George Washington and the Sultan of Morocco

Moorish Presence, Diplomacy, and Rights in the New Nation

First Name _____ Last Name _____ Date _____

Grades 6 through 12 interdisciplinary Research Simulation Task

Essential Question

How do Washington’s letter, the Moroccan treaty, and the free Moors’ petition reveal African participation and unequal freedom in the new nation?

NJSLS Social Studies

6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.a evaluates early administrations. 6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.b examines constitutional principles. 6.1.8.CivicsHR.3.c addresses slavery and human rights. For grades 9 through 12, 6.1.12.HistoryCC.2.a connects trade and policy, and 6.1.12.HistoryUP.2.c examines denied constitutional ideals.

NJSLS English Language Arts

RI.CR.6.1 supports textual analysis. RI.AA.6.7 evaluates claims. RI.MF.6.6 integrates information. W.AW.6.1 develops arguments. These grade 6 anchors support scaffolded access. Upper grade literacy expectations appear below and in the teacher guide.

CCLS Literacy Connections

RH.6–8.1, RH.6–8.2, RH.6–8.7 and WHST.6–8.1 support evidence, central ideas, visuals, and argument. RH.9–10.1, RH.9–10.9, RH.11–12.1, RH.11–12.9 and WHST.9–10.1, WHST.11–12.1 deepen corroboration and argument.

Interdisciplinary and Amistad Alignment

History and civics center African diplomatic agency and resistance to enslavement. Geography examines Atlantic connections. Mathematics uses mean and range. Science literacy tests a travel model. Amistad connections examine freedom, racial classification, and people asserting rights.

Day 1 Morocco and a New Republic

Do Now

Why would a newly independent country seek friendship across an ocean?

Source A Recognition and Diplomacy

Morocco is in northwestern Africa, beside the Atlantic Ocean and close to the Mediterranean Sea. Its ruler, Sultan Sidi Muhammad ibn Abd Allah, also called Mohammed III, opened Moroccan ports to American ships in 1777. This action offered the new United States an important international connection during its struggle for independence. A treaty followed in 1786 and American ratification in 1787. These were different steps in a developing relationship. [1, 2]

Morocco acted as a sovereign African state with its own interests in commerce and diplomacy. Thomas Barclay negotiated for the United States under authority from American diplomats. The relationship challenges an account of the founding era that considers only Europe and North America. Geographic distance did not prevent an African government from participating in the new republic’s international affairs. [1, 2]

Quick Write

Explain how Morocco’s actions broaden our understanding of the new nation’s international relationships. Cite one detail.