Colonies have the only and sole exclusive Right & Power to lay . . . taxes upon the Inhabitants of this Colony."

5. Answers will vary, but students should recognize that Henry’s speech was a defiant call for armed resistance to British forces. He declared that war, in effect, had already begun.

**Handout B—Context Questions**

a. The document was written in 1788.
b. It was written in Virginia.
c. Patrick Henry wrote the document.
d. The document is a speech.
e. Henry wrote the speech to convince the Virginia delegates to oppose ratification of the Constitution.
f. The audience for this speech was the Virginia delegates in particular, but also the people of all the states.

**Handout C—In His Own Words:**

**Patrick Henry on the Constitution**

Main idea of each passage:

1. **Majority Rule:** Henry favors majority rule and democratic government. He argues that under the new Constitution, a small minority of Americans could thwart the will of the majority by refusing to ratify a proposed amendment. For example, four small states—such as New Jersey, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Hampshire—containing only five to ten percent of the total population of the country could block approval of an amendment favored by the remaining nine more populous states.

2. **A Standing Army:** Henry argues that the Constitution will create a standing army that the government will use to crush any opposition to its exercise of power. The militia will be powerless to stop it. Henry warns that the seat of government will become an armed fortress used by this army.

3. **Liberty vs. Empire:** Henry laments the fact that Americans seem to favor the building of a great empire, which will come at the expense of their liberty.

4. **Good and Bad Rulers:** Henry argues that the Constitution does not include sufficient safeguards against the abuse of power by evil officeholders.

5. **The President, a Tyrant:** Henry cautions that the presidency is poorly designed and that a power-hungry occupant of that office will be able to use the standing army and the militia to establish tyranny.

**THOMAS JEFFERSON**

**Handout A—Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826)**

1. Jefferson had mixed feelings about slavery. He warned that slavery might one day tear the Union apart. He condemned the slave trade and proposed a plan for ending it. But Jefferson owned more than 200 slaves who lived on and near his great plantation of Monticello, and he freed none of them while he lived. He did provide in his will for the emancipation of seven of his slaves, including Sally Hemings (the slave with whom Jefferson is alleged to have had a sexual relationship), her five children, and her nephew.

2. While he was president, Jefferson reduced the number of public employees, cut military spending, and lowered the national debt.

3. Jefferson championed the right to bear arms, religious freedom, the rights of people accused of crimes, and the right to property.

4. Answers will vary. Some students will point out the contradictions between Jefferson’s opinions and his actions. For example, he condemned the slave trade, warned that slavery might one day tear the Union apart, and proposed a plan for ending slavery in the United States. But he owned more than 200 slaves who
lived on and near his great plantation of Monticello, and he freed few of them while he lived. Also, despite his opposition to powerful government, he purchased the Louisiana Territory from Napoleon for $15 million. And though he advocated the rights of individuals, Jefferson violated the civil liberties of many Americans when enforcing the Embargo Act. Students may argue that these facts are proof that Jefferson did indeed violate his principles at times. Other students, however, may say that Jefferson was sometimes forced to choose between competing principles. In purchasing Louisiana, for instance, he hoped to provide for the happiness of America. By harshly enforcing the Embargo Act, he wished to keep the United States out of European wars.

5. Jefferson believed that these achievements were the high points of a life dedicated to the promotion of human freedom. Education, he held, freed the mind from ignorance. Tolerance freed the will from coercion. And the assertion of human liberty and equality freed the body from the chains of tyranny.

6. Jefferson was trying to unite the nation after the bitterness of the 1800 presidential contest. His words implied that all Americans shared certain philosophical principles—those embodied by the terms “federalism” and “republicanism”—that superseded petty political differences between the Federalist and Republican Parties.

Handout B—Vocabulary and Context Questions

1. Vocabulary
   a. impose, charge
   b. leaving out
   c. errors in reasoning
   d. businesses that dominate a sector of the economy
   e. undying
   f. constant
   g. the requirement that the government must show good cause in order to hold a person in jail
   h. to have a right to
   i. leaving behind
   j. official

2. Context
   a. The document was written on December 20, 1787.
   b. It was written in Paris, France.
   c. Thomas Jefferson wrote the document.
   d. The document is a personal letter.
   e. Jefferson wrote the letter to respond to Madison’s previous letter and to inform him of Jefferson’s opinion of the Constitution.
   f. The audience for the letter was James Madison and, by extension, the other members of Congress he would be addressing on the issue.

Handout D—Analysis: Thomas Jefferson on the Constitution

A. Jefferson approved of this separation of powers.
B. He approved of the House—whose members are chosen by the people—possessing the taxing power.
C. He approved of voting in the legislature being done by individual members and not by state delegations.
D. He approved of the president’s veto power, although he wanted the judicial branch to have a veto power also.
E. He wanted the right of habeas corpus to be more firmly established in a bill of rights.
F. He wanted the right to a trial by jury to be more firmly established in a bill of rights.
G. He approved of Congress’ oversight of the military forces but wanted protection against a standing army to be more firmly established in a bill of rights.

Answer Key
H. He was troubled by the lack of limitation on how many terms the president could serve.

RICHARD HENRY LEE

Handout A—Richard Henry Lee (1732–1794)

1. Lee was an outspoken opponent of the international slave trade. His first official act in the Virginia House of Burgesses was to introduce a bill that proposed “to lay so heavy a duty on the importation of slaves as to put an end to that iniquitous and disgraceful traffic within the colony of Virginia.” Lee also condemned the institution of slavery itself. Blacks, Lee declared, were “equally entitled to liberty and freedom by the great law of nature.” He warned that slaves would rebel if they “observed their masters possessed of a liberty denied to them.” Nevertheless, Lee did not free any of his slaves. He simply could not afford to do so.

2. On June 7, 1776, Lee introduced a resolution that declared “that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States.” This led to the drafting of the Declaration of Independence. Lee’s resolution was adopted by Congress on July 2, 1776.

3. In the Federal Farmer, Lee criticized the Constitution’s centralization of powers in the federal government and its lack of a bill of rights. He warned that the Constitution would destroy the states and create a “consolidated” government in which all power was dangerously concentrated in one place. Lee wished instead to preserve a federal system, in which power is divided between the national and state governments.

4. Answers will vary. Some students may say that Lee did not want anyone to know he was the author of the Federal Farmer. Anonymous authorship was a common tactic of political pamphleteers at the time. This was a way to keep people focused on the arguments and not the author of the pamphlet. Some students may suggest that the pseudonym “Federal Farmer” reflects Lee’s identity as a plantation owner who favored the principle of federalism. Lee probably also wished to imply that the views expressed in the pamphlet were held by all virtuous farmers of America.

5. Answers will vary. Some students may agree with Lee that no constitutional procedures or laws can stop corrupt officeholders from doing evil. Others may disagree with Lee and argue that a well-designed constitution can reign in evil-doers by pitting the interest of one against the other. (Madison famously expressed this latter idea in Federalist No. 51, in which he argued that “ambition must be made to counteract ambition.”)

Handout B—Vocabulary and Context Questions

1. Vocabulary
   a. united
   b. vicinity
   c. incapable of being taken away
   d. openly, clearly
   e. discovered, found out
   f. determined
   g. supports, buttresses

2. Context
   a. The document was written in 1787–1788.
   b. The document was written in Virginia.
   c. Richard Henry Lee is the author of the document.
   d. The document is a series of essays/letters.
   e. The purpose of the document was to convince Americans not to ratify the Constitution.
   f. The audience was Americans in every state.