Liberty and Justice

U.S. Government

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Grade Level	12th Grade	**Time Frame**	1-5 class period(s)
Subject	Social Studies	**Duration**	150 minutes
Course	U.S. Government		

Essential Question

What is the intention of "with liberty and justice for all" in our Pledge of Allegiance? What is justice? Do all people enjoy civil liberties in America?

Summary

In this lesson, students will use various strategies while defining the social contract and learning the origin of this political idea. Students will use instructional strategies to relate the ideas upon which our government was founded and research whether or not we are truly an equal society "with liberty and justice for all." Students will not only learn about current issues, but also create solutions to these problems in order to empower them in their educational experience.

Snapshot

Engage

Students examine the statement “with liberty and justice for all” and reflect on their individual interpretations of this text, then decide if the statement is always true, sometimes true, or never true.

Explore

Students graphically organize their prior knowledge about a concept into a definition using their own words and ideas.

Explain

Students read ideas and write the textual evidence from news articles that support their ideas from the Always, Sometimes, or Never True discussion.

Extend

Students write a summary statement about a concept or to summarize the main idea from textual information. Students can be presented with multiple pieces of text or forms of information and use the Gist strategy to compare or summarize the central idea related to all the information.

Evaluate

Students merge into groups of four and create action steps to solve the conflicts they read about earlier in the articles.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards (Social Studies: United States Government (9th through 12th grade))

USG.2.2: Identify the central ideas and importance of the concept of inalienable rights, including life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, the social contract, and the grievances stated in the Declaration of Independence and reflected in the Constitution of the United States.
USG.3.8: Analyze the concept of popular sovereignty, including the government's responsibility to legitimize majority rule while protecting minority rights.

Attachments

- Evaulation Rubric - Spanish.docx
- Evaulation Rubric - Spanish.pdf
- Evaulation Rubric.docx
- Evaulation Rubric.pdf
- Frayer Model - OKC Thunder Example - Spanish.docx
- Frayer Model - OKC Thunder Example - Spanish.pdf
- Frayer Model - OKC Thunder Example.docx
- Frayer Model - OKC Thunder Example.pdf
- Frayer Model - Social Contract - Spanish.docx
- Frayer Model - Social Contract - Spanish.pdf
- Frayer Model - Social Contract.docx
- Frayer Model - Social Contract.pdf
- Gist Handout.docx
- Gist Handout.pdf
- Gist Rubric.docx
- Gist Rubric.pdf

Materials

- Paper
- Pencil
- Notebook paper
- Copy paper
- SMART board
- Gist Handout (attached)
- Frayer Model Handout (attached)
- Frayer Model example, OKC Thunder (attached)
- Social Contract article (linked)

Engage

Always, Sometimes, or Never True: Teachers will provide participants with the statement “with liberty and justice for all.” This can either be written on the board or shown on the projector when students walk into the classroom. Teachers will then ask participants to read the statements and choose the answer that best describes their response to the statement: always, sometimes, or never true.

After students answer aloud, have participants write a short justification regarding their own response as to why they believe in what they wrote. Afterward, students can be guided with the following questions: What do liberty and justice mean to you? What recent events in the news, or personally, helped shape your opinion on this question? What factors do you think affect justice and liberty in America?

Explore

After the class discussion, hand each student a copy of Social Contract article. Have each student read the article and highlight any key words that they think are important to the concept of the social contract. After students have read, hold a brief class discussion over their findings. You might consider asking:

- What words stuck out?
- What do you think the social contract looks like in reality?
- How does the social contract relate to the way we currently live?

Frayer Model: Teachers will begin by using a familiar concept to explain the Frayer Model diagram and demonstrate how to fill it in. A visual aid is included in these lesson plans called "Frayer Model - OKC Thunder." The teacher should model this example before applying it to the lesson concept.

Using computers or handheld devices, students will research the term "equality" and create their own Frayer Model over the term. Once the diagram is complete, have students share their ideas with a partner or group, modifying their diagrams as they accept new information.

It is optional to allow students to do a whole-class discussion after this partner/group discussion.

The information from the social contract article should then be related to the articles students read later in this lesson. Use the following questions: (1) Do all Americans receive "liberty and justice for all"? (2) What are some examples of how America allows freedom to it's citizens? (3) Are all people in America treated equally?

Teacher's Note

The teacher can use the Oklahoma City Thunder, and fill out each quadrant of the form giving a brief description, or definition, the origin of the team, a picture of Westbrook's jersey, and write out who is key within the Thunder organization. This model was created pre-season in 2016. To remain relevant to students, be sure to update the "Key People" section with current players, coaches, or managers, removing those who have been traded or who have left the organization. An editable Word file has been included with this lesson to make it easy to do this.

Explain

Presents with the question, "What do you think the Founding Fathers meant by 'We the People' in the Constitution?" After reading this question, students should talk in pairs about who they believe is included when the Founding Fathers said "We" in "We the People."

Students will analyze articles over current issues in America. Students will then decide if the article gives supporting evidence of equal treatment in America. Have students select an article to read on their own or break the students up into pairs to tackle the reading. Pairs may be a good decision, due to the length of the reading material. The articles for this section of the lesson are as follows:

- The Poverty Cycle
- #BlackLivesMatter: The Birth of a New Civil Rights Movement
- Undocumented Workers' Grim Reality: Speak Out on Abuse and Risk Deportation

Each student (or pair) should write about their opinions of the articles and provide textual evidence to support their beliefs. They should determine a stance on this and then rewrite the textual evidence that supports their opinions on a sheet of notebook paper. Students should then be asked, "How do these events affect how people view freedom in America?" The answer can be concluded in pairs. Guide students toward solution-based thinking by adding the following: "What are some actions that can help combat and even change some of these circumstances in the U.S.?"

A whole-class discussion of the articles and different students' (or pairs') stances can follow this activity, but it is optional.

Cutting Down On Paper Use

Make class copies of the articles to cut down on the paper used during this lesson, or if your class has access to technology, you could also send students to the link to their articles.

Extend

Gist: After reading the article and highlighting key components to build their claims, students will summarize their articles from the perspective of an American citizen who feels betrayed by their country, due to perceived violations of their civil rights. Each student will write a 28-word or less summary of their article from their chosen perspective and use the hashtag to identify the main idea. The hashtag needs to be a single word and will count toward the 28 words.

Students will post these gist summaries in response to the essential question,"What do you think the Founding Fathers meant by 'We the People' in the Constitution?" Each student will use the "Gist Handout" sheet to complete their summaries and post them in a designated area in the room. Following the first summary, or gist, students will then use the highlighted statements in another gist to cite textual evidence that supports their original summary. For example, if a student writes "Some Native American tribes are facing a 'Financial' Trail of Tears. #NativesDeserveBetter" The student can then write a statistic from this article in their next Gist statement. Each student is responsible for at least two Gists.

Once the student has responded, there should be a place in the room set aside for students to tape their gist summaries. As this portion of the room continues to grow, it should be referred to as the "feed," like the feed of a social media platform. The "feed" is basically the classroom's posts, which will become a large gallery of information during the lesson. These "gists" can also be referred to during classroom discussion.

Teacher's Note

This "feed" area should be prepared for the students prior to beginning this lesson. A blank wall space would work great, as long as students can easily see the information posted on the wall.

Evaluate

Critical Thinking (Solutions to Social Problems): Students will come together into groups of four and will then be charged with the responsibility of becoming a social activist for the conflict of their group's' choice. Students can chose immigration reform, poverty (in general, if preferred), or police brutality. Students will then use their Gist summaries to create one main statement and hashtag.

Sample Student Responses

For example, for the conflict of police brutality, students may write the following: (1) Hold police officers accountable for unnecessary violence. (2) Begin a social media campaign sharing civil rights abuses that the media will not cover. (3) Use your education to make a difference and become a police officer yourself.

The teacher should explain how each conflict currently causing issues in America is all of our responsibilities to help solve. Listen to student responses and respond appropriately. At the end of the lesson, the final question should be, If "we the people" did not mean all people, then how do we ensure that the rights of all people in the U.S. are protected?" Teachers will be able to evaluate this portion of the lesson with the social activist rubric provided in the resources.

Resources

- Black Lives Matter Article: Day, E. (2015, July 9). #BlackLivesMatter: the birth of a new civil rights movement. The Guardian. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jul/19/blacklivesmatter-birth-civil-rights-movement
- Undocumented Workers Article: Harris, P. (2013, March 28). Undocumented workers' grim reality: speak out on abuse and risk deportation. The Guardian. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/mar/28/undocumented-migrants-worker-abuse-deportation
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Always, Sometimes, or Never True. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/d9908066f654727934df7bf4f50685d2
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Frayer Model. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/d9908066f654727934df7bf4f505d709
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Gist. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/3289
- Social Contract Article: Kelley, M. (2016). Social contract. About Education. Retrieved from http://americanhistory.about.com/od/usconstitution/g/social_contract.htm
- Poverty Cycle Article: Running Strong for American Indian Youth. (2014). The Poverty Cycle. Retrieved from http://indianyouth.org/american-indian-life/poverty-cycle