



CLAUDE PEPPER LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

LESSON PLAN - CITIZENSHIP

Purpose/Rationale: In order for students to understand the “big” issues that affect our daily lives, it is important for them to decide for themselves what citizenship entails, and how their understanding of good citizenship helps to shape their world view. Discussing the importance of citizenship within one’s smaller community can help lead to discussions about what it means to be a citizen of the world.

Introduction Activity: Citizenship Quiz

Quiz:

Answer yes or no to each of the following questions.

1. I take responsibility for what goes on in my community. Y N
2. I do my part for the common good. Y N
3. I participate in community service. Y N
4. I help take care of the environment. Y N
5. I obey the law. Y N
6. I help make our political system (a representative democracy) work by voting, voicing my opinions, and participating in the decision-making process whenever possible. Y N
 - Teacher passes out citizenship quiz to students and asks each student to complete the quiz individually.
 - After everyone has finished, begin full-class discussion.
 - Some possible guiding questions: How did you answer these questions? Do you have to say “yes” to all of these questions in order to be a good citizen? Are there any other components of good citizenship that are not mentioned here? Are there questions mentioned here that are *not* part of citizenship?

Activity One: Extending Citizenship

- Teacher divides students into groups of four and asks them to make their own list of citizenship qualities, divided into three parts: local citizenship, national citizenship, and international citizenship.
- The lists should be done in poster-form, and should clearly divide the citizenship duties into the above three categories.

- Each group needs to write a three-paragraph write-up explaining how they created their citizenship requirement lists. What determines good citizenship qualities? How do local issues differ from international ones?

Activity Two: Comparing and Discussing

After groups have finished their posters and write-ups, class should come together for another discussion on citizenship. Some important points for the instructor to bring up:

- How do our lists differ from group to group?
- What were your reasons and ideas behind the items on your list?
- What are the differences between being a good citizen in your home community and being a good citizen of the world?

Activity Three: Extending the View

In the same groups from the previous activity, students will study a specific country and identify key issues of cultural importance and expectations of citizens.

Some suggested groups:

- Iraq
- Iran
- India
- Palestine (Palestinians in Israel)
- Israel
- Canada
- France
- Indonesia
- United Kingdom
- Germany
- North Korea
- South Korea
- China
- Japan
- Jamaica
- Egypt
- Cuba
- Costa Rica
- Russia

** These countries are just suggestions.

Each group should find out the following information about the country they have chosen:

- What is the population?
- Major religions?
- Major cultural groups?
- Racial and ethnic demographics?
- Customs of dominant cultures?
- Are there any well-known conflicts within the country?

- Any conflicts between this country and another?
- Major resources?
- Major deficiencies? (What resources does this country lack?)
- What big differences exist between your group's country and the U.S.?
- Are there any conflicts that seem impossible to resolve?

Activity Four: Comparing Cultures

After the groups have completed their research, the class will come back together to compare notes. Each group will present the information that have compiled. Once all of the groups have presented, the instructor will lead another class discussion:

- Are there things that some of us in this classroom see as good citizenship characteristics, but, for whatever reason, others disagree with? Why might that be?
- Are there things we should keep in mind when we are judging the actions of people in different places and from different cultures?
- How should world organizations such as the U.N. determine what constitutes citizenship (or, say, human rights)?
- Agree or disagree: I don't have any responsibility to my school, my community, my nation, or anything else. My only responsibilities are to myself.
- What is social responsibility? What does it have to do with being a good citizen?
- Is helping needy people and important part of being a good citizen?
- Do you think you are a good citizen? Why, or why not?
- What are the benefits of being a citizen of a country? What are the civic responsibilities that go along with citizenship? What will happen to our rights and privileges if we don't meet those responsibilities?
- Is it important for citizens to voice their opinions and participate in the decision making process? Why, or why not?
- Agree or disagree: Rosa Parks was guilty of poor citizenship when she refused to sit in the back of the bus because she violated the law.
- Under what circumstances can civil disobedience be justified? (*You might think about the Declaration of Independence and Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement.*)
- What does good citizenship have to do with the Golden Rule? What does it have to do with good character?
- What are the benefits of good citizenship? How do you benefit from the good citizenship of others?
- Preparation for a Jewish bar mitzvah usually involves doing something of service to the community. Should something like this be required for high school graduation?
- What are some of the things in your community that need improving? What could you do about it?
- What are some of the world-wide conflicts that need improvement? What could you do about it?