| 19 | But what if the faction is made up of the majority of the population? Majority rule when dealing with majority factions is dangerous. If all we had to control factions was "majority rule," majority factions could get their own desires met even if it meant doing things that hurt the whole country or the rights of other people.   |
| 20 | So how do we prevent biased majority groups from harming their country and other people's rights, while still using the ideal of "majority rule"? This is a question at the heart of people's resistance to trying this new "republican" form of government. If we can answer this question, we will have eliminated a huge source of doubt people have about this new form government. Then maybe people all over the world will see how good republican government is and start using it too!   |
| 21 | How can we control the majority while still using "majority rule"? There are two options:<br>1. Stop the majority of the people from having the same opinions about things or from having a stake in the same things, or<br>2. When the majority does have the same frenzy about something, make it impossible for them to act together to oppress the minority.  |
| 22 | Let's take the first option. Some people say not to worry about majorities abusing their power. They say that the morals or religious beliefs of the people will keep them from hurting the country as a whole or the rights of minority groups. But this is not enough to keep the majority in control if they all agree about something! Think about it: we can't trust a person's morals to keep her/him from ever being violent or unfair to others. When groups of people act together, their morals are even less likely to control their actions, as they may give in to peer pressure when they see everyone around them being unfair or violent.   |
| 23 | <b>Some democrats have tried to argue that when every person has the same political rights, they will be the same in other ways: in terms of opinions, interests, and passions. But as we've said earlier, in a direct democracy --where every citizen gets together to vote on every issue -- factions, especially majority factions, are huge problems. You need a small group for direct democracy to work, but in such societies, frenzies often infiltrate the majority. Also in direct democracies, the people are used to getting together and working together through their government, so they will be unstoppable when they threaten the rights of the minority. That's why democracies have always worked out poorly and been short-lived. They're not good at protecting people and their property from a frenzied majority faction.</b> |
| 24 | But republics -- where the people have representatives -- are different. They might even have a solution for the problem of factions. So, we're going to look at how republics are different from democracies. Then we'll look at the solution to factions that republics offer and how that is related to our new country.   |
| 25 | There are two major differences between democracies and republics.<br>1. Republics involve the people electing a pretty small group of people to be their representatives, and<br>2. Republics can work with larger populations and larger countries than democracies.  |
| 26 | Consider the first difference: representation. Representation has two possible effects. The first one is a good thing. Representation can help the opinions of the people become widened, so they consider the good of the whole country. It can also help clean up the people's opinions and views and make them smarter and better. This is because the people's opinions have to go through an extra layer of people before becoming law. And the people who make up this extra layer will often be the best -- the most talented and accomplished -- their communities have to offer. They should be smart and wise, able to consider the long-term and community-wide effects of a decision.   |

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|    | <p>They should also love fairness and their nation. All of this will make the representatives less likely to support ideas that are bound to hurt the community at large or violate the rights of other people. In other words, the representatives will clean up the people's views in a way that will better express the needs of the community than if all the citizens, with their personal stakes and opinions, came together in a pure democracy.</p>   |
| 27 | <p>The second possible effect of representation, however, is not so positive. Sometimes bad politicians might be elected. They can betray the citizens by voting in ways that are contrary to the greater good. How can we lessen the chance of bad politicians being elected? The difference between big and small countries gives us the answer.</p>  |
| 28 | <p>Big republics are better for choosing the best representatives for two reasons. First, the probability of choosing good representatives is higher. See, no matter how small the country is, you must still elect a certain number of people to be representatives because too small a group of representatives is bound to form a little clique of their own. On the other hand, no matter how big the republic is, the number of representatives must be limited to a moderate – medium – number, or else it will just be a big mess. So, in small republics, you must be less picky about who you choose as your representatives, since you'll need so many. In a large republic, you'll have to be very picky, since you'll have to limit the number of representatives chosen in all. So, because you have to be pickier in large republics, you'll typically end up with better people as your representatives.</p>   |
| 29 | <p>The second reason big republics are better for getting the best representatives is that a larger number of voters must choose each representative. This cuts down on the chance that corrupt politicians will be able to sway a big enough group of people to get elected. Because the voters will be free from this manipulation, they will be able to pick representatives that actually have the best qualities.</p>  |
| 30 | <p>Of course, there is a "happy medium" when it comes to size of republics, as in most discussions. If there are too many voters for each representative, the representatives will not really be able to know everyone's needs and situations. On the other hand, if too few voters elect each representative, the representatives might be too likely to give into their voters' desires, even at the cost of the good of the country as a whole. Luckily, our new Constitution ensures just such a "happy medium" through its federal set-up. That means that there are two levels of government – state and national – that share the responsibilities of governing. And they each have their own strengths. The state governments are best able to know the people's local needs and desires, while the national government can best take care of the people as a whole.</p>  |
| 31 | <p>Ok, earlier we said that there are two major differences between democracies and republics.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Republics involve the people electing a pretty small group of people to be their representatives, and</li> <li>2. Republics can work with larger populations and larger countries than democracies.</li> </ol> <p>We've been talking about the first one so far. Now, let's talk about the second one.</p>   |
| 32 | <p><b>Because republics don't require every citizen to get together to solve every problem, republics can cover much more land with many more people on it than democracies can. This larger size is one of the reasons factions aren't as dangerous in republics as they are in democracies.</b></p> <p>You see, smaller communities are more likely to be made up of fewer different interests and groups of people. Because there are fewer different interests and groups, it's more likely that the majority of people will agree on some subject. For example, if there were a survey asking what people's favorite ice cream flavor was and it listed every possible flavor in the world, it is VERY unlikely that over half of the people taking the survey would each choose the same option. But what if there were just two or three choices? Then, there is a much better chance that over half of the people taking the survey would, indeed, agree on the best ice cream flavor. Likewise, if a community divides itself into 300 groups, it is not very likely that over half of the people will be in any one group. But if the community only breaks into a couple of groups, half the people could easily be in one of those groups. So, smaller communities are most likely to develop majority factions.</p> <p>Now, let's say that the community is only made up of ten people. The majority group could just have five or six people in it! With such a small group forming the majority, it is very easy to make risky plans and possibly even to hurt the people in the minority.</p> |
| 33 | <p>But that doesn't have to be the case. Let's say we make the community bigger. Suddenly, there are more different groups of people with different interests and opinions in the community. It is now harder to form majority</p>  |

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|    | factions, and the majority factions that do form are harder for their leaders control because large groups often have problems with in-fighting.   |
| 34 | So we can see that republics are better than democracies for controlling factions. Similarly, larger republics are even better than smaller republics for this job. If you think about it, this applies to the state and national governments, too. The Constitution guarantees that each state will have a republican form of government, so each state is just a small republic. Forming a union of the states into a national government will lead to better representatives being elected and more resistance to strong factions forming and functioning. The large size of this union has many benefits over having states alone.                       |
| 35 | In any given state, because of their small sizes, a powerful leader could become popular and have a divisive effect on the people. But, with a union, these state-based leaders would be less likely to spread their frenzy to people in other states. For example, a specific religious group could turn themselves into a relatively powerful political group in one state or even a few states. But the variety of different religious views spread across the nation would stop that one from becoming too powerful nationally. Any number of frenzies could strike SOME people, but it would be hard for the frenzies to spread over the whole country. |
| 36 | So, to all those people who worried that republics are too susceptible to the dangers of factions, we now have an answer. <b>“In the extent and proper structure of the Union, therefore, we behold a Republican remedy for the diseases most incident to Republican Government.”</b> If we value the republican system, then we ought to support this new Constitution and the Federalists who aim to ratify – or pass – it.  |