

**WHAT ARE
MY RIGHTS
AS AN
AMERICAN?**

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Overview and Rationale

Students at this age are starting to develop a strong sense of self and individuality. Children become increasingly sensitive to the evaluations of their peers (Katz, Lilian). “In children, as in adults there is infinite variety” (Helping Children Grow: Children’s Individuality). This is a key time for young citizens to realize what being an American is all about, where we came from, where we are still coming from and where they will take our nation. Gaining a strong understanding of where we have been helps our leaders to relate to the struggles that individual groups have had to suffer in order to achieve what they have.

Using social studies as a strong base in the classroom, the students become actively involved in a smaller version of America. Students can get involved in the government and politics that go into a classroom setting. Being able to learn these kinds of issues on this scale will help them to understand the impact they can make on the community, state, and national level. Teaching children that they are an important part of America is just as important as teaching the students they are American. Knowing what it means to be American is different to each student because of where they came from to be here. Clarifying that even though we all have different backgrounds we all have the same rights brings us closer together as individuals.

Looking at individual rights from the standards it is clear that this topic is important. The state standards for education in Utah list about ten standards that are easily incorporated into this topic just from the social studies standpoint. Obviously being able to analyze and understand our past is thought to help us in the future. Standard 4 states: Students analyze the contributions of key individuals and groups on the development of the New World and the United States. Simply studying this aspect of the rights of Americans would be of more value than the students would realize. Standard 7 states: Students analyze the contributions of individuals, groups, and movements in the United States from 1900 to the present. We must make sure that our students continue to realize that America is not a static country. There is constant change and they will be

a part of this throughout their lives. The chance for change was factored into the founding documents of our nation. They will have the opportunity to start some of this change if they have a strong grasp of what they can do as active members of the community to get things like this started. Teaching the youth that they can make a difference and they can change the world by doing small things is important.

In fifth grade, the students are just about to be the leaders of the school. It is a perfect time to show them what kind of process Americans have set up to work through things. Giving the students the information in fifth grade gives them plenty of opportunity to experience and understand the steps to go through before we, as a school, ask them to be the leaders in sixth grade. Several schools in Utah have the fifth grade the last grade in elementary. This can be a trial by fire type process. They can learn through seeing their attempts for change work or fail. Trial and error is an important part of rights that can be learned from this aspect as well.

Social studies is important for students to be exposed to because as the saying goes: if we don't remember our history and where we came from, we are destined to repeat it. When students explore the contributions of groups that are different from them, they gain a new perspective on the world. Students will understand from the past unrest how there is still unrest in the community they live in today.

Teacher Background Information

Before teaching this unit there are many things a teacher must do to prepare before they are ready to share their knowledge with the students. I know that for myself I would definitely have to revisit the area of history that concerns American Rights. A great resource for teachers who are teaching about American Rights is first and for most, the constitution of America, which includes the Bill of Rights, and all of the amendments. As I was looking for good resources that teachers could use, I found many great websites about the Constitution. Some of these websites were:

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/help/constRedir.html>

This one of the best websites I found because it was very helpful in gaining great background knowledge that is required for teaching these lessons. You first go to this website and then you can click on an area of interest to learn more about it. I went to the declaration of independence, the bill of rights and the rest of the amendments. After finding the subject you are looking for you are then sent to this website:

<http://www.archives.gov>

This websites was fabulous because it had copies of the actual documents, such as; the Declaration Of Independence, The Bill Of Rights with the first 10 amendments, and then it also had amendments 11-27. I found this to be an awesome attraction to the website because if wanted, a teacher could print these “official” documents out for the students to look at. This website was also very user friendly and easy to understand. Like I said before, this website contained actual copies of these documents, but at the same time, this website also had the document retyped so it could be more legible and clearer. I would recommend this website to anyone wanting to learn more about our rights as American citizens.

Another great website that had a lot of information available for learning teachers was:

<http://www.firstamendmentschools.org/>

This websites focuses more on the first amendment, but had a lot of resources for teachers. One thing I really liked on this website that I feel could be used by teachers and students was a section where you could quiz your own knowledge about the first amendment. I loved it and I took the quiz and learned a lot about the first amendment and about the rights I have because I live in America. This quiz was found on this website on the right hand column and was titled, “Take the first amendment 101 challenge: Test your knowledge on the first amendment.” While you are taking the quiz, if you get the answer right or wrong there is a full explanation giving more information about why the answer is right or wrong, which really helps in the understanding of each question. There was also a section on the most frequently asked questions about the first amendment with the correct answers, which I found to be not only very helpful and a great resource, but also very interesting as I was learning a lot by reading a few of them.

Some other great resources I found to help teachers prepare themselves for this unit included a website by Yale University. This website had numerous lesson plans as well as a great list of resources that could be used by teachers, students or both. I found this list to be very helpful. Some of the books included on the teachers list were:

CHILDREN IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM, CASES AND MATERIALS. WALTER WADLINGTON ET ALS. THE FOUNDATION PRESS. MINEOLA, NEW YORK, 1983.

THE AMERICAN LAW DICTIONARY. PETER G. RENSTROM. ABC-CLIO, INC. SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA, 1991.

Some of the books that could be used by teachers and students were:

THE RIGHTS OF STUDENTS, 3 rd. ed. ACLU. SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1988.

BILL OF RIGHTS IN ACTION. CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS FOUNDATION. LOS ANGELES, 1991.

THE AMERICAN JUDICIAL SYSTEM. INSIDORE STARR. OXFORD BOOK COMPANY, NEW YORK, 1972.

THE FIRST AMENDMENT BOOK. ROBERT J. WAGMAN. PHAROS BOOKS, NEW YORK, 1991.

Two other websites that were found in a previous search of this topic that could be a useful resource are:

<http://quest.arc.nasa.gov>

www.internet4classrooms.com

These were only a few of the resources that I found that could help anyone who wanted to learn more about their rights as Americans. I did not have the chance to look at each of these resources in depth, but I did look at the websites pretty closely and found them to be great resources for teachers as well as students.

Unit Planning Chart-

Unit Issue: The Rights of Americans

Grade: 5th

Unit of Study: Social Studies

Time Frame: At least 6 weeks

Outcomes/Unit Goals:

- Students will be able to discuss events that led to the development of the United States.
- Students will be able to understand documents of importance such as: the Constitution, The Bill of Rights, Amendments...
- Students will have the opportunity to explore contributions of individuals, groups and movements that helped in the obtaining of our current freedoms. Students will also have the chance to see the cause and effect of these movements.
- Students will be able to discuss the future and where we want our future to be and how we can have an effect and influence on things n the future. The students will be able to recognize and realize their important roles as civic leaders and citizens of the United States of America.

Social Studies:

- Personal histories. Find out where you come from originally and why your ancestors migrated.
- Talk about Ellis Island and about the process immigrants have to go through before they can enter the U.S.A. Use videos and books where needed.

- Picture sorting activity. Have the students make up stories about these pictures and share the stories w/each other (like the picture activity that we did in class).
- “Rights of the Class”- develop a class Bill Of Rights and a class constitution. This will help the students understand the process of making a constitution and also help in acquiring class rules and consequences for breaking those rules.
- Blue eyes/Brown eyes activity that was found in “Seeking Diversity” book. This activity is a great way for the students to understand discrimination and the causes and effects of what happens when people have prejudice and discriminate against other people.

Social Skills:

- The students will learn about the 3 branches of the government. The students will work together to create a class Bill Of Rights. They will have to show respect for one another and each other’s ideas.
- Voting in class is a great way to enhance social skills as well as learning more about politics within the classroom.
- The students will be dividing into groups for many of the activities to work together. This will help in the idea of unity and collaborative working skills.

Teacher resources:

Some of the resources that we found to help in the process of this unit were:

- <http://www.kidsclick.org>
- National Geographic
- <http://www.linktolearning.com>
- <http://score.rims.k12.ca.us/standards/grade5.html>
- USOE
- Children’s Literature:
 - carolhurst.com
 - <http://dawcl.com>
 - acs.ucalgary.ca/%7edk/brown/

-Read Alouds

- Letters from Rifka, by Karen Hesse
- Immigrants, by Martin W. Sandler
- Land of Promise, by Joan Lowery Nixon
- Sam Ellis’s Island, by Beatrice Siegel

Art:

During this unit the students can be actively engaged in numerous art projects to help in the learning process of this unit. Some of the art projects that can be involved in this unit are:

- Making quilt squares about slavery and black history in America.
- Greeting cards from different countries (exploring where American holiday traditions come from).
- Creating maps of the travels of immigrants.
- Exploring colonial art (slide show online).

Student Reading/Literature:

Some of the books that could be implemented into this unit to help integrate reading and writing are:

- The Journal of Otto Peltonen, a Finnish Immigrant. By William Durbin.
- When Jessie Came Across the Sea. By Amy Hest.
- Dreams in the Golden Country, the Diary of Zipporah Feldman, a Jewish Immigrant. By Kathyryn Lasky.
- Immigrant Kids. By Russell Freedman.
- A More Perfect Union: The Story of Our Constitution. By Betsy & Gulio Maestro.

Oral Language:

- Reader's theatre: having the students act out historical moments in our history. Students work together to role play specific points in time.
- The reading of important documents and letters and entries of important historical information.
- Do you believe in the cause? Debate the basis of separation from Great Britain.
- Talk about the most important part of the freedoms we have here in America.
- Debate current and common issues revolving around the amendments.

Written Language:

- Have the students write a letter to a person thinking about coming to America. Have the students tell the person about America, what they like or dislike.
- Write a letter to King George-have the students try to come up with a proposal to King George to try to make a compromise.
- Write a story from a young immigrant's perspective about their daily life.
- Keep a reading journal and have the students express their thoughts and feelings in their journal while the teacher reads aloud.

Music:

There are many ways that music can be integrated into this unit. Some of the ways that we thought could be good for this unit were:

- Play the Slave Song, "Drinking Gourd".
- Folk Songs from immigrant groups.
- Share the history of American "Pop Culture" Music. Go through the different styles and decades.
- Patriotic songs that express American feelings: the National Anthem, 50 Nifty, America the Beautiful...

Science:

- Having the students research biological background of different races, also have the students research their own background.
- How did the early immigrants of America grow their food, do other countries still use these methods. How is food grown? Also talk about supply & demand.
- Have the students discuss navigating and orienting.

Math:

- How did math effect: physics, chemistry, engineering, banking, biology, medicine & industry?
- Calculate miles that immigrants had to travel from other countries. Also calculate the hours of travel and how they traveled.
- Have the students create timelines of the adventures of many immigrants.

Technology:

- Have the students pick a country & state to do a report and presentation on their country. Have the students use a computer to write their report (make sure the students have class time to use the computers on campus in case they do not have access to a computer at home...) have the students learn how to put together a power point presentation on their country or state.
- Discuss other countries and the technology that they have compared to our technology here in the States. Could this be a reason for immigration?
- Talk about how technology has changes here in America and why it has changed. Play the telephone game and talk about the benefits and downfalls of an enhancing technological country.

Physical Education/Movement/Health

- The students will be involved n a giant game of telephone out on the field running from one person to the next to tell them the “secret message”. This will help the students learn the importance of having technology as well as some of the things that are lost by having technology (one on one interaction with neighbors....)
- Talk about the health in different countries and what has to be in a country to provide good help for the people.
- Talk about food, water (unclean water), exercise, disease, air, good environment. Compare to other countries. Could this be a reason for immigration?

Accommodations for Learners:

- Group Projects and group work.
- Varied levels of text on the same issue to help all levels of students.
- Vary the roles in groups to help in equal participation.
- Have a variety of activities to accommodate different learning styles.

Field Trips/Guests:

- City Hall, State Capital.
- Have a local government official come to class and give a presentation with a question and answer period for the students.
- Immigrants can come and share their story with the class and also have a question and answer period for the students so they can have an actual personal experience on this subject.

Assessment:

- Read the students journals to get a further understanding of the students’ knowledge on the subject.
- Have the students do written reports that you can assess as a teacher.
- Assess the students’ oral and group presentations.

- Assess the students' center work and walk around to listen while they are discussing and debating certain issues.
- Observation and rubrics can also help in the assessing and evaluation of this unit.

Organization and Subject Matter Overview

Then we will move into the rights that we have in America. What are the amendments? What is the bill of rights? What do these rights mean for American citizens? What did we have to do to get these rights? (Protest, Civil Rights, Women's Movements)

We will conclude this unit by talking about today's issues. We will discuss the rights that we have today as a society, as a people, and as a class. Do these rights and freedoms in our nation stop all discrimination and prejudice against people? Are these rights equal for all people? What can be done to make a difference in our society? Where are we, as the future generations of America, going to take our nation?

See attached Unit Table.

Goals and Objectives

1. Students will be able to discuss the events that led to the development of the United States. Discuss causes for unsettlement in government, economy, religion, and home life. Relate this to their community today. What can they do as an active citizen?
2. Students will demonstrate understanding of the important documents founding our country. Identify key parts and features that Americans depend on in their lives. Discover the rights that they take for granted everyday.
3. Students will explore the contributions of individuals, groups and movements to show the cause and effect.
4. Students will understand the significance of having the right to vote. They will learn about the struggle minorities (women, blacks, etc.) underwent to earn them this right.
5. Students will discover how the voting and election process works by holding class elections and voting on important issues pertaining to the class (initiatives).
6. Students will study their rights as an American, how those rights were established, and how to exercise their rights. They will have the opportunity to create a class Bill of Rights.
7. Students will become involved in their community by writing letters to government officials addressing issues related to their lives.
8. Students will increase in their determination to become an active American citizen and realize they can make a difference in the world around them by becoming involved.
9. Students will be involved in the government and politics that go into a classroom setting.

10. Students will develop a better understanding and appreciation for what it means to be an American citizen. They will learn that America is not a static country. There is constant change that they will be a part of throughout their lives.
11. Students will recognize that America is made up of many diverse groups of people and although we are all different, we share the same rights which is what unifies us.

Utah State Core
Standard 5

- Objective 1—Trace the development of the United States Constitution.
- Objective 3—Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizenship

Learning Activities Bank

Lesson One:

Title of Lesson: Did the Bill of Rights Apply to All?

Adapted from The Bill of Rights—Different Points of View

<http://jeffcoweb.jeffco.k12.co.us/passport/lessonplan/lessons>

Teacher: Shannon Cook

Date: October 25, 2004

Grade Level: 5th

Number of Learners: 30

Time Allotted: 45 minutes over two days

Unit Theme: What are my Rights as an American?

Standards Met: Utah State Core standard 5

- Objective 1—Trace the development of the United States Constitution.
- Objective 3—Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizenship

Goal:

The learners will be able to examine the origins and continuing influence of key ideals of the democratic republican form of government, such as individual human dignity, liberty, justice, equality, and the rule of law (NCSS 10a); identify and interpret sources and examples of the rights and responsibilities of citizens (NCSS 10b);

Objectives:

Given (materials), the learners will look over the Bill of Rights and discuss if the rights applied to all people at that time, as well as examining the new amendments to see how they have incorporated these rights to groups that may not have been included before. They will then rewrite one of the Bill of Rights to make it more inclusive of those left out in order to gain an understanding of the importance of the Bill of Rights and of different perspectives of various people.

Overview:

The fight for freedom during the Revolutionary War and the forming of our new government require great sacrifice on the part of our Founding Father. The question is whether these new freedoms and rights, which were created, influenced/affected ALL the

people living in the United States at that time, especially Native Americans, African Americans and Women. This lesson helps students develop the concept of different perceptions and historical bias.

Materials Needed:

A copy of the Bill of Rights for each student, Several copies of the remaining amendments to the Constitution, poster board for each group, markers, crayons, etc. for illustration and writing of posters

Motivation:

What do you think some of your most important rights as a citizen are? Has everyone in the country always had these rights? Have a discussion on what groups of people were excluded from certain rights and why.

Procedures:

1. Hand out a copy of the Bill of Rights to each student. Ask them to look through them and think of whether, at the time they were written, they applied to ALL people living in the United States.
2. Have the students brainstorm on some groups of people that may have not gotten the same rights as others (women, African Americans, Native Americans)
3. Discuss the issues and concerns unique to these people that may not have been the concerns of our Founding Fathers.
4. Have students get into groups of four or five and as a group pick one Bill of Right that they believe is the most important and discuss together why. If there is a disagreement in a group have them vote on which right they will address.
5. Have students examine the Right they chose and discuss whether this right applied to and/or protected Native Americans, African Americans and Women at the time that the Bill of Rights was written. Have them think of some examples of why or why not to share with the class.
6. Allow each group a few minutes to share what they discussed with the class.
7. Then hand each group a copy of the rest of the Amendments to the Constitution and have them look specifically for ways that the concerns of Native Americans, African Americans and Women were addressed in these later amendments.
8. Now tell the groups that they need to take the Bill they picked earlier and rewrite it to specifically address the inclusion of African Americans, Women, and Native Americans. Have them make a poster with the newly written Right and illustrations to show its significance.
9. Have the Groups share their posters with the class and hang them up in the room.

Accommodations:

Make sure the groups have a variety of levels of learners in them to accommodate students who may struggle, enlarge the Bill of Rights and Amendments for students with visual difficulties. Explain vocabulary in the documents that may be unfamiliar to students.

Closure:

Groups will hold up their posters and explain what they have changed. Posters will be displayed in the class.

Assessment/Evaluation:

1. The teacher will evaluate the critical thinking skills used by students in the whole class discussion as well as walking around and listening to various group discussions.
2. The teacher will assess the rewritten Bill of Rights posters from each group to see if the kids implemented the various groups while keeping the importance of the original Right.

Extension:

- If the Bill of Rights were being written TODAY, how would they look different and how would they be the same?
- How is the Bill of Rights the same as expectations or standards in your classroom, school, or home, and how is it different.

Lesson Two:

Title: Readers Theatre of Founding Documents

Teacher: Wendy Barnson

Subject Area: Social studies

Grade Level: 5th

Date: October 20, 2004

Time Allotted: 45 minutes

Unit Theme: The Rights of Americans

Overview:

The rights of Americans have never been given to the citizens without a struggle. The founding fathers of our nation had to go through quite an oppressive time before they finally said enough is enough. The passion that the leaders of our nation can express through words is a skill that all students of America should understand. Gaining an appreciation for what great leaders have said to bring us to action is a wonderful thing that we can experience.

Objectives:

Utah State Core standard 5

- Objective 1—Trace the development of the United States Constitution.
- Objective 3—Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizenship

Utah State Core Standard 4

Students analyze the contributions of key individuals and groups on the development of the New World and the United States.

- Objective 2-- Examine the role of leaders that led to United States independence.

Materials:

Several different documents

Declaration of Independence

Bill of Rights

Preamble

Constitution

Give me liberty or give me death

I have a dream...

Other impassioned speeches (See <http://libertyonline.hypermall.com>)

Motivation:

Teacher will read quotes from famous Americans. Powerful speeches that can be very dramatic. Reading several will give the students different ideas of what acting can be used.

Procedure:

- 1- Complete motivation. Teacher will read quotes from famous Americans. Powerful speeches that can be very dramatic. Reading several will give the students different ideas of what acting can be used.
- 2- Expectations will be explained. Students will be expected to give their best rendition of a speech using all acting and vocal skills they might need. Students will be the judge of the performance based on the rubric criteria created as a class. Suggestions will be volume, stage presence, dedication and believability, and feel of the speech.
- 3- Students will be given copies of different speeches to read through. Based on the areas they feel are their strengths they will select a speech they will prepare and perform.
- 4- Students will be given approximately twenty minutes to review their speech. They may research the time period for clothing, society ideals, and political unrests. This will give them an idea of why the speeches were important to the nation.
- 5- Perform and evaluate based on the given criteria.

Assessment/Evaluation:

Students will show their understanding of the reasons that speeches were convincing because of the exposure in trying to create the same emotion in their classmates. I believe that by reading the speeches out loud the students gain a better understanding of what phrases and wordings draw the most emotion out of people. They will respond to different types of speeches because of their lives and background.

Accommodations:

The students will be allowed to listen to the speeches on tape for struggling readers. Being able to work with a partner will help students complete their speech for the class. They will be able to call for help if they needed it. Extra time will be granted for those students needing additional help in preparation.

Closure:

As a class we will talk about what made the speeches last the test of time. What were the important parts that people believed in enough to change their lives because of these speeches? Are there any topics right now that people feel this strongly about today?

Extension:

The students could brainstorm a topic that they feel strongly about. Write speeches to present to other classes to see if they can encourage change among their own community of the school.

Teacher Reflection:

I feel that teaching students how to be in front of people and express themselves is an

essential goal of social studies. Any progress that the students make through this learning experience will be worth while for the students and the teacher's time.

Lesson Three:

Title of Lesson: **Class Voting and Elections/ Voting is my right!**

Teacher: **Tasha Radman**

Subject Area: **Social Studies**

Grade Level: **5th grade**

Unit theme: **What are my rights as an American?**

Goal: Standard 5, Objective 3: Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. The students will appreciate their right to vote, be taught how to vote, and discover why it is important for member of the United States to vote.

Objectives:

1. Students will be able to vote on important issues/ initiatives in the classroom in order to better comprehend how voting works in America and why they should be active voters.
2. Students will be able to run for a class office. They will work in groups to create advertisements and presentations demonstrating why they should be elected to office. This activity will help them understand how the election process and campaigning work.

Materials Needed:

Fake Ballots, Voting booth, pencils, hole punch

Poster boards, scissors, glue, markers etc.

Copies of voting materials (ballots, initiatives, campaign slogans, TV ads, etc) from previous elections

VOTE! By: Eileen Christelow

Background Information

Prior to this lesson students will have studied about democracy. They will also have learned about the struggle minorities such as women and blacks had fighting for the right to vote.

Overview of lesson:

This lesson plan extends over 5 days. Students will be organized into groups and will run for class offices as well as develop and vote on classroom initiatives. The teacher will educate the students on what initiatives are and bring copies of voting materials from previous elections, or if it is election year they can talk about the initiatives that are going to be on the ballot. Each group will create posters and a presentation for their "campaign". On the last day each student will be able to go into the class voting booth and cast their votes for the initiatives s as well as elect different groups to office.

Motivation:

How many of you know what voting is? When do we vote? How do we vote? Discuss informal voting that students have been involved in. Etc. (10 minutes)

Procedures:

Day 1: (45-60 minutes)

1. Read Aloud to class the book: VOTE! By: Eileen Christelow
2. Explain to students that they are going to learn more about voting (why's and how's) and also elections. They will get to vote on important issues in the class and also run for different offices.
3. Show students copies of ballots, campaign signs and slogans, TV ads, and other voting materials from prior elections in the United States. If it is an election year you can even study the current initiatives and amendments on the ballot. Discuss with class what initiatives and amendments are and the different positions of office etc.
After your discussion explain to your students that the class is going to come up with their own class initiatives to vote on. Examples of class initiatives may deal with recess, lunch, cleaning the classroom, routines, student input and choice, class rules, etc.
4. Divide the class into groups (3-5 students per group). These will be their base groups for the duration of the week. Depending on the class and the different needs of your students you may want to allow your students to select their own groups.
5. Have students brainstorm ideas for class initiatives to discuss tomorrow.

Day 2 (45-60 minutes)

1. Students will share their ideas for initiatives to be voted on.
2. Write all of their ideas on chart paper. Explain to your students that you will select 3-5 initiatives from their list for the ballot.
3. You are going to shift gears to class elections. Explain to the students that each group will run for a class office. Describe for them the different class offices they can run for and the duties and responsibilities associated with them. Some examples are listed in the chart below.

President	Recess patrol	Trash men
Vice president	Judges	Boards and Erasers
Secretary	Governor	Supplies Police
Treasurer	Mayor	Office Aids
Historian	City Councilman	Plant Waterer's

4. Each group will get to decide which office they want to run for. Have each group turn in a paper listing their 2nd and 3rd office of choice.
5. Each group will create a poster advertising why they are the best candidates for their particular office. They can be as creative as they want and even make up a slogan.
6. Each group will share their poster with the class. Display their posters around the room.

Day 3 (45-60 minutes)

1. Students will study more about the class initiatives and decide the pro and cons of each. You can keep it simple and just discuss the pros and cons as a class or have each group right rebuttals for and against a initiative.
2. You could have an elections bulletin board that they can post things on during the week.
3. Each group will put together a 5-10 minute presentation for the class to give the next day. Ideas for presentations may include skits, commercials, speeches, debates, songs, poem etc. Clarify to your students that they need to include in their presentation reasons for why they should be elected to office. Reflect back on campaigns slogans and TV ads you showed them the

first day. What did they include? What made them seem like a good candidate? Once again allow the groups to be creative.

Day 4 (45-60 minutes)

1. Group presentations. (Each group will share 5-10 minute presentation with class)
2. Inform class that they will be voting the next day and to think about what initiatives and groups they are going to vote for.

Day 5 (45-60 minutes)

Voting day- culminating activity

1. Prior to when your students arrive have a voting booth set up in your classroom. Make sure there is a sheet or door for privacy and that it looks like the real voting booths.
2. Establish certain times that they can vote. (Lunch, recess, etc.)
3. Explain that their votes will be kept private/ confidential.
4. Show the class the ballot and go over the initiatives. Demonstrate for them how to mark their votes. You can keep it simple and have them circle ballot with pencils or you can let them use a hole punch or poker thing like they do in the real elections.
5. You can tally up the votes at the end of the day and announce the winners or wait to announce them until Monday. If a group did not get elected for their first choice they can have their 2nd or 3rd choice.

Closure: As a class discuss what they learned about voting and elections this week. You can have a guest visitor from the community speak to them about the importance of voting. Examples of guest speakers are city councilman, mayor, member of school board, UEA, etc.

Accommodations:

The students will be working in groups. This lesson plan incorporates a variety of different content areas (language arts, math, music, etc.) Students who may not be good at math or reading will be able to contribute ideas and it allows students from all of the intelligences to participate in some way. Also students will be given a lot of choice and input about what they create for their presentations, posters, etc. The teacher will be available to assist the groups and answer questions.

Evaluation:

1. Students will be evaluated on participation. Have each member of the group fill out a evaluation form on each member.
2. Have students write a summary and reflection that they turn in on what they have learned. You could even have them write a paragraph about what an initiative is. Why it is important to vote. Etc.

Extension:

1. Hold debates between groups/ candidates
2. Field trip to county courthouse/ state capital
3. Write letters to elected government officials
4. School wide vote- each class can run for office
5. Have guest speaker from the community come and talk to the students about voting and being involved in the community. (City councilman, school board, mayor, etc.)

Lesson Four:

Title of Lesson: Discussing Issues About the 1st Amendment In Class

Teacher: Paige Montgomery

Date: 10/22/04

Time Allotted: 30-45 minutes

Grade Level: 5th grade

Number of Learners: 20-30

Unit Theme: What Are My Rights As An American?

Standards Met:

Standard 5

Students analyze the role of the Constitution in the building of governance and citizenship in the United States.

Standard 7

Students analyze the contributions of individuals, groups, and movements in the United States from 1900 to the present.

Standard 1

Students examine the sequence of events that led to the development of the New World and the United States.

Standard 4

Students analyze the contributions of key individuals and groups on the development of the New World and the United States.

Standard 11

Students analyze the physical features and political divisions of the United States.

Goals: The students will be able to discuss the events that led to the development of the United States. Discuss causes for unsettlement in government, economy, religion, and home life. Students will be able to relate the times of old to their time and to their own community. What can they do as an active citizen?

Students will demonstrate understanding of the important documents founding our country. Identify key parts and features that Americans depend on in their lives. Discover the rights that they take for granted everyday.

Students will explore the contributions of individuals, groups, and movements to show the cause and effect.

Objectives: Given specific scenarios and cases that pertain to the first amendment, the students will discuss various outcomes and discuss various opinions about these trials and experiences. By these discussions the students will be able to learn from each other, enhance their social skills by sharing their opinions with one another, and learn more about the first amendment and the freedoms that are guaranteed to the American citizens.

Materials Needed: Some of the materials that are needed for this lesson are:

The most frequently asked questions about the first amendment, which can be found here:

<http://www.firstamendmentschools.org/>

The teacher would also need the answers that go with these questions and the case studies that go with these questions.

The teacher needs envelopes to put the outcome of the cases in and the questions and the case glued on the outside of the envelope.

There would have to be room in the learning environment to set up (depending on the number of learners) 4-6 centers.

Motivation: The teacher will use the student's prior knowledge and background knowledge on the subject of the first amendment to complete this lesson. The students will have already learned about the amendments and what the amendments do.

The teacher will start the lesson by reading a court case that had to do with the first amendment and get the students started in a class discussion as to what they think the outcome of this court case will be.

Procedures: To start the lesson off the teacher will first do a review of the student's prior knowledge of the first amendment. Then to get the students engaged in the activity for this lesson the teacher will read the class a court case regarding the first amendment. The teacher will ask the students what they feel the outcome of this case will be. After the students have been involved in a quality class discussion (+/-5 minutes) about this court case regarding the first amendment have the students split into their centers (4-6 centers, about 3-4 people at each center).

-At each center there will be four envelopes with questions and cases on the outside. The students will work together to pick one of the questions that they want to discuss and they will also pick one question that they want to discuss with the whole class.

-The students will then have about 10 minutes to discuss the case they picked sharing ideas, views and opinions about this issue. The students will be working on respecting their classmates by not interrupting or putting down other's ideas. After they have discussed and shared their ideas as to what the outcome of their case could be, they will then open the envelope and read the actual outcome that did take place.

-After each group has completed their discussion of their case and read the outcome, we will come back together as a class and the groups will share the cases that they want to share and discuss together. Depending on time, we can either discuss each question or put the 4-6 questions from each group in a hat and draw one question that we can discuss in depth as a class.

-We will conclude this lesson by discussing that last case as a class, and also having the teacher read the outcome of the very first court case. After reading that outcome have the students comment on the outcome and express their feelings. Was that the outcome they had predicted? What was different with that outcome than you thought? Do you feel that the outcome was a good outcome or not?

Accommodations: During this lesson there are modifications that can be made if I have students with special needs, learning disabilities, or exceptional students. But overall I feel that this lesson is a great way to incorporate everyone in the class and give everyone a chance to speak their minds and share their opinions. If I feel that there is a chance some students will not get heard or talk too much I will do the bean approach where every student has 5 beans and can

only speak by giving a bean to the middle and when their beans are out they cannot talk anymore until everyone has used their beans. I think that this would be a great thing to add to the lesson to be sure every student is getting the same chances to say what they are feeling.

Closure: To close this lesson the teacher will give the final outcome of the court case they started the lesson with to wrap up the discussions. Discuss the final outcome and have the students express their feelings about the outcome of the case and about the activity. Find out if the students have any further questions about the first amendment.

Assessment/Evaluation: To be able to assess the students during this lesson the teacher will walk around the classroom and observe the students while they are discussing the issues at hand. The teacher will listen to the student's responses and make sure they are on task and following the directions. The teacher will want to listen to the responses of the students to get an idea for their comprehension of the first amendment.

Extension: In order to extend this experience for the students I will have the students go home and share one of the cases that they learned about with their parents or with family members or friends. The students will tell that person about the case and what happened and get the person's opinion of what they think will be the outcome...the student will then write down their prediction and then tell them the actual outcome. The students will come to class with the case and the predictions of the person they shared the case with and be prepared to share the experience with the class. This will help the students continue in their learning of the first amendment and also help them with their social skills.

Teacher Reflection: This part of the lesson plan will be completed after the lesson has taken place. The teacher will critique the lesson and find the strengths and the weaknesses of this activity. The teacher will think of things that could have been changed to make the lesson and activity go better.

Frequently Asked Questions

According to the most recent definition of the law, what material is considered "harmful to minors"?

Do adults forfeit their First Amendment protections once they become public school employees?

Do outside groups have the right to distribute their material on campus?

Do school officials possess greater authority in removing books from the curriculum than in the school library?

Does a school violate the First Amendment if it disciplines a teacher for speech that touches on a matter of public concern?

Does the First Amendment apply to public schools?

Does the use of Internet filters raise First Amendment concerns?

How do courts balance a teacher's First Amendment rights against the interests of the public school system?

How do courts determine whether speech is a true threat?

How do school officials and the courts apply free-speech court standards?

How do the courts determine whether a teacher's speech touches on a matter of public concern?

How does a court determine if a student's choice of dress is constitutionally protected?

How far may schools go in restricting student speech in the interest of school safety?

If a teacher is in part terminated for constitutionally protected speech, may a school board still avoid any constitutional violation?

Is a student's choice of dress protected by the First Amendment?

Is a teacher's classroom a public forum?

Is profanity a form of expression protected by the First Amendment?

May a school constitutionally punish students for wearing long hair or dyeing their hair an unusual color?

May a school punish a student for wearing Confederate flag attire?

May a teacher be punished for teaching subjects school officials or parents deem unsuitable?

May a teacher censor a student's artistic expression?

May a teacher refuse to teach certain materials in class if she feels the curriculum infringes on her personal beliefs?

May a teacher wear clothing not approved by a teacher dress code?

May noncurriculum-related student groups use school media to advertise their meetings?

May public school facilities be used by outside community groups during nonschool hours?

May religious leaders or other outside adults attend the meetings of student clubs?

May school officials remove library books for reasons other than objections to the ideas contained in the books?

May schools adopt mandatory uniform policies?

May schools enforce speech codes on school grounds?

May schools limit the time, place, and manner of student expression?

May schools prohibit students from wearing armbands or buttons that contain a political and/or religious message?

May students distribute religious or political literature at school?

May students form religious or political clubs in secondary public schools?

May students solicit funds at school?

May the school exclude any student extracurricular group?

Must a public school student salute the flag during a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance?

Must a public school teacher salute the flag during a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance?

Must schools now use filtering software on school computers?

What are the constitutional objections to mandatory dress codes and uniform policies?

What are the free expression rights of students in public schools under the First Amendment?

What are the policy arguments for and against uniforms and school dress codes?

What are the primary considerations to make when determining issues of student speech that occur in cyberspace?

What control does the school retain over student meetings in a limited open forum?

What is a public forum?

What limits, if any, can be placed on the private Web sites of students?

What limits, if any, may school officials place on student expression that occurs off school grounds?

What types of books are most subject to censorship?

What types of laws protect teachers who believe they have been unfairly treated by a school board, school superintendent, or other school official?

When does student speech become "harassment?"

Which First Amendment rights do students retain at school-sponsored social events?

Court Cases for Students to Discuss

Is profanity a form of expression protected by the First Amendment?

It can be, depending upon the circumstances and context. There is no general exception for profanity under the First Amendment unless the profanity qualifies as "fighting words." Fighting words are defined as words that by their very nature incite an immediate breach of the peace.

One case worth noting is the 1971 case of *Cohen v. California*, in which the U. S. Supreme Court reversed the conviction of a man who had been arrested for wearing a jacket in a courthouse bearing the words "F*** the Draft."¹ The court noted that the profane word on the jacket was not directed at a particular individual and aroused no violent reaction.

However, public school students have greater restrictions placed on their First Amendment rights than adults. In fact, school officials generally can prohibit vulgar and offensive student language under the Supreme Court's 1986 decision in *Bethel Sch. Dist. No. 403 v. Fraser*.² In that decision, the Supreme Court wrote that "it is a highly appropriate function of public school education to prohibit the use of vulgar and offensive terms in public discourse."³

In sum, one federal appeals court judge clarified the distinction between free speech and profanity quite well: "the First Amendment gives a high school student the classroom right to wear Tinker's armband, but not Cohen's jacket."⁴

Notes

¹ 403 U.S. 15 (1971).

² 478 U.S. 675 (1986).

³ Id. at 683.

⁴ *Thomas v. Bd. Of Educ., Granville Cent. Sch. Dist.*, 607 F.2d 1043, 1057 (J. Newman, concurring).

May a school constitutionally punish students for wearing long hair or dyeing their hair an unusual color?

The courts are much divided on this issue. The First, Second, Fourth, Seventh, and Eighth Circuits seem receptive to students' claims regarding personal choice with respect to their hair.¹ However, the Third, Fifth, Sixth, Ninth, and Tenth Circuits seem unreceptive.²

Many of the student hair cases today deal not with length but color. For example, a high school student from Virginia sued his school district in federal court after school officials suspended him for having blue hair. A federal judge reinstated the student, finding a violation of his constitutional rights.³

Generally speaking, the courts that have found a constitutional issue have ruled along similar lines, claiming that a student's choice of hair color and style raises either a First Amendment free expression issue or a 14th Amendment liberty or equal protection interest. Some courts have even pointed out that regulating a student's choice of hairstyle impacts with greater permanence than regulating a student's dress because, unlike with hairstyle or color, the student can wear what he pleases outside school.

Conversely, the courts that have sided with school districts have generally ruled that the students' wearing of long hair "does not rise to the dignity of a protectable constitutional issue."⁴

Either way, different courts have simply come to different legal conclusions. As a result, students' rights in this regard largely depend on where they live.

Notes

¹ *Richards v. Thurston*, 424 F.2d 1281 (1st Cir. 1970); *Dwen v. Barry*, 483 F.2d 1126 (2nd Cir. 1973); *Massie v. Henry*, 455 F.2d 779 (4th Cir. 1972); *Arnold v. Carpenter*, 459 F.2d 939 (7th Cir. 1972); *Bishop v. Colaw*, 450 F.2d 1069 (8th Cir. 1971).

² *Zeller v. Donegal Sch. Dist.*, 517 F.2d 600 (3rd Cir. 1975); *Karr v. Schmidt*, 460 F.2d 609 (5th Cir. 1972); *Gfell v. Rickelman*, 441 F.2d 444 (6th Cir. 1971); *King v. Saddleback Jr. College Dist.*, 445 F.2d 932 (9th Cir. 1971), cert. denied, 404 U.S. 979 (1971); *Hatch v. Goerke*, 502 F.2d 1189 (10th Cir. 1974).

³ See "Federal Court Reinstates High School Student Suspended for Blue Hair." (1999, June 4). American Civil Liberties Union. Available online: www.aclu.org

⁴ *Zeller*, 517 F.2d. at 605–606.

May a teacher censor a student's artistic expression?

Teachers possess a great deal of control over classroom assignments and other matters related to teaching the curriculum. In the context of an assigned art project, for example, teachers have the right to make sure that students are meeting the requirements of their assigned work. In art class, this may mean that a student's work receives poor marks if it fails to meet the standards and requirements of the assignment.

One federal appeals court, for example, rejected a student's First Amendment claim in the context of a research topic. The court wrote: "[F]ederal courts should exercise particular restraint in classroom conflicts between student and teacher over matters falling within the ordinary authority over curriculum and course content."¹

Of course, this does not mean that a teacher may mark a student down simply because the teacher disagrees with the message the work intends to convey, especially if other aspects of the work meet the requirements of the assignment.

Teachers are sometimes unsure about whether they may allow students to include religious images or ideas in their assignments. Generally, students may express their beliefs about religion if such expression is relevant to the subject under consideration and meets the requirements of the assignment.² To censor such forms of expression may violate a student's free exercise rights.

However, some recent lower court decisions have upheld the decision by school officials to prohibit religious expression by primary students, if the teacher has a concern that the expression might be seen as school promotion of religion.³

If a student's artistic expression is *not* part of her schoolwork, then the work should be examined by the tests set out in the *Tinker* and *Fraser* standards. Under *Fraser*, if it is vulgar, profane, or obscene, then a teacher has the authority to remove the work or restrict its presence on school grounds. If the expression does not violate those restrictions, then the school, under *Tinker*, must prove they have evidence that the expressive work will substantially interfere with the working of the school or will interfere with the rights of others.

Notes

¹ *Settle v. Dickson County School Bd.*, 53 F.3d 152 (6th Cir. 1995), cert. denied, 516 U.S. 989 (1995).

² This answer is drawn from the advice given in Religious expression in public schools, guidelines published by the U.S. Department of Education: "Students may express their beliefs about religion in the form of homework, artwork, and other written and oral assignments free of discrimination based on the religious content of their submissions. Such home and classroom work should be judged by ordinary academic standards of substance and relevance, and against other legitimate pedagogical concerns identified by the school."

³ *C.H. v. Olivia*, 226 F.3d 198 (2nd Cir. 2000), cert. denied, 533 U.S. 915 (2001).

Must a public school teacher salute the flag during a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance?

Probably not. This answer stems from the landmark 1943 Supreme Court decision *West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette*, where the high court ruled that public school students had a First Amendment right not to salute the flag.¹

Even though the *Barnette* decision speaks directly about public school students, the same principles have been extended to teachers in subsequent decisions. In one case, a federal appeals court ruled that school officials violated the First Amendment rights of a public school arts teacher when they fired her for refusing to salute the flag.² "We take guidance, instead," they ruled, "from the Supreme Court's instruction in *Tinker*, whose lesson is that neither students nor teachers 'shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate.'"³ The court noted that the teacher did not "proselytize" her students but stood in respectful silence and that another teacher led the students in the pledge.

A teacher's right not to salute the flag, however, may not extend to all other exercises related to the school. In a case from the Seventh Circuit, for example, a Jehovah's Witness kindergarten teacher was fired when she informed the principal she could not teach any part of the curriculum that involved patriotic activities. Although one of these activities included saluting the flag, the teacher felt she must also not engage in prescribed elements of the curriculum involving patriotism, in any secular or religious holiday, or in the celebration of student birthdays. As the court ruled, "[t]here is a compelling state interest in the choice and adherence to a suitable curriculum. . . . It cannot be left to individual teachers to teach what they please."⁴

Notes

¹ *West Virginia State Bd. of Education v. Barnette*, 319 U.S. 624 (1943).

² *Russo v. Central Sch. Dist. No. 1*, 469 F.2d 623 (2nd Cir. 1972), cert. denied, 411 U.S. 932 (1973).

³ *Id.* at 632.

⁴ *Palmer v. Board of Education*, 603 F.2d 1271 (7th Cir. 1979), cert. denied, 444 U.S. 1026 (1980).

What are the constitutional objections to mandatory dress codes and uniform policies?

Generally, the most common constitutional claims alleged are (1) violations of students' First Amendment rights to freedom of expression; (2) violations of students' First Amendment rights to freely practice their religion; or (3) violations of parents' 14th Amendment liberty interests in rearing their children.

Many students claim that requiring them to wear particular clothing deprives them of the ability to freely express themselves through their choice of dress. In one case, students from a Kentucky high school claimed that their school's dress code policy that prohibited clothing with any logos other than the official school logo was a violation of their free expression rights. The federal court, however, sided with the school district, finding that it had "struck a reasonable balance" between preventing potential disruptions and protecting students' First Amendment rights.¹

In another case, a high school student brought a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of a school board policy prohibiting male students from wearing earrings. The school, which had enacted the ban as part of an effort to curb the presence and influence of gangs on campus, provided substantial evidence of gang presence and activity -- and the resulting violence -- in its schools. Ultimately the court upheld the district's dress code policy, concluding that the board's concern for the safety and well-being of its students and the curtailment of gang activities was rational and did not violate the First Amendment.²

Some students have also argued that a particular dress code or uniform policy conflicts with their religious beliefs, in violation of the Free Exercise Clause. For example, two high school students in Texas sued after school officials prohibited them from wearing rosaries to school, based on the belief that the rosaries were considered "gang-related" apparel. The students claimed that the application of the rule to them violated both their free speech and free exercise rights.³

This time, the federal court ruled that the school *had* violated the First Amendment rights of the two students. Although the court did "not doubt that a dress code can be one means of restricting gang activity on campus," it also concluded that "the regulation places an undue burden on Plaintiffs, who seek to display the rosary not to identify themselves with a gang, but as a sincere expression of their religious beliefs."

Yet another objection, this one raised by parents, has been that forcing students to wear particular clothing infringes on a parent's 14th Amendment liberty interest in rearing their child, in violation of the Due Process Clause. In fact, many parents around the country have formed groups devoted to challenging school uniforms.⁴ These groups have argued that the implementation of restrictive uniform and dress code policies violates the First Amendment and the principle of democratic self-choice.

So far, though, the courts are tending to side with school districts on parental and student challenges to uniform policies. Because the law is still rapidly developing in this area, school districts should consult with legal counsel before adopting a broad-based uniform policy. At the very least, any school policies requiring uniforms should have a provision that protects the right of parents and students to opt out on religious grounds.

Notes

¹ *Long v. Bd. of Education of Jefferson County, Kentucky*, 121 F. Supp. 2d. 621 (W.D. Kent. 2000), *aff'd*, 2001 U.S. App. LEXIS 18103 (2001).

² *Oleson v. Bd. of Education of Sch. Dist.*, No. 228, 676 F. Supp. 820 (N.D. Ill. 1987).

³ *Chalifoux v. New Caney Independent Sch. Dist.*, 976 F. Supp. 659 (S.D. Tex. 1997).

⁴ Hudson, D., "Parents Across the South Battle Mandatory School Dress Codes." Available online at firstamendmentcenter.org.

Lesson Five:

Title of lesson: Letter writing to local and national leaders

Teacher: Rachael Bangerter

Date: (created) October 2004

Time Allotted: one or two class periods

Grade level: 5th

Unit Theme: Americans' Rights

Standards met: Utah State Core Curriculum Standard 7

Students analyze the contributions of individuals, groups, and movements in the United States from 1900 to the present.

Objective 1

Analyze the significant events and actions of the 20th century and the 21st century.

- Examine social and political movements; e.g., suffrage, prohibition, civil rights.
- Describe the significance of science, technology, inventions, and medical discoveries.

- Examine the development of arts and popular culture of the United States; e.g., artists, writers, pop culture.

Goal: The learners will be able to know how to be active citizens in America by writing letters to local and national leaders.

Objectives: At the end of the lesson, the students will know how to write letters to local and national leaders in order to make a change in how the society is run. Given paper, envelopes, writing utensils, research materials, addresses, and stamps, students will work in groups to come up with a leader to write to. A letter will be written and will be placed in an envelope and stamped (the students will not seal envelopes, because the teacher will need to look over the contents); this activity will teach students to be active participants in their current society.

Materials needed: Paper, Envelopes, Writing utensils, Research materials, addresses, and stamps.

Motivation: The teacher will begin the lesson by talking about one current problem—whether it is in the school, city, state, or country only one problem will be addressed. After telling the students about the problem using a dramatic voice and visual proof, the teacher will read a letter that he/she wrote to promote a change.

Procedures: Once the teacher has the students' attention he/she will tell the students that they will be working in stations with specific cooperative learning groups (students will be in the same group for the entire activity).

1. The teacher will explain what students will do. At each station the students will learn of some school, city, state, and national problems. Research materials will be provided at each station so that students can brush up on their knowledge of current issues.
2. While at each station, one problem/current societal issue will be picked for note taking. The students will write down the location of the problem (i.e. school, city, state, and national), the leader to respond to, and notes about the issue.

It would nice to have one student be a scribe for the group, but to make sure all students are engaged in the activity *ALL* students will take notes at each station, picking just one issue as a focus. (Each student in the group will be writing about the same issue, but as an assessment measure students will take individual notes).
3. After going through all of the stations, students will return to their seats and work in their cooperative groups to compose a letter on an issue of their choosing. The students will choose from the notes taken during the station time (the students should have four issues to choose from—only one will be chosen).
4. On a back table, letter materials will be provided: paper, pencils, envelopes, addresses of local or national leaders, and stamps to place on the envelopes (The teacher will need to make a note for students not to seal their envelopes).
5. The teacher will collect envelopes for grading and send off. Also the teacher will collect student notes as a way to assess student understanding.

Accommodations:

Gifted Students who are faster learners will take notes on one issue at each station. However, if they finish taking notes early, they can look at another issue and take notes on that (later these students may want to write an independent letter, but this would have to be after the group letter had already been composed.)

Students with special needs or who are second language learners will be given a template/ note guide to aide them in note taking (the guide might be a good idea for the whole class). The guide would look something like this:

1. Is the problem found in the school, city, state, or country?
2. What is the current problem?
3. Who would you write a letter to so the problem can be fixed?
4. Please write notes below to explain the problem.
5. What do you think about the problem?
6. What do you want to do about the problem?

Also, these students may need to have a buddy system. A more advanced student could be paired with one of these students and aide in note taking or vocabulary clarification.

Closure: The teacher will tell the students that by writing letters to local and national leaders they can be life long participants in society.

Assessment/Evaluation: The teacher will look over the students' notes and letters to conclude if the assignment was fully understood.

Extention: The teacher could also talk to students about the importance of voting, what age one can vote, how to fill out a voter form, how to gain an opinion about political issues in society, etc. Students should be encouraged to be independent thinkers—many children may just do as their parents do (i.e. voting for a specific political party because that is what their parents do). Hopefully by the time students are eligible to vote, they will vote for what fits their belief system best—it may or may not be consistent with the beliefs of their parents.

Teacher reflection: How did the lesson go? What were the strengths of this activity? What would be wise to change before teaching this lesson again?

Assessment

Students will demonstrate their knowledge and learning in a variety of ways throughout our unit. The teacher will use tools such as KWL charts to begin the unit or topic. This will help the teacher gain an understanding of students' background knowledge, and preconceived notions about the units of study. In relation to our topic regarding Rights as an American, the KWL chart can be used as a pre- assessment for determining students' knowledge of the Bill of Rights

and Constitution as well as discovering the things they would like to find out about them. It can also be used at the culmination of the unit to determine what students have learned throughout the course of study.

Another tool that we will use for assessment is a daily journal. The students will write in the journal daily to address information that they learned that particular day. Questions and journal topics will be given to the students to direct thinking and responses. They will answer questions and respond to the journal topics to the best of their knowledge. Students will be given opportunities to respond in a variety of ways such as illustrations, poems, making up song lyrics, etc.

Many of our activities will involve cooperative learning strategies to promote participation, inquiry, and responsibility among all students. To help all learners benefit from daily lessons, oral group presentations will be done in front of the class on many occasions. This will help assess not only the learning that has taken place, but the contribution of group members as well. It will also help the teacher gain a sense of the social atmosphere in the class and assess the communication and interaction skills of each student. Active participation in groups and presentations will promote the highest order of thinking and learning.

Along with presentations, group work will also be assessed through teacher observation. The teacher will put together observation rubrics to assess student progress. The rubrics may include questions such as: How well did the group address their issue/topic? Was the information they gave historically accurate? Did all students participate? Were all the questions answered thoroughly? Did students work well with other members of their group? How might you as a teacher better facilitate group participation and learning?

Group and Personal Evaluations will be used during the unit as well and may include topics such as: Did you/member of your group contribute significantly to the group discussion without monopolizing it? Were you prepared for your presentation? Did you follow the

directions for the assignment? This assessment will help students take personal responsibility for their actions and participation in class. They will learn to work as a cooperative member in a group and have the opportunity to express concerns if there are members of their group not participating or being extremely overbearing.

Many of the activities in our unit will culminate with presentations or finished products that can be easily evaluated. When the students are asked to make a poster of their rewritten Right, the posters can be assessed for content knowledge, and adherence to the assignment given. The Readers Theatre presentation will reflect student knowledge of the events that led up to the writing of the founding documents of our nation. They will also reflect an understanding of the important contributions of our Founding Fathers. As a culminating activity, students will write a letter to an official addressing something that they are unhappy with, or a situation where they feel their rights are being trampled upon. This activity will give an overall evaluation of their understanding of how the Constitution and Bill of Rights play an important part in their everyday lives. They will be able to show their knowledge of their rights as well as the procedures that can be taken to insure that these rights are protected.

Appendices

Children's Books

When Jessie Came Across the Sea by Amy Hest

Immigrants by Martin W. Sandler

The Butterfly Seeds by Mary Watson

Letters from Rifka by Karen Hesse

Five Smooth Stones by Kristiana Gregory

Land of Promise by Joan Lowery Nixon

Krull, Kathleen. *A Kids' Guide to America's Bill of Rights: Curfews, Censorship, and the 100-Pound Giant*. HarperCollins, New York: 1999. <http://odur.let.rug.nl/~usa/D/index.htm>

Websites

<http://www.educationworld.com/>

<http://quest.arc.nasa.gov>

www.linktolearning.com/grade5ss.html

www.internet4classrooms.com/5thsocest.htm

www.carolhurst.com

<http://mywebpages.comcast.net/intechgration.immigration.htm>

http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content2/Strengthen_Children_Self.html Ideas for developmentally appropriate instruction.

<http://libertyonline.hypermall.com> A multitude of documents for speeches regarding liberty can be found here.

<http://odur.let.rug.nl/~usa/D/index.htm> From Revolution to Reconstruction and what happened afterwards. Many important documents can be found here as well.

<http://www.mecca.org/~crights/dream.html> Martin Luther King Jr.'s I Have a Dream speech can be found here. Bringing in more current speeches that bring people to action.

<http://eesc.orst.edu/agcomwebfile/edmat/EC1301.pdf> This site contains brochures that could be produced for distribution regarding the development of children. Helping Children Grow: Children's Individuality found here.

http://www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed382411.html Katz, Lilian wrote an article about the benefits of mixed-age grouping.

<http://www.archives.gov>

<http://www.firstamendmentschools.org/>

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/help/constRedir.html>

<http://jeffcoweb.jeffco.k12.co.us/passprt/lessonplan/lessons>

<http://www.eduref.org/>

<http://teacherlink.ed.usu.edu/tlresources/reference/billofrights.html>

<http://www.house.gov.constitution/amend.html>

Adult Level Content **Books/Articles**

A More Perfect Union: The Story of our Constitution by Betsy and Giulio Maestro

American History 102: Civil War to the Present by Stanley K Schultz, Professor of History
found at <http://us.history.wisc.edu/hist102/lectures/lecture08.html>

The American Judicial System. Insidore Starr. Oxford Book Company, New York: 1972.

Bill of Rights in Action. Constitutional Rights Foundation. Los Angeles, 1991.

Comparing Constitutions by Bernard Rudden, S.E. Finer, Vernon Bogdanor

Racial and Ethnic Relations in America reference volumes 1-3

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SUBJECT MATTER OVERVIEW
WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS AS AN AMERICAN?

Topic	Founding Documents	Branches of Government and Bill of Rights	First Amendment and becoming an active citizen.	Class Elections and Voting.
NCSS Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine persistent issues involving the rights, roles, and status of the individual in relation to the general welfare (NCSS VI a.) • Identify and describe the basic features of the political system in the United States and identify representative leaders from various levels and branches of government (NCSS VI e.) • Explain and apply concept such as power, role, status, justice, and influence to the examination of persistent issues and social problems (NCSS VI h.) 			
Utah Objective	<p>Standard 5 students analyze the role of the constitution in the building of governance and citizenship in the United States. S5,O1 Trace the development of the United States constitution. S5,O2 Examine the functions of the branches of federal government. S5,O3 Examine democratic processes. Standard 7 students analyze the contributions of individuals, groups, and movements in the United States from 1900 to the present. S7,O1 Analyze the significant events of the 20th and 21st century</p>			
Learning Activities	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Monday	Create an oppressive environment for the class. They are punished for thinking things other than what was thought by the ruling official. Talk about how this made them feel. Colonists.	Introduce the three branches of government	Get into centers and pick a court case to debate and discuss. The students will discuss cases that are related to the first amendment.	Students will analyze real voting materials used in previous elections: ballots, TV commercials, campaign slogans, initiatives.
Tuesday	Perform speeches for the class with as much emotion and driving energy as possible. Students pick a	Students role play the branches of government	Discuss and debate more court cases and experiences revolved around the 1 st amendment. Discuss in	Create classroom initiatives to vote on. Create posters advertising why their group should be

	speech to prepare. Give time for research and questions.		centers and as a class as a whole.	elected to office
Wednesday	Read the Preamble of the Constitution. Don't tell them what you read. In pairs have them predict what this is from and write what they felt about it. Good, bad, what they would change.	Study the Bill of Rights and discuss the groups that may not have been given those rights initially (blacks, women, etc.)	Discuss current events as a class to identify key issues and problems so students researching about topics that will address in their letters to local or national leaders at a later date.	Study out class initiatives, and write and discuss pros and cons of each. Prepare presentations.
Thursday	Students will have the opportunity to present their speeches. The students will respond to the presentations with comments of what they liked. What parts or strategies really impacted the students? Would this speech have driven them to action?	Study and analyze the amendments and how the rights were extended to all people. Rewrite one of the Bill of Rights and create a poster	Letter writing to a leader in society either locally or nationally	Each group will give presentations to promote their campaign for in class elections: Skit, write a poem, create a TV commercial, debate, give a speech, etc.
Friday	A field trip to the state capital	Talk about the struggles different groups and minorities underwent to earn us the right to vote.	Guest speaker from the community come talk about getting involved in the community: voting, service, etc.	Voting day—students will vote in a voting booth for elections and initiatives.