

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Period: \_\_\_\_\_

## Jefferson's Presidency – The Election of 1800

*Directions:* Read and analyze the following documents. Answer each question in the space provided.

### Document 1

*Jefferson's First Inaugural Address establishes freedom of opinion as the key-note of his administration, and asks a national unity in which "we are all Republicans, we are all Federalists."*

"...this [election] being now decided by the voice of the nation, announced according to the rules of the Constitution, all will, of course, arrange themselves under the will of the law, and unite in common efforts for the common good. All, too, will bear in mind this sacred principle, that though the will of the majority is in all cases to prevail, that will to be rightful must be reasonable; that the minority possess their equal rights, which equal law must protect, and to violate would be oppression. Let us, then, fellow-citizens, unite with one heart and one mind...

We are all Republicans, we are all Federalists. If there be among us who would wish to dissolve this Union or to change its republican form, let them stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it... Sometimes it is said that man can not be trusted with the government of himself. Can he, then, be trusted with the government of others? Or have we found angels in the forms of kings to govern him? Let history answer this question."

Source: *First Inaugural Address*, March 4, 1801. Jefferson, *Writings* (Ford, ed.), IX, 195ff. (*Viewpoints USA*, pg. 75)

1. *According to Jefferson, why should people be allowed to speak out against the government?*

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### Document 2

*Looking back, Jefferson calls his election, "the revolution of 1800."*

"The revolution of 1800... was as real a revolution in the principles of government as that of 1776 was in its form; not effected indeed by the sword, as that, but by the rational and peaceable instrument of reform, the suffrage of the people. The nation declared its will by dismissing functionaries [ideas] of one principle [party], and electing those of another, in the two branches, executive and legislative, submitted to their election. Over the judiciary department, the Constitution had deprived them of their control."

Source: *Letter to Spencer Roane*. Jefferson, *Writings* (Ford, ed.), XII, 136. (*Viewpoints USA* pg. 76)

2. *According to Jefferson, why was his election, "the revolution of 1800"?*

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### Document 3

*Two historians, Charles and Mary Beard, claim that Jefferson put his democratic principles into practice.*

“On account of his commitments and the strength of the Federalists in Congress, Jefferson had to proceed cautiously after his inauguration; and yet he and his followers moved steadily in the direction which they had mapped out during the campaign of 1800... Jefferson’s inauguration... was marked by studied simplicity. Republicans had thought that Washington’s custom of reading his messages to Congress smacked of the speech from the throne. Jefferson... adopted the practice of sending his recommendations to Congress by a clerk...

In the business of government, the Republicans... kept their thesis well in mind. They had denounced the funded debt as a means of creating a “money power”; they did not repudiate any part of it but they paid it off as rapidly as they could. They had objected to the excise tax, especially on whisky, and they quickly abolished it amid the general rejoicing of the back-country farmers. They had protested against the high cost of the federal establishment and they reduced expenses... They had held commerce in low esteem and viewed the navy as a Federalist device for defending it...”

Source: Charles A. Beard and Mary Beard, *The Rise of American Civilization*. New York. Macmillan (1933) 1961, I, 383-384. (*Viewpoints USA* pg. 76)

3. According to Charles and Mary Beard, what were **two** ways Jefferson put his democratic principles (giving more power to the people) into practice?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

### Document 4

*But others question whether government policies really changed during Jefferson’s administration.*

“Despite Jefferson’s “philosophy” and opposition to the views of his predecessors, he made remarkably few changes in the policies of the government during his two terms as President of the United States. Although he later referred to his election as the “revolution of 1800,” there was little in his inaugural address to substantiate such a view. Stating that “we are all Republicans, we are all Federalists,” he pledged his administration to the “honest payment of our debts and the sound preservation of the public faith; encouragement of agriculture and of commerce its handmaid [companion].” The inaugural was so conciliatory [peace-making] in tone that Hamilton thought it “virtually a candid [honest] retraction [withdrawal] of past misapprehensions [delusions], and a pledge to the community that the new President will not lend himself to dangerous innovations [ideas], but in essential points tread [follow] in the steps” of the Federalists. Hamilton had the measure of the man.”

Source: H.J. Carman, H.C. Syrett, and B.W. Wishy, *A History of the American People*. New York. Knopf (1952) 1960, 315. (*Viewpoints USA* pg. 76)

4. According to the historians and Alexander Hamilton, how did Jefferson “tread in the steps of the Federalists”?

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