

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

RH.6-8.2: Reading for Main Idea

### Conflict with American Indians and Adams Administration

Title:	
<p>The two main DemocraticRepublican leaders, Jefferson and James Madison, saw the Alien and Sedition Acts as a serious misuse of power on the part of the federal government. They decided to organize opposition to the Alien and Sedition Acts by appealing to the states. Madison drew up resolutions that were adopted by the Virginia legislature, while Jefferson wrote resolutions that were approved in Kentucky. The Kentucky Resolutions in particular asserted the principle of nullification—that states had the right to nullify, or consider void, any act of Congress that they deemed unconstitutional. Virginia and Kentucky viewed the Alien and Sedition Acts as unconstitutional violations of First Amendment citizens rights.</p> <p>The resolutions warned of the dangers that the Alien and Sedition Acts posed to a government of checks and balances guaranteed by the Constitution.</p>	<p>“Let the honest advocate of confidence [in government] read the alien and sedition acts, and say if the Constitution has not been wise in fixing limits to the government it created, and whether we should be wise in destroying those limits.” —8th Resolution, The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions (Thomas Jefferson)</p> <p>Moreover, Virginia and Kentucky claimed the right to declare null and void federal laws going beyond powers granted by the Constitution to the Federal government.</p> <p>The resolutions also called for other states to adopt similar declarations. No other state did so, however, and the issue died out by the next presidential election. Nevertheless, the resolutions showed that the balance of power between the states and the federal government remained a controversial issue. In fact, the election of 1800 between Federalist John Adams and Republican Thomas Jefferson would center on this critical debate.</p>
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