**The Federalist No. 10**

The Utility of the Union as a Safeguard Against Domestic Faction and Insurrection

James Madison (most likely)

Thursday, November 22, 1787

democratic

tendency

enemies / false, lying

stained

combined

nourishment

foolish / get rid of

total destruction

**To the People of the State of New York:**

AMONG the numerous advantages promised by a well-constructed Union, none deserves to be more accurately developed than its tendency to break and control the violence of faction. The friend of popular governments never finds himself so much alarmed for their character and fate, as when he contemplates their propensity to this dangerous vice. He will not fail, therefore, to set a due value on any plan which, without violating the principles to which he is attached, provides a proper cure for it. The instability, injustice, and confusion introduced into the public councils, have, in truth, been the mortal diseases under which popular governments have everywhere perished; as they continue to be the favorite and fruitful topics from which the adversaries to liberty derive their most specious declamations. …. Complaints are everywhere heard from our most considerate and virtuous citizens, equally the friends of public and private faith, and of public and personal liberty, that our governments are too unstable, that the public good is disregarded in the conflicts of rival parties, and that measures are too often decided, not according to the rules of justice and the rights of the minor party, but by the superior force of an interested and overbearing majority. … These must be chiefly, if not wholly, effects of the unsteadiness and injustice with which a factious spirit has tainted our public administrations.

By a faction, I understand a number of citizens, whether amounting to a majority or a minority of the whole, who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community.

There are two methods of curing the mischiefs of faction: the one, by removing its causes; the other, by controlling its effects.

There are again two methods of removing the causes of faction: the one, by destroying the liberty which is essential to its existence; the other, by giving to every citizen the same opinions, the same passions, and the same interests.

It could never be more truly said than of the first remedy, that it was worse than the disease. Liberty is to faction what air is to fire, an aliment without which it instantly expires. But it could not be less folly to abolish liberty, which is essential to political life, because it nourishes faction, than it would be to wish the annihilation of air, which is essential to animal life, because it imparts to fire its destructive agency.

The second expedient is as impracticable as the first would be unwise. As long as the reason of man continues fallible, and he is at liberty to exercise it, different opinions will be formed. As long as the connection subsists between his reason and his self-love, his opinions and his passions will have a reciprocal influence on each other; and the former will be objects to which the latter will attach themselves. The diversity in the faculties of men, from which the rights of property originate, is not less an insuperable obstacle to a uniformity of interests. The protection of these faculties is the first object of government.

…

imperfect

abilities

impossible

underlying

political / enthusiasm

hatred

owning land

jerk, rattle

questions, research

achievable

caused

come together

The latent causes of faction are thus sown in the nature of man; and we see them everywhere brought into different degrees of activity, according to the different circumstances of civil society. A zeal for different opinions concerning religion, concerning government, and many other points, as well of speculation as of practice; an attachment to different leaders ambitiously contending for pre-eminence and power; or to persons of other descriptions whose fortunes have been interesting to the human passions, have, in turn, divided mankind into parties, inflamed them with mutual animosity, and rendered them much more disposed to vex and oppress each other than to co-operate for their common good. … But the most common and durable source of factions has been the various and unequal distribution of property. Those who hold and those who are without property have ever formed distinct interests in society. … A landed interest, a manufacturing interest, a mercantile interest, a moneyed interest, with many lesser interests, grow up of necessity in civilized nations, and divide them into different classes, actuated by different sentiments and views. …

The inference to which we are brought is, that the *causes* of faction cannot be removed, and that relief is only to be sought in the means of controlling its *effects*.

If a faction consists of less than a majority, relief is supplied by the republican principle, which enables the majority to defeat its sinister views by regular vote. It may clog the administration, it may convulse the society; but it will be unable to execute and mask its violence under the forms of the Constitution. When a majority is included in a faction, the form of popular government, on the other hand, enables it to sacrifice to its ruling passion or interest both the public good and the rights of other citizens. To secure the public good and private rights against the danger of such a faction, and at the same time to preserve the spirit and the form of popular government, is then the great object to which our inquiries are directed. …

By what means is this object attainable? Evidently by one of two only. Either the existence of the same passion or interest in a majority at the same time must be prevented, or the majority, having such coexistent passion or interest, must be rendered, by their number and local situation, unable to concert and carry into effect schemes of oppression. …

assignment to representatives

prosperity, happiness

area

keeping others down

rapid burning fire

deteriorate

collection of state governments

illness

From this view of the subject it may be concluded that a pure democracy, by which I mean a society consisting of a small number of citizens, who assemble and administer the government in person, can admit of no cure for the mischiefs of faction. A common passion or interest will, in almost every case, be felt by a majority of the whole…

A republic, by which I mean a government in which the scheme of representation takes place, opens a different prospect, and promises the cure for which we are seeking. … The two great points of difference between a democracy and a republic are: first, the delegation of the government, in the latter, to a small number of citizens elected by the rest; secondly, the greater number of citizens, and greater sphere of country, over which the latter may be extended.

The question resulting is, whether small or extensive republics are more favorable to the election of proper guardians of the public weal; …

…The smaller the society, the fewer probably will be the distinct parties and interests composing it; the fewer the distinct parties and interests, the more frequently will a majority be found of the same party; and the smaller the number of individuals composing a majority, and the smaller the compass within which they are placed, the more easily will they concert and execute their plans of oppression. Extend the sphere, and you take in a greater variety of parties and interests; you make it less probable that a majority of the whole will have a common motive to invade the rights of other citizens…

The influence of factious leaders may kindle a flame within their particular States, but will be unable to spread a general conflagration through the other States. A religious sect may degenerate into a political faction in a part of the Confederacy; but the variety of sects dispersed over the entire face of it must secure the national councils against any danger from that source. A rage for paper money, for an abolition of debts, for an equal division of property, or for any other improper or wicked project, will be less apt to pervade the whole body of the Union than a particular member of it; in the same proportion as such a malady is more likely to taint a particular county or district, than an entire State.

In the extent and proper structure of the Union, therefore, we behold a republican remedy for the diseases most incident to republican government. And according to the degree of pleasure and pride we feel in being republicans, ought to be our zeal in cherishing the spirit and supporting the character of Federalists.

PUBLIUS

**Teacher’s Guide**

Name of Text: **Federalist No. 10:** The Utility of the Union as a Safeguard Against Domestic Faction and Insurrection

Grade Level: 11th-12th grade

Lesson Developer: Angela Orr

* ***Quantitative Measurement:*** The Federalist Papers have aLexile of 1450.
* ***Qualitative Measurements:*** Complex structure, high language and vocabulary demands with Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary, sophisticated themes, a complex argumentative structures, and high knowledge of discipline specific content in U.S. government and Constitutional understanding
* ***Reader & Task***: Analyzing and interpreting a Federalist Paper is a cognitively demanding exercise, as this type of text is structured in a non-traditional way and is full of archaic language and structures. This type of reading is not typical in earlier grades. Reading this text as a part of a government/civics curriculum would provide students with a college preparatory experience. This close reading example provides many more questions than is typical of a close read. After teaching with this document for many years, it became apparent that it took time and ample discussion for students to truly comprehend the beauty and craft of Madison’s argument. This document seems to provide an accurate example of the type of complex text that students might encounter in college, and, without learning the mechanisms through which to break down the text and follow its architecture, students might look to the internet or their instructor for an outside explanation. In my experience, students who tackle this document successfully feel an enormous sense of pride in their ability.

Standards: Nevada State Social Studies: C13.3 CCSS: RHST.11-12.1, RHST.11-12.2, RHST.11-12.4, RHST.11-12.5, RHST.11-12.10;

WHST.11-12.2, WHST.11-12.4, WHST.11-12.9, WHST.11-12.10; SL.12.1, SL.12.2; L.12.1,

L.12.2, L.12.4

Dedication: This lesson is dedicated to Dr. Scott Casper who has inspired *We the People* teachers around the nation to read this seminal document with students.

Vocabulary: Consider employing strategic instruction of academic vocabulary alongside this close reading. A few options for viewing vocabulary in context could be integrated during or after the reading. Some possible questions appear below.

* On line 18, the word “declamations” appears. First, brainstorm other familiar words that share a root with this word. What clues does this give you about the word itself? Do these clues fall in line with the context clues and the meaning of the sentence in which “declamation” appears?
  + Students might come up with words like: claim, exclaim, exclamation, declare
* With your understanding of the text and surrounding context clues, what do you believe the word “expedient” means in line 43?
* The word “actuated” appears on lines 28 and 68. How can our understanding of other words with the root “act” help us understand its meaning?
* Look at the phrase “such as faction” in lines 80-81. What is the antecedent, or the words that come before the phrase, that tell us what “such a faction” is referring to? How does this understanding and the next sentence help us understand where Madison is taking the reader in the next part of his work?

| Text Dependent Questions | Teacher Notes and Possible Textual Evidence  For Student Answers |
| --- | --- |
| *Depending on the needs of your individual students, you may want to focus their attention on the fourth question as the first question. You may want to have students use lines 27-30 to determine how Madison defines faction, as this is the most important definition in the document. However, if you choose to move through the document from beginning to end, this question is fourth in line.* | |
| What do we learn about this document from the title and lines 1-6? | This is an orientation question to ensure a basic contextualization (name, date, author, audience) of the document. Students learn the name of the document as well as that it is part of a longer series, “No. 10.” They also learn that there is no surety that Madison was the document’s author. The document is addressed in a strange format “To the People of the State of New York.” (Because this would be read in a larger unit of study, students would likely already know about the framing of the Constitution and that this document was created by Federalists to convince the people to ratify it in their state ratification conventions.) |
| From the title and the first sentence, what do we learn about the advantages of a well-constructed union? | Students must understand that the major thesis of this work rests on the idea that the nature/construction of the government “breaks and controls the violence of faction.” They might also notice that the problem is with “domestic” factions (those from our own lands) as well as with insurrection.  NOTE: Faction is not yet defined for students, as later they will use context clues as well as learn Madison’s definition of this important term. When possible, hold off on defining this term. |
| In the first paragraph how do the following words develop Madison’s tone? *violence, alarmed, dangerous vice, perished, instability, injustice, confusion, mortal diseases, conflict, rival parties, tainted, complaints, adversaries to liberty, specious, overbearing majority, unsteadiness* | All of these words are used to describe faction or the problems associated with it. They set a very negative tone regarding the problems of faction. There seems to be a sense of urgency in dealing with these problems, as “complaints are everywhere heard.” In using words like “mortal disease,” “perish,” “cure,” “tainted,” Madison compares the problems of faction with a health crisis. This comparison appears again later in the piece. It becomes clear that Madison emphasizes the prevention of factions for the security of the Union. |
| In lines 27-30, how does Madison define faction? | Three descriptors together describe a faction:   * “a number of citizens, whether amounting to a majority or minority of the whole” (a group, big or small, but not the totality of the population) * “united and actuated by some common impulse or passion, or of interest” (a common goal) * “adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community” (not for the common good or in contrary to individual rights) |
| Make a T-Chart and title each side with one of the two ways to “cure the mischiefs of faction.”  Take notes in this chart as we continue reading. Start by discussing the meaning of lines 33-36 and placing important information in the chart. | This T-Chart becomes important, because in lines 31-36, Madison sets up two solutions to the first of the two problems he outlines, which is highly confusing to students. He will not go back to the second cause until line 72.   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Remove Causes | Destroy Effects | | Destroy Liberty  Give every citizen same opinions and interests |  | |
| Discuss how Madison uses and defends his analogy, “Liberty is to faction what air is to fire.” How is “destroying liberty” worse than the disease of faction? | Teacher Note: Before asking this question to a small group, you may want to ask another quick question to ensure students are following the argument – To what does Madison refer with the words “first remedy” in line 37? (destroy liberty). In addition, you may want to review that fire needs oxygen to be sustained.  This extended analogy requires students to stop and reread this section likely more than one or two times.  Liberty is essential to political life like air is essential to animal life. Air is also essential to fire, but we would not rid ourselves of air to put out the dangers of fire, just as we should not abolish liberty to remove the negative effects of factions. Madison also goes back to his analogy of faction as a disease, but determines that the remedy of destroying liberty is worse than the disease of faction, because liberty is essential.  Ask students to add notes to their T-Chart. |
| An expedient is an action that produces an immediate result. According to the paragraph beginning on line 43: What is the second expedient referring to? Why is this both “impracticable” and “unwise”? | Expedient refers to the second way to remove the causes of faction – to give everyone the same opinions and interests.  It is impracticable and unwise because humans are imperfect and will always have different opinions. A person’s reason and his self-love each influence one another, so that opinions and passions align and attach. Plus, because the abilities of people differ and their abilities lead to differing degrees of wealth, there is no “uniformity of interest.” Plus, the protection of these abilities to make a living is the “first object of government.” (This is a referential nod to Locke and founding documents including the Declaration of Independence citing the need for government protection of property rights and “happiness.”)  Ask students to add notes to their T-Chart. |
| What are the causes of faction? Make sure that you can both cite evidence and explain each in your own words. (See lines 53-69.) | Teacher Note: For this question, have students work with a partner or two to jot down some answers. Have them practice explaining their evidence choices to one another before having them share with the whole group. Being able to explain evidence in your own words is a useful skill and a necessary for college and career readiness.  The causes of faction are “latent” and “sown into the nature of man” and include:   * Different opinions concerning religion and government and others * Attachment to different leaders trying to gain power * Attachments to other persons whose fortunes interest the people * People want to be with those that agree with them, “parties,” and are then in opposition and have “animosity” for those who do not * Biggest problem: unequal distribution of property: landed vs. non-property owners, manufacturers, merchants, bankers, etc. |
| Return to your T-Chart, and X out one entire side of your T-Chart, based upon what you learn in lines 70-72. Why can this solution not be considered a “cure for the mischiefs of faction.” | |  |  | | --- | --- | | Remove Causes | Destroy Effects | | Destroy Liberty  Give every citizen same opinions and interests  Impracticable and unwise  People have different opinions and passions  Many causes of faction, including unequal distribution of property and different occupations with different interests |  | | You cannot remove the causes because they are the most natural part of being human. In addition, liberal governments by the people are supposed to protect private property. Destroying liberty destroys the very type of government we want. | | |
| Using lines 73-82, describe why majority factions are more dangerous in a popular government than minority factions. | Minority factions are cured by the “republican principle.” The majority can just defeat “its sinister views by regular vote.” These groups cause delay (“clog the administration”) and upset the people (“convulse society”) but are unable to “execute and mask its violence under the forms of the Constitution.” That is, the construct of the constitution prevents these minority factions from becoming too powerful.  Majority factions, on the other hand, popular government “enables it to sacrifice to its ruling passion or interest both the public good and the rights of other citizens.” Republican rule allows for majority factions to take away the rights of the minority. And this is why Madison contends that majority factions are “the great object to which our inquiries are directed.” |
| Place “stop a majority faction” on the correct side of your T-Chart. Then, draw two lines going down in opposite directions from this possible solution outlined by Madison.  From lines 83-87, determine the two manners Madison proposes for stopping a majority faction. | Because Madison again splinters his argument, students are redirected to the graphic organizer.   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Remove Causes | Destroy Effects | | Destroy Liberty  Give every citizen same opinions and interests  Impracticable and unwise  People have different opinions and passions  Many causes of faction, including unequal distribution of property and different occupations with different interests | Stop Majority Factions   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Prevent the same passion or interest from existing in a majority | Or render the majority unable to come together to “carry into effect schemes of oppression” | | |
| Why is it that factions cannot be prevented in democracies? How is a republic better for curing the disease of faction? | In a pure democracy, where a small group of people “assemble and administer the government in person” there will always be a common passion or interest by the whole group. Whereas in a republic, where people are represented by a small delegation that they select, there is likely to be less a chance for the same passion or interest, because a republic allows for a “greater number of citizens, and greater sphere of the country.” (lines 88-99) |
| Explain how Madison develops his claim that large and extended republics are better at preventing majority factions. | He begins by describing the problems with small republics: “the fewer probably will be the distinct parties and interests” and the fewer of these interests, “the more frequently will a majority be found of the same party.” He goes on to suggest that the smaller the number of people needed to make a majority and the smaller the area in which they reside, the “more easily will they concert and execute their plans of oppression.” His solution is to “extend the sphere,” or make the republic larger. In a larger republic, there are more interests and parties, and “you make it less probable that a majority of the whole will have a common motive to invade the rights of other citizens.”  Madison then gives several examples of how factions may develop in each of the states or regions but would not be able to spread throughout the other states.   * “factious leader may kindle a flame…but will be unable to spread…” * “religious sect may degenerate into a political faction…but the variety of sects dispersed over the entire face of it must secure the national councils against any danger from that source” (a variety of religions makes it impossible for one to rule) * Paper money, abolition of debts, equal division of property is “less apt to pervade the whole body of the Union than a particular member of it” (member of it = state)   Madison returns to the disease analogy to describe that a certain “malady is more likely to taint a particular county or district, than an entire state.” |
| Discuss with your group the possible reasons why Madison would have created this particular architecture for his argument. Why would he spend so much time describing possible solutions to faction that he then proves to be ineffective? What rhetorical devices did he use in his argument? | This final question allows students to reflect on the entire piece. Students may begin to understand that the nature of convincing people to accept a new form of government makes it necessary to describe why other forms would not work well. In addition, in presenting possible cures for faction that are dismissed, his final argument (one made with no historical or even philosophical proof) seems more valid.  Madison makes use of powerful analogies as well as hyperbole and strong descriptive language. The recurrence of references to both disease and fire are highly effective examples of this. |

Vocabulary

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **These words merit LESS time and attention**  (They are concrete and easy to explain, or describe events/ processes/ideas/concepts/experiences that are familiar to your students.) | | | **These words merit MORE time and attention** (They are abstract, have multiple meanings, and/or are a part  of a large family of words with related meanings. These words are likely to describe events, ideas, processes or experiences that most of your student will be unfamiliar with.) | | |
| **Line #** | **Word** | **Definition** | **Line #** | **Word** | **Definition** |
| 11 | Vice | Wicket, evil, or criminal behavior | 44 | The reason of man | Logic that can be used to discover the true nature of humanity and the world in which we live |
| 16 | Perished | Died; ceased to be |  |  |  |
| 19 | Virtuous | Good; just; moral |  |  |  |
| 29 | Adverse | Causing harm or injury |  |  |  |
| 40 | Nourishes | Helps grow |  |  |  |
| 47 | Reciprocal | Involving an exchanges between two parties |  |  |  |
| 57 | Speculation | A risky business venture |  |  |  |
| 58 | Ambitiously | With strong desire to reach a goal |  |  |  |
| 58 | Pre-eminence | Foremost, leading |  |  |  |
| 66 | Mercantile | Having to do with business |  |  |  |
| 68 | Sentiments | Opinion; a way of thinking or feeling about something |  |  |  |
| 116 | Abolition | The act of getting rid of something |  |  |  |

**Writing Task Options A (suggested) and Option B (enrichment):**

**Option A** - Practice choosing appropriate evidence and developing sound reasoning to support a claim (This option is suggested as the number of minutes working through the reading may not allow for writing a full-blown essay.)

Directions for implementing the graphic organizer that follows.

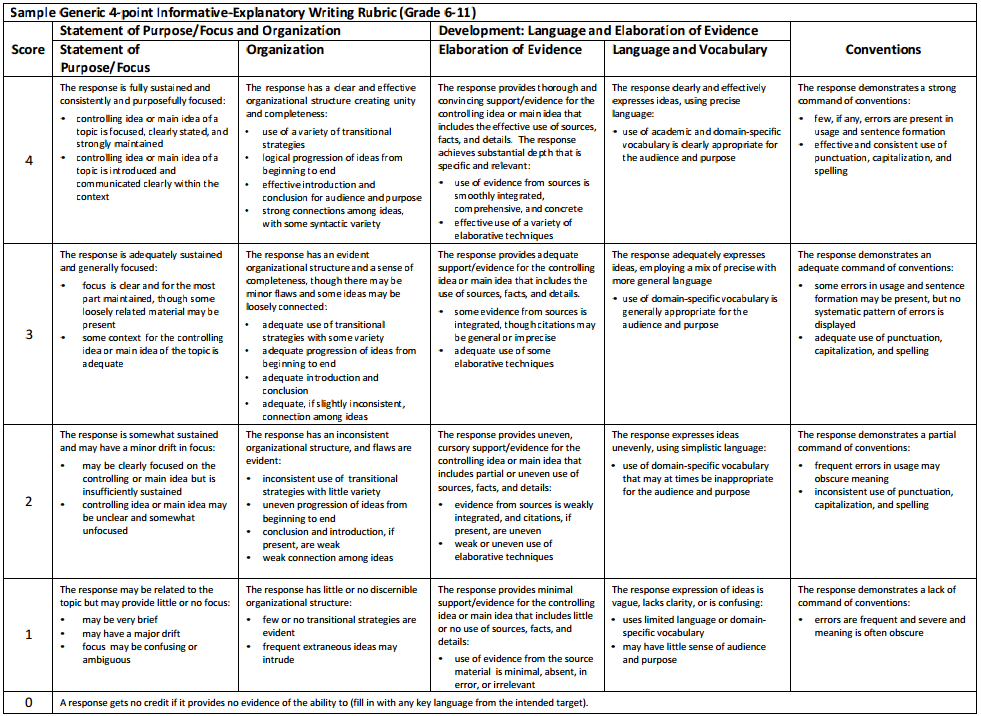
1. Explain to students that some of the most difficult aspects of writing in the social sciences include: choosing the most appropriate evidence to support a claim, paraphrasing that evidence appropriately, and explaining and elaborating on the choice for that evidence (reasoning). The activity that follows aims to help students practice these three skills using a pre-determined claim and pre-selected quotations from Federalist Ten.
2. Place students in pairs (or have them work alone, depending on your pedagogical aim). Provide them with the attached graphic organizer titled with the simple claim: **Factions are dangerous to civil society and government** Allow students a few minutes to familiarize themselves with the organizer.
3. Take five to ten minutes to review the role of reasoning in making an argument.
   1. Reasoning provides voice to an argument. It explains how the evidence supports the claim and elaborates on the evidence itself.
   2. It’s important to remember that a piece of evidence does not speak for itself. Some examples to share with students might be a courtroom drama or the nightly news. In a courtroom, a witness may present evidence of a bloody shoe, but that evidence means nothing without reasoning. Both the prosecutor and the defense attorney can spin the evidence to fit their claims. As a second example, it may be fun to show current events clips wherein the same piece of evidence (or sound bite) are reviewed by different news casters and commentators in the same way. It is not difficult to find, for instance, a clip of the president or other official speaking and very different interpretations of this evidence from different networks. To hit the point home, you might be able to find “coverage” of the same issue on the Daily Show or other comedic news show.
4. For the next step, have students work with their partner to paraphrase each of the pieces of evidence in the first column.
5. Next, students will evaluate the extent to which these pieces of evidence support the claim by ranking the evidence from 1 (best supports) to 8 (least supports). Student groups can then share their rankings and explain their top choices. In doing so, they are verbally practicing reasoning (see definition above).
6. Finally, student pairs will work together to write out their reasoning for the top three ranked pieces of evidence to support the claim. In this way, they will have written an argument based on Madion’s Federalist 10, but done so in a linear and structured fashion.

**Option B** – Essay (enrichment)

Describe why Madison claimed that factions were dangerous to civil society and government. Why did he believe that a majority faction would likely sacrifice the public good and rights of other citizens? Explain why Madison believed a large and extended republic, instead of a pure democracy or smaller republics, could be more effective in stopping majority factions from gaining power.

Writing Task Checklist: *Please refer to this checklist as you develop your short essay.*

* Introduce the essay with a paragraph that describes Madison’s view of faction.
* Cite evidence (paraphrases and short quotations) to support your analysis of each case.
  + Identify two to three pieces of evidence from Federalist 10 that illuminate the problems of factions as well as three pieces of evidence that demonstrate why Madison believes an extended republic provides a solution to these problems. For each case:
* Reasoning is the most essential component of your analysis. Ensure that for every piece of evidence and conjecture you make, you provide details, elaboration, explanation, and make clear your thinking.
* See 4 point rubric for essential components including: purpose, focus, organization, development of language and elaboration of evidence, and proper grammar and conventions.



**Claim:** **Factions are dangerous to civil society and government.**

| **Possible Evidence** | **What is this text saying?**  **(in your own words)** | | **Ranking**  **1-8 (1=best)** | **Choose your three (3) top ranked pieces of evidence. Write out the REASONING to demonstrate why this piece of evidence supports the claim. Be clear and specific.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| When a majority is included in a faction, the form of popular government, on the other hand, enables it to sacrifice to its ruling passion or interest both the public good and the rights of other citizens. | |  |  |  |
| The latent causes of faction are thus sown in the nature of man; | |  |  |
| By a faction, I understand a number of citizens, whether amounting to a majority or a minority of the whole, who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community. | |  |  |
| The inference to which we are brought is, that the *causes* of faction cannot be removed, and that relief is only to be sought in the means of controlling its *effects*. | |  |  |
| But the most common and durable source of factions has been the various and unequal distribution of property. Those who hold and those who are without property have ever formed distinct interests in society. … A landed interest, a manufacturing interest, a mercantile interest, a moneyed interest, with many lesser interests, grow up of necessity in civilized nations, and divide them into different classes, actuated by different sentiments and views. | |  |  |
| From this view of the subject it may be concluded that a pure democracy, by which I mean a society consisting of a small number of citizens, who assemble and administer the government in person, can admit of no cure for the mischiefs of faction. A common passion or interest will, in almost every case, be felt by a majority of the whole. | |  |  |  |
| A zeal for different opinions concerning religion, concerning government, and many other points, as well of speculation as of practice; an attachment to different leaders ambitiously contending for pre-eminence and power; or to persons of other descriptions whose fortunes have been interesting to the human passions, have, in turn, divided mankind into parties, inflamed them with mutual animosity, and rendered them much more disposed to vex and oppress each other than to co-operate for their common good | |  |  |
| Complaints are everywhere heard from our most considerate and virtuous citizens, equally the friends of public and private faith, and of public and personal liberty, that our governments are too unstable, that the public good is disregarded in the conflicts of rival parties, and that measures are too often decided, not according to the rules of justice and the rights of the minor party, but by the superior force of an interested and overbearing majority. | |  |  |

**Questions to Consider When Choosing the Best Pieces of Evidence to Support a Claim**

* Do my chosen pieces of evidence make sense in the following equation:

**evidence & reasoning + evidence & reasoning + evidence & reasoning = well supported claim**

\*Hint: If any of your pieces of evidence contradict one another and this contradiction is not easily reconciled with your reasoning, you may need to choose a different combination of evidence.

* What comes right before and right after this evidence in the text? That is, what is the context for this piece of evidence? Is the context important? Is the date or background important to understanding this evidence?
* Does this evidence link directly to my claim? Or, am I trying to force a fit with my claim?
* Can I explain my reasoning concisely? Can I explain why this piece of evidence is important?
* Are there important details, explanations, and elaborations (to enhance my reasoning) I can make from this evidence to strengthen my claim?
* If there are two related pieces of evidence, which seems most powerful? Why?
* What information would I need to use to introduce this piece of evidence?
* Is there a quotable piece of this quote? If so, what is the quotable piece? How would I attribute it? (Who said it?) Or, is this piece of evidence better as a paraphrase? How do I know?
* Does any of this evidence seem to better serve the counterclaim? Explain.