

THE SHAYS REBELLION

FACILITATION GUIDE

PREPERATION BEFORE CLASS

REVIEW BACKGROUND

Here's some background information to help prepare you to lead your students through this role-play.

SUMMARY

Set in 1787 in the aftermath of the Shays Rebellion and the attack on the federal armory in Springfield, Massachusetts, students take on the roles of Farmers, Regulators, Bankers and Merchants. Students work together to craft the state's response to the rebellion by voting on proposals (see page 5).

KEY QUESTIONS

- How should residents protest against the government?
- When is it justified for the government to disperse a protest?

STUDENT ROLES

As students log into VOXPOP, they are distributed across the following four groups:

BANKERS	FARMERS	MERCHANTS	REGULATORS
<p>Bankers loaned money to the state of Massachusetts. Now it's time for the state government to pay them back. A state must pay back its debts – or else, who will ever trust MA?</p> <p>Bankers support proposals that maintain order and trust in the state government.</p>	<p>Farmers, many veterans of the Revolutionary War, are trapped by debts and high taxes. They believe the state should respect its veterans, not tax them into poverty!</p> <p>Farmers support proposals they hope will create a more fair state government.</p>	<p>Merchants believe that only responsible citizens should have a say in government. Our state will fall apart if dangerous people take control!</p> <p>Merchants support proposals that encourage order.</p>	<p>Regulators in western Massachusetts led the rebellion against the state government. They say we had to rebel just as we rebelled against the British. No taxation without representation!</p> <p>Regulators support proposals that limit the power of government and empower residents.</p>

SETUP

Prepare to run the role-play in your classroom.

CREATE A SESSION

Create a session for each class period in which you will run the role-play. Go to:

voxpath.io/role-plays/the-shays-rebellion

You will be asked to **Name** your session. We suggest naming it after the class period in which you will run it.

Then you will be asked to enter your **email address**, so we can send you an email with the link to the session. Save the email and use it to open the session when the class starts.

VOXPOP saves your progress as you play, so you can run the role-play over multiple days. Just click on the link in the email to re-open it.

DECIDE ON DURATION

In this guide, we suggest timings for a 60-minute session, including notes about sections that you can skip if you are pressed for time.

For a more relaxed experience, you can split the role-play into multiple sessions. Running a VOXPOP over two 45-minute sessions works particularly well. Look for the + in suggested timings to see where it's beneficial to add time. If you split the role-play into two sessions, we suggest ending the first day after the Issues (page 3). You can always revisit the videos the next day if you like. Just hit the Back button at the bottom.

CLASSROOM SETUP

When you're ready to start the role-play, use the link in the email to open the session on your classroom's main screen.

Students should each use an individual device to log in and interact with the role-play. They can use any web-enabled device, including PCs, Chromebooks, tablets and phones.

You can leave desks in their normal configuration, but students will be moving around the class and meeting in different groups throughout the role-play. They should carry their device with them when they move.



INTRODUCTION

During this phase students are introduced to the situation, read their profiles and get into character.

10 minutes total

ASSIGN PROFILES - 3 min

Before class starts, open the VOXPOP session you created on your classroom screen.

As students arrive they can log in on their web-enabled device by going to the **URL**

voxpath.io/student

Students should then enter the 6-character alphanumeric **Code** displayed on the classroom screen.

They will be asked to type in a display name.

- If students are returning to a session that's already in progress, they must type their name exactly as they did before. Names are case- and punctuation-sensitive.
- Names will be displayed on the classroom screen.

As students log in, they will be assigned to **Groups** and their name will appear on the screen.

If students arrive late, you can bring up the **URL** & session **Code** by clicking on .

WELCOME - 1.5 min

A video introduces students to VOXPOP.

THE SITUATION - 4 min

A video provides the historical background that students need to know.

PROFILES - 3 min

Your students receive information about their roles, including their **Group** and a personal **Bio**.

Students should hit the yellow button on their screen when they're done reading.

INTRODUCTIONS - 3 min

In this phase, students get into character by introducing themselves to one another.

Walk around and look at your students' profiles to get a sense of who they are.

VALUES

During this phase students discuss their group's goals and share them with the class.

10 minutes total

VALUES INTRO - 1 min

A video explains the next activity.

DISCUSS VALUES - 4+ min

Students meet with their **Group** and establish common goals.

Each **Group** has a different question to discuss. The questions are listed below along with their group's perspective on the value. Each **Group** must each select one representative to explain the answer to the class.

BANKERS value TRUST	FARMERS value FAIRNESS	MERCHANTS value RESPONSIBILITY	REGULATORS value LIBERTY
<p>Why does the government need people's trust?</p> <p>A government must keep its promises, or citizens won't listen to them.</p> <p>If nobody trusts us, no one will do business with Massachusetts or its people.</p>	<p>Why should the government treat everyone fairly?</p> <p>A state government should represent everyone in the state.</p> <p>Our government steals from us!</p>	<p>Who should be trusted with government power?</p> <p>Good governance requires responsible citizens.</p> <p>If we let dangerous people control our state, Massachusetts will fall apart!</p>	<p>Does the state live up to the Revolution's values?</p> <p>We fought the British so we could be free from oppression.</p> <p>The state does not represent us; instead, they tax and jail the poor!</p>

SHARE YOUR VALUES - 5 min

In this phase, students practice public speaking and learn about the other **Groups**.

Encourage **Groups** to cheer for each other and show support for the **Values** that align with theirs.

As you click **Next**, the software will call up the **Groups**, in this order:

- FARMERS
- BANKERS
- REGULATORS
- MERCHANTS

ISSUES

During this phase, we break the challenge facing the class into three issues.

8 minutes total

ISSUES INTRO - 1 min

A video explains the next activity.

THE ISSUES - 7+ min

VOXPOP divides the conflict into three main **Issues**. There is one video per **Issue**.


These are the **Issues**:

FINANCE	REPRESENTATION	LAW
<p>During the Revolution, the state government didn't have the money to pay its soldiers. So, it issued notes. Many veteran Farmers sold these notes to Bankers for far less than the face value.</p> <p>Now the state has to repay the notes. To cover the expense, the government raised taxes on land, which hit Farmers particularly hard.</p> <p>How should the state handle its debts? What does our government owe to its veterans? And what do we owe to our investors?</p>	<p>The Massachusetts Constitution heavily favors Boston and the eastern region of the state. Regulators are leading the charge for greater representation.</p> <p>However, many of them participated in Shays Rebellion, an armed insurrection.</p> <p>What's more urgent: empowering people in western Massachusetts, or addressing the rebels who rose up against the state?</p>	<p>Daniel Shays' march on the federal armory in Springfield was the culmination of months of protests. Since last summer, armed protestors have been shutting down government buildings across the state.</p> <p>What's more important for the long term stability of Massachusetts: preventing future riots, or showing compassion to disenfranchised people throughout the state?</p>

POST-VIDEO DISCUSSIONS - Time-permitting

A discussion question will appear after each video plays, with suggestions for groups to call on. These classwide discussions are a good way to review the **Issues** and establish alliances between **Groups**.

However, **they are not necessary, and discussion is not included in the time estimates** given in this guide.

If you choose to answer the questions with your class, remind students to click the **Perspective** button  to learn more about what their group thinks.

COMMITTEES

During this section, students are divided into committees to work on one of the three issues.

10 minutes total

COMMITTEE INTRO - 1 min

A video explains the next activity.

WORK IN COMMITTEES - 9 min

In this phase, students must work with members of other **Groups** to select proposals that address the crisis.

Students from each **Group** are distributed across three **Committees**.

In their **Committees**, students:

- Vote on their individual devices to select one **Proposal** for a whole class vote,
- Pick a representative to explain and argue for their **Proposal** to the class,
- If applicable, pick a representative to present arguments against the proposal.

These are the **Proposals**:

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE	COMMITTEE ON REPRESENTATION	COMMITTEE ON LAW
<p>DEVALUE STATE NOTES</p> <p>Pay back notes based on how much investors paid. Someone who bought a \$20 state note for 50 cents will get 50 cents.</p> <p>Supporters: BANKERS</p>	<p>DISQUALIFICATION ACT</p> <p>For 3 years, rebels may not vote, sit on juries, or hold any civil office, even if they are elected.</p> <p>Supporters: MERCHANTS</p>	<p>RIOT ACT</p> <p>Sheriffs can stop gatherings of 12 or more armed people. Resisters will be imprisoned and lose all property.</p> <p>Supporters: MERCHANTS, BANKERS</p>
<p>SELL PUBLIC LAND</p> <p>Sell unused public land and use the money to cover state expenses. This would permit the state to lower taxes.</p> <p>Supporters: FARMERS, REGULATORS</p>	<p>MOVE CAPITAL TO CENTRAL M.A.</p> <p>Move the capital from Boston, a coastal city, to Springfield, a town in central Massachusetts.</p> <p>Supporters: REGULATORS</p>	<p>OATH OF ALLEGIANCE</p> <p>If rebels sign confessions and take an oath of allegiance to the state, they will not be executed or imprisoned.</p> <p>Supporters: FARMERS</p>

Your students' devices have more information about the proposals they can access by clicking 

Ask your students to tell you more about the proposals.

VOTE & EPILOGUE

During this section, students debate the solutions, cast votes, learn about what really happened and reflect on the experience.

17 minutes total

VOTE INTRO - 1 min

A video explains the next activity.

DEBATE & VOTE - 9 min

The class decides by majority vote whether to pass the **Proposals** selected by the **Committees**.

This is an opportunity for students to practice public speaking as they attempt to persuade classmates to vote for or against proposals.

Encourage debate! This is the last chance to address the crisis.

As you click **Next**, the website will prompt a **DEBATE** and then a **VOTE** on each proposal, in this order:

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

COMMITTEE ON REPRESENTATION

COMMITTEE ON LAW

WHAT HAPPENED - 7+ min

An **Epilogue** video explains what really happened.

When the video is done playing, these suggested discussion questions appear:

- What similarities do you see between the Shays Rebellion and political conflicts today?
- When is it justified for the government to disperse a protest?

The post-activity discussion gives students time to decompress from the role-playing experience.