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

Alternating Views on Shay’s Rebellion

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| Excerpt from *The American Vision* | Excerpt from Thomas Jefferson’s letter to William Smith on November 13, 1787 |
| People with greater income and social status tended to see the rebellion as signs that the new country was at risk. They feared that as state legislatures became more democratic and responsive to poor people, property rights and votes would be taken from  the wealthy. As General Henry Knox, a close aide to George Washington,  concluded: “What is to afford our security against the violence of lawless men?  Our government must be braced, changed, or altered to secure our lives and  property.”  These concerns were an important reason why many people, including merchants and artisans began to argue for a stronger central  Government. Congress called on the  states to correct any of these issues in the present government. The confederation’s failure to deal with conditions that might lead to rebellion proved that the Articles of Confederation were too weak. | What country before ever existed without a rebellion? And what country can preserve its liberties if their rulers are not warned from  time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance?  Let the people take arms. The remedy is to present them with the facts, pardon and pacify them. The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood  of patriots and tyrants. It is its natural manure. Our Constitutional Convention has [made too much of Shays’ rebellion]: and in the spur of the moment [I worry they will over-react].  Vocabulary:  Remedy: cure  Pardon: forgive  Pacify: calm down  Manure: fertilizer |

**Directions:** Reach each point of view and answer the questions below. The following definitions will help you answer the questions.

* **Perspective:** a particular attitude toward or way of regarding something.
* **Claim:** stating or asserting something as true without providing evidence or proof.
* **Hypothesize:** educated guess; to create an explanation with limited evidence.
* **Turning Point:** a significant event, idea, or historical event that brings about a substantial change.

1. Compare Jefferson’s **perspective** on Shay’s Rebellion with *The American Vision’s* perspective.
2. What **claims** does Jefferson make that shows he is in favor of the rebellion?
3. **Hypothesize** why Shay’s Rebellion was a **turning point** in American history.