Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2008 Volume IV: Representations of Democracy in Literature, History and Film

Dissent in Democracy: Subverting the Dominant Paradigm

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> Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breath free . . . [1]
> From "New Colossus" by Emma Lazarus (written, 1883, inscribed in bronze at the foot of The Statue of Liberty, 1903)

> The good we secure for ourselves is precarious and uncertain until it is secured for all of us and incorporated into our common life. [2]
> Jane Addams

> The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil, is for good men to do nothing. [3]
> Edmund Burke

> There comes a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick at heart, that you can't take part, you can't even passively take part; and you've got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels, upon all the apparatus, and you've got to make it stop, and you've got to indicate to the people who run it, the people who own it, that unless you're free the machine will be prevented from working at all. [4]
> Mario Savio, Berkeley, 1964

> While there is a lower class, I am in it. While there is a criminal element, I'm of it. While there is a soul in prison, I am not free. [5]
> Eugene V. Debs

Statement of Purpose

As a teacher of ninth grade English in an inner-city school district, I have the opportunity to affect my students' writing and reading development at a critical stage in their lives. My learners are in transitional stages-from middle school to high school, from children to adults-thus, it is crucial that the instructor of writing and reading makes what they teach accessible, interactive, and enjoyable. Though most teachers downplay the fun factor in their classrooms, if we, as educators, truly wish to engender intellectual curiosity in our students and foster life long learners, it is essential to make our lessons interesting to our students. This unit, by virtue of its connectivity not only to other disciplines, like math and social studies, but to the issues that affect students' lives, seeks to engage learners in a critical analysis of American democracy through a series of skills-based activities. The final result of this unit is to make the issues of the past and present come alive as students construct a body of knowledge about what democracy in America really means and why their votes and voices matter.

CT Content Standard #4 [6] :

Students will use the language arts to explore and respond to classical and contemporary texts from many cultures and literary periods.

h. Students will read classic and contemporary literature to determine political and

social ideas which characterize those works.

Essential Questions:

1. What is democracy?
2. Who is an American citizen?
3. Why is America considered a "free" country?
4. What are the differences between a monarchy, a constitutional republic, and a democracy?
5. How does one represent democracy in the printed and spoken word?
6. What is the role of an individual in democracy?

Unit Overview and Rationale

Throughout American history dedicated individuals have affected sea changes in standards of living across race, gender, ethnicity, social class and sexual orientation. Some of these individuals have gone so far as to become martyrs to their causes. All of these individuals have employed the written or spoken word, in tandem with the spirit of the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights, to prove their cases for justice. The purpose of this unit is to examine the Founding Fathers' vision of America, and allow students to develop not only a nuanced appreciation of democracy in contrast to other political systems, but to ask them whether our not our government has lived up to the promise of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" to the people it represents. It is my hope that by introducing students to representations of democracy in literature, oratory, and film spanning the spectrum of United States' history, students will develop an interest in the democratic process and a desire to participate in it. After all, a democracy works best when all of its citizens are invested in its progress. Through this unit, students will learn that, historically, social change has been affected by defiant and outspoken individuals unsatisfied with the status quo who became conduits for the hopes and aspirations of the downtrodden and overlooked. There will always be one who stands up and speaks, eloquently and succinctly, to express what the many suffer and endure but feel they are forbidden to express. The individuals whose work is featured in this unit took risks, made sacrifices, and, in some cases, paid the ultimate price, so the United States government could become "a more perfect union." For most of this country's history, voting was not a birthright for women or people of color, but a hard-fought struggle for autonomy and self-realization. This unit hopes to rediscover those voices of dissent in both literature and popular culture, from the public and private sectors, who have taken on the mantle of the spokesperson, and examine their words through the lens of democracy, literally the wisdom of the people.

This unit will include selections from, and in some cases the entirety, of the following works of literature and oratory:

· Selections from *Politics* by Aristotle
· *The Constitution of the United States*
· *Common Sense* by Thomas Paine
· *Civil Disobedience* by Henry David Thoreau
· "The Gettysburg Address" by Abraham Lincoln
· Selected poems by Walt Whitman and Carl Sandburg, and, perhaps, transcendentalists Emerson and Thoreau
· "Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions" (drafted by Elizabeth Cady Stanton & Susan B. Anthony) from the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention and "On Women's Rights" by E.C. Stanton
· Selected poems by Langston Hughes
· Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech
· Barack Obama's address on racism, "A More Perfect Union"
· *Sicko* by Michael Moore (film)
· Selections from *A Man Without a Country* by Kurt Vonnegut

All of these individuals share a common gift for oratory and the written word. By exposing students to these influential individuals, not only will they achieve an appreciation of the dynamic nature of America's democracy, they will also come to realize the power of words and how, historically, they have operated on the collective imagination of "the people." Though the day-jobs of these individuals are varied-there are poets, politicians, preachers, philosophers, and film directors among them-every single one can be called, more appropriately, an activist, even a radical. All of these individuals have been catalysts in galvanizing the population and fomenting upheavals in popular opinion by bringing their causes to the fore of the collective American conscience. All have relied on the words of their forebears (as evidenced by Aristotle's *Politics* and the United States Constitution) and the uncanny power of persuasion to change minds. Even when political figures have assumed the leaderships of these movements, change was affected, not top-down but bottom-up, from iron-willed grassroots movements.

Another common trait among these agents of change is their reliance on the natural-born rights of the groups of people they have represented. Whether it was an appeal to fellow colonists to realize the virtues of independence and representational government, or the assertion for women's rights, or the struggle to overcome bondage and achieve civil rights for African Americans, one of the most invaluable rhetorical tools of these individuals has been referencing a sentiment that has been echoed through the ages: the inviolable natural right to liberty. By framing an appeal for change in a context that is mythological, perhaps even theological, the orator is afforded greater leverage by assuming moral authority over his or her opponents.

In addition to the aforementioned readings, students will engage in a variety of activities that will stimulate their interest in, and enhance their appreciation for, democracy. Some of the activities will include:

· writing the biography / autobiography / journal of an individual who has affected significant societal change
· polling fellow students for their opinions on hot-button issues
· drafting a school constitution
· debating the major issues of the day
· a letter writing campaign to local politicians

Since I will be debuting this unit of study during the pivotal 2008 election cycle, I intend to make it fully interactive by breaking the unit into two subsections: "The Origins and Application of Democracy in the United States" and "The Democratic Process." The first part will focus primarily upon those figures who have helped inform the concept of democracy in the United States up to the present day. The emphasis of this part will be on critical thinking and persuasive writing skills, allowing students to employ higher order skills such as analysis and evaluation in their compositions. During the latter part of the unit, "The Democratic Process," students will synthesize and apply their knowledge of democracy with a series of skills-based activities that will employ cross discipline knowledge of American history, civics, and mathematics.

Because students will be partaking in hands-on, research-based data analysis, some fluency in math is a must.

Students will be analyzing such disparate data as the U.S. Electoral College and poll results that they will generate on their own.

What this unit hopes to accomplish is to make young people, who may be at risk of becoming disenfranchised, to, instead, feel invested in the democratic process and more aware of their right to voice a dissenting opinion that does not accord to the status quo.

Part One: The Origins and Application of Democracy in the U.S.A.

Lesson Plans

Week One, Class One:

Materials:

1. Class copies of Aristotle's *Politics* , Book Three, Parts I, VII-XII
2. Student writing journals

Objectives: Students will analyze those portions of *Politics* that apply to their study of American democracy. This will begin as a whole class activity.

Duration: One eighty-two minute class period

Anticipatory Set: "What is democracy?" "Who has the right to vote in the United States?"

Instructional Procedure

Initiation: Students will answer the deceptively simple question, "What is democracy?" in their writing journals. This prompt will be written as a warm-up exercise that students will write about for the first 5-10 minutes of class. A class discussion of student responses will follow. After students have volunteered their definitions of democracy, class copies of excerpts from Aristotle's *Politics* will be passed out.

Seatwork: Students will read Book Three, Parts I and VII-XII. During and following the reading, the instructor should ask pointed questions of individual students, such as: What is the purpose of Aristotle's *Politics* ? Who is the audience? What is the main idea of Aristotle's argument? What different types of government does Aristotle identify? In Aristotle's opinion, what is the purpose of government? How does Aristotle define democracy? Who counts as a citizen under Aristotle's definition of democracy? What is the difference between a constitutional republic and a democracy? What type of government does Aristotle prefer? As a whole class activity, the teacher will make a T-chart on the board titled "Democracy" with column subheadings "Positives" and "Negatives." Students will volunteer positive and negative attributes of democracy as described by Aristotle.

Closure: The teacher will leave the T-chart on the board, then write the following writing prompt on the board: "What is the difference between a Constitutional Republic and a perfect Democracy?" Students will be given five minutes to write their responses. A class discussion of these responses will follow. The objective of these discussions is for students to define disparate political systems, and determine which ones work best.

Homework: Students will write a persuasive argument for a political system of their choosing and explain why they believe it is the best system of government, citing at least three reasons that support their individual arguments.

Assessment: All student writing

Week One, Classes Two-Three

Materials:

1. Class copies of your school's student handbook and behavior code
2. Class copies of *The Constitution of the United States of America*
3. Access to a computer lab or other digital multimedia, such as a DVD player

Alternate materials:

4. *The Declaration of Independence*

Objectives: Students will develop an understanding of the laws that govern American democracy. Students will be able to differentiate between a monarchy and a democracy. Students will create a model student government, and defend their plans before their peers.

Duration: Two eighty-two minute class periods

Anticipatory Set: What is a perfect democracy? Is America a perfect democracy? To whom did the Bill of Rights apply when it was written? How is the Bill of Rights a reflection of the political climate of post-Revolution America?

Instructional Procedure

Initiation: Students will answer the question "Is America a perfect democracy?" as a warm-up written journal assignment. Students will be given no more than fifteen minutes to write spontaneously about the subject based on the previous day's reading of Aristotle's *Politics* . A class discussion of journal responses will follow the initial writing portion of the class. The instructor should lead students to develop their own unique understandings of what is meant by the concept "democracy."

Seatwork: Students will read the *Constitution* and *Bill of Rights* . During and after reading, the instructor will

ask pointed questions of individual students that may include, but are not limited to: How do the rights in the Bill of Rights reflect the zeitgeist, or the popular sentiment of post-Revolution U.S.A.? How is the United States government organized to create a balance of power? What three main branches of government are outlined by the Constitution?

Closure:

(Day One) Students will again write in their journals a response to the following prompt: “Which is the most important right in the *Bill of Rights* ? In your response, develop a connection between this right and a real-life experience in which you had your rights infringed upon. If you have never had your rights infringed upon, compare and contrast the three branches of government, and choose the branch that you believe is most powerful; be prepared to defend your response with examples from the Constitution.” If time allows, a class discussion of student journal responses will follow.

(Day Two) A writing prompt in which students defend their groups’ different versions of student government. Students will be asked to support their choices with at least one right and one law suggested by their groups’ constitutions and bills of rights.

Homework: If students have not yet had an opportunity to finish writing their constitutions, they will be asked to come in with at least one suggestion for a student right and one law of student government.

Assessment: Students will draft a mock school constitution for their school as a small-group activity (no more than five students per group). Students will draft rules and regulations for governance of the student body. Students will also draft a students’ bill of rights, which should be limited, ideally, to ten student rights. Students will choose a representative from their groups to represent the group’s consensus version of student government. Student representatives will then have an opportunity to present and debate their plans before the class. If a class is in a computer lab, they may use multimedia such as an LCD projector to outline and delineate their proposed government using Microsoft Office applications, PowerPoint or Word, or create digital videos with their cameras at home, which have the potential to be played as a DVD or a digital media player, like RealPlayer or Windows Media Player. Following these presentations, students will vote on what they believe to be the best potential student government. Students will not be allowed to vote for their own groups. As a follow-up, students can present their chosen rules, laws, and regulations to the administration of their school.

Week Two, Class Four

Materials:

1. Class copies of excerpts (pp.VII-XIII of the foreword and p.XXXIII of the introduction, pp. 1-7, 26-40, 44-48, and 50-51 from Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense* , (*note* : excerpt page numbers correspond to the Signet Classics 2003 Edition of *Common Sense, Rights of Man, and other essential writings of Thomas Paine*)

Objectives: Students will read and respond critically to Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense* . Students will apply their knowledge of persuasive rhetoric to their own lives through a letter-writing campaign about issues of their choosing.

Duration: One eighty-two minute class period

Anticipatory Set: “What does it mean to be a patriot?” “Why might some Americans have been resistant to

change or revolution in 1776?”

Instructional Procedure

Initiation: Students will answer the question “How is a democracy different from a monarchy?” as a written “Do Now” journal assignment. Students will be asked to explain their answers in detail and be prepared to defend them during class discussion. Other possible initiation questions may include the following: “Did the founding fathers have a perfect democracy or a republic in mind while drafting the Constitution?” or “Who has more power in the United States government: the people or the legislators?” or “What is the difference between a colony and an independent nation?” or “What is meant by taxation without representation?” In any case, students should be given no more than fifteen minutes to compose a response, and the instructor should allow another ten to fifteen minutes for class discussion of student journal responses.

Seatwork: (Whole class) Student volunteers will read portions of Thomas Paine’s

Common Sense aloud. As a during reading activity, students will be asked to record at least three reasons Paine cites in support of the American Revolution.

Closure: Students will be asked whether or not Thomas Paine’s vision for America has come into being. Which changes in America did Thomas Paine foresee? What did Paine fail to foresee? This should be done as an individual writing prompt, followed by a whole class discussion of student responses.

Homework: Students will choose an issue that affects their lives and write a letter to their school administrator, local politician, newspaper editor, U.S. Congressperson, or state governor that defends either a pro or con stance about their issue of choice. The instructor and class should brainstorm different issues and topics that they believe the community, their elected officials or school administrators can have an impact on. This is a free associative group activity.

Assessment: Student journals and letters

Week Two, Class Five

Materials:

1. Class copies of Henry David Thoreau’s “Civil Disobedience”
2. Class copies or transparencies of pie charts that show the division of federal [7] and state [8] budgets
3. An overhead projector

Alternate Materials:

4. A brief biography of abolitionist John Brown

5. “A Plea for Captain John Brown” by Henry David Thoreau
6. “Self Reliance” by Ralph Waldo Emerson
Objectives: Students will read and respond critically to Thoreau’s essay “Civil Disobedience”

Duration: One eighty-two minute class period

Anticipatory Set: “Who was considered a citizen in the United States before the Civil War?” “How is the concept or theory of democracy different than its reality or execution in the United States?”

Instructional Procedure

Initiation: Students will answer the question “What, or whom, did the founding fathers leave out when framing the Constitution?” “Why were certain groups of people not taken into account when the Constitution was written?” as a warm-up journal assignment. Students will be asked to explain their answers in detail and be prepared to defend them during class discussion.

Seatwork: (whole class) Student volunteers will read “Civil Disobedience” aloud. During reading, the instructor should ask pointed questions of individual students such as “What kind of government does Thoreau prefer?” “What is Thoreau’s opinion of prisons?” “Which uses of his tax dollars does Thoreau approve or disapprove of?” As students research the answers to these questions, the students should create a T-chart, dividing Thoreau’s assertions into “Approve” and “Disapprove” columns. Students will discuss whether they agree or disagree with Thoreau and why.

Closure: After reading “Civil Disobedience,” as a whole class activity, students will be shown a pie chart that shows exactly how each tax dollar is divided. Students will create a T-chart showing what uses of taxpayer money they approve of and what they believe to believe to be wastes of taxpayer money. The purpose of this exercise is to spark debate about a variety of potential issues among students.

Homework: Students will write a second draft of their persuasive letters.

Assessment: Student journals and letters.

Week Three, Class Six

Materials:

1. Class copies or transparency of “The Gettysburg Address” by Abraham Lincoln
2. Class copies or transparency of selected poems (“For You O Democracy,” “Cavalry Crossing a Ford,” and “O Captain, My Captain”) from Walt Whitman’s *Leaves of Grass*
3. Class copies of chapter 18 of Alexis de Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America* , “Why American Writers and Orators are Often Bombastic”

4. An overhead projector

Alternate Materials:

5. “Democratic Vistas” by Walt Whitman
6. Lincoln’s “House Divided” speech
7. “The Emancipation Proclamation” by Abraham Lincoln
8. Class copies of Lincoln’s speech at New Haven, CT, March 6, 1860

Objectives: Students will read and respond critically to Lincoln’s speeches and Whitman’s poems. Students will compare and contrast the ideas of Abraham Lincoln and Walt Whitman through the lens of major historical events like the Civil War and abolition.

Duration: One eighty-two minute class period

Anticipatory Set: “What was the cause of the Civil War in the United States?” “What was the outcome?” “What effect did the Civil War have on democracy in the United States?”

Instructional Procedure

Initiation: “Why is President Abraham Lincoln considered an American hero and legend?” Students will respond to this writing prompt, and discuss collaboratively for the first 20-30 minutes of class.

Seatwork: As a whole class activity students will read and respond critically to Lincoln’s “Gettysburg Address.” The writing prompt should be as follows, and students should be given no more than three minutes to write a response: “According to President Lincoln what does the future of democracy in America rely on?” A brief discussion of the document and student responses will follow, with the instructor filling in the historical context. Students will then read Walt Whitman’s poems “For You O Democracy,” “Cavalry Crossing a Ford,” and “O Captain! My Captain!” and discuss them. Students will then be given de Tocqueville’s “Why American Orators are Often Bombastic,” and student volunteers will read this aloud. Afterwards, students will respond in writing to the following prompt: “Based on your own experience of American politicians and ‘The Gettysburg Address,’ do you agree or disagree with de Tocqueville’s opinion of American oratory?”

Closure: A discussion of student responses will follow.

Homework: Students will write the first draft of a 1-2 pp research paper about one of the following figures in American history: Paul Robeson, Thomas Jefferson, Arthur Miller, Frederick Douglas, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Susan B. Anthony, John Brown, Harriet Tubman, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Sojourner Truth or Cesar Chavez

(students may also choose their own figure to research, as long as they can explain why and how that historical figure relates to democracy in the United States).

Assessment: see *Homework*

Week Three, Class Seven

Materials:

1. Class copies of “Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions” as drafted by the Woman’s Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, NY, July 19-20, 1848
2. Class copies of “On Women’s Rights” by Elizabeth Cady Stanton
3. Class copies or transparency of Amendment XIV, Section One to the *Constitution*
4. Class copies or transparency of Amendment XIX, Section One to the *Constitution*

Alternate Materials:

5. Brief biographies of Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Sojourner Truth (several available to Connecticut teachers and library card holders via iconn.org’s individual databases)

Objectives: Students will read and respond critically to the writings of Elizabeth Cady

Stanton as well as the Women’s Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, NY, July 19-20, 1848

Duration: One eighty-two minute class period

Anticipatory Set: “Why are amendments to the Constitution necessary?”

Instructional Procedure

Initiation: The instructor will pass out class copies or show a transparency of Amendment XIV, Section One to the Constitution (1868): “All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.” And ask students, “Based on the Fourteenth Amendment, who has the right to citizenship in the United States?” Students will be given no more than three minutes to write a response. A brief discussion of the Fourteenth Amendment and its historical context will follow.

Seatwork: Students will read and respond critically to excerpts from "Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions" drafted by the Women's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, NY, July 19-20, 1848 and "On Women's Rights" by Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

Closure: Students will be asked how long after the Women's Rights Convention they think it took women to acquire the right to vote. Students will propose answers and their justification for those answers until the correct answer is known. At this point the instructor will distribute class copies of the Nineteenth Amendment (1920): "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." The class will end with a discussion about why it took so long for women to acquire the right to vote.

Homework: Students will continue working on their biography research papers.

Assessment: Student journals and research papers

Week Three, Class Eight:

Materials:

1. Class copies of selected poems of Langston Hughes ("Let America be America Again," "America," "The South," "Negro," "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," and "A Dream Deferred")
2. Class copies of Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech

Alternate Materials:

3. "The Atlanta Compromise" by Booker T. Washington
4. Chapter Three "Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others" from *The Souls of Black Folk* by W.E.B. Dubois
5. The Supreme Court decision of Plessy V. Ferguson

Objectives: Students will examine and analyze the poems of Langston Hughes in the context of the Jim Crow era, as well as civil rights. Students will be asked to compare and contrast the sentiments expressed in the poem "I Dream a World" by Langston Hughes with those of Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech.

Duration: One eighty-two minute class period

Anticipatory Set: "Following the Civil War were blacks and whites separate but equal in the United States?"

Instructional Procedure

Initiation: Students will answer the *Anticipatory Set* as a writing prompt, and include at least two examples supporting their opinions. Students will be given ten-fifteen minutes to write. A class discussion about the Jim Crow era and Civil Rights shall follow.

Seatwork: The instructor will break the students up into small groups (no more than five students per group). Each group will receive a sampling of selected poems of Langston Hughes and be asked to analyze one of them. Each group will analyze a different poem, but students will be encouraged to read all of them closely. A whole class discussion of each poem the student groups have analyzed will follow.

Closure: If time remains, students will read "Freedom's Plow" by Langston Hughes

Homework: Students will read copies of Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream Speech" and Langston Hughes' "I Dream a World" and be asked to compare and contrast them in a three-paragraph essay.

Assessment: Student journals and essays

Part Two: "The Democratic Process"

Week Four, Class Nine

Materials:

1. A video and written transcripts of Barack Obama's address on race in the U.S.A.: "A More Perfect Union"
2. Class Copies of pp. 81-89 of Kurt Vonnegut's *A Man Without a Country* .
3. A digital media player and LCD projector or a DVD player and television

Alternate Materials:

4. "Obama Declares Nomination is 'Within Reach'" by Adam Nagourney and Jeff Zeleny from *The New York Times* , 5-22-08
5. "Obama is moving to Down-to-Earth Oratory" by Michael Powell from *The New York Times* , 4-1-08

Objectives: Students will read and respond critically to pp. 81-89 of *A Man Without a Country* as well as the transcript of Obama's address on race in the United States, "A More Perfect Union."

Anticipatory Set: What kinds of changes are necessary for the U.S.A. to become a better nation (think about: the environment, health care, race relations, education, the Iraq War, the energy crisis, etc)?

Instructional Procedure

Initiation: Students will respond to the *Anticipatory Set* in their journals. A whole class discussion of these responses will follow. The variety of student responses should spark debate among students about what changes are necessary for the U.S.A. to become a better nation.

Seatwork: Students will read pp. 81-89 of *A Man Without a Country* . The instructor will ask pointed questions of individual students during and after the reading that may include, but are not limited to: "What is Vonnegut's opinion of our elected leaders?" or "In Vonnegut's opinion what does the United States government expect of its citizens?" or "What is Vonnegut's opinion of the 2000 presidential election?" Students will then watch a video of Barack Obama's speech "A More Perfect Union."

Closure: If time remains, a brief discussion of student reactions to Senator Obama's address will follow the video.

Homework: Students will write a three-paragraph reaction essay that either agrees or disagrees with Mr. Obama's opinon of race relations in the U.S.A.

Assessment: Student journals and reaction essays.

Weeks Four-Five, Classes Ten and Eleven

Materials:

1. A DVD of Michael Moore's *Sicko*
2. A television and DVD player
3. A transparency or class copies that show the Electoral College [9]

Objectives: Students will watch and respond critically to Michael Moore's documentary about health care in the U.S., *Sicko.*

Anticipatory Set: Does America offer its citizens more freedom than other countries?

Instructional Procedure

Initiation (Day One) *:* Students will be given a color map of the U.S.A. as the results of the 2004 Electoral College. Students will be asked to write in response to the prompt: "What is the meaning of the numbers and colors on the map?" This will segue into an instructor-guided discussion of the Electoral College.

Seatwork: Students will watch and respond critically in an Active Viewing worksheet to the Michael Moore documentary, *Sicko* .

Closure (Day Two) *:* Students will write a three-paragraph reaction essay about *Sicko* .

Homework (Day Two) *:* If time does not allow students to finish their reaction essays, they will do so for homework.

Assessment: Student journals, reaction essays, and Active Viewing worksheets.

Week Five, Classes Twelve and Thirteen

Materials : Voter registration forms

Objectives : Students will use the information they have learned throughout the unit to create a final project or essay that will also work as their cumulative exam for the unit. Students will be given the opportunity to volunteer as a pollster or in a voter registration drive.

Anticipatory Set : What are the common elements of good oratory? How does good oratory work on its audience?

Initiation (Day One): Students will be assigned to one of three projects: to organize and participate in a voter registration drive, to poll at least 100 individuals concerning their opinions on three major issues of the 2008 presidential campaign, or to write an essay in which two works that were read in class are chosen from two of the three distinct eras in American history (1776-1859, 1860-1959, 1960-present). Students who are assigned the last of the three will need to write at least two double-spaced pages.

Seatwork (both days): Students will work in small groups or as individuals. Due to logistics, only one group (of no more than three responsible students) per class will participate in the polling and voter registration drives. The remainder of the students will write essays that seek to answer the question given in the *Anticipatory Set* . Students will be given one class to write their first drafts, then a second class to peer revise.

Homework : Final draft of report / project. Those students who participated in voter registration drives and polls will write reports of no less than two double-spaced pages that analyze their poll results about the current issues they chose, or how willing non-registered adults were to register to vote, as well as reasons why and why not adults chose to register.

Assessment : Group presentations and final essays.

Notes

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[1] Lazarus, Emma, “New Colossus.”

[2] Addams, Jane, “The Subjective Necessity for Social Settlements,” in *The Jane Addams Reader* , 17.

[3] Burke, Edmund, source unknown.

[4] Savio, Mario, “Sproul Hall Sit-in Address.”

[5] Debs, Eugene V., “Statement to the Court Upon Being Convicted of Violating the Sedition Act.”

[6] Connecticut Content Standard, English/Language Arts, Grades 9-12.

[7] http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/thumb/e/ef/US_budget_2007.svg/450px-US_budget_2007.svg.png

[8] http://www.osc.state.ct.us/reports/economic/96cmprpt/crptbdgt.htm

[9] http://www.rklau.com/tins/images/electoral_college.gif

Resources

Addams, Jane. *The Jane Addams Reader* . Elshtain, Jean Bethke, ed. New York: Basic Books, 2001. This is a compilation of Addams' most significant writings.

Aristotle. *The Politics* . Saunders, Trevor J., ed. Sinclair, T.A., trans. London: Penguin Books, 1962. This is a hardcopy edition of Aristotle's classic book of philosophy and political criticism. It is also available online at http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/politics.3.three.html.

"Connecticut Content Standards." English/Language Arts, Grades 9-12. http://ctcurriculum.org/list_standards.asp?taskid=&dis=LA&grade=12&disname=English%2FLanguage+Arts&gradename=Grades+9%2D12 (accessed July 30, 2008).

Debs, Eugene V., "Statement to the Court Upon Being Convicted of Violating the Sedition Act." September 18, 1918. http://www.marxists.org/archive/debs/works/1918/court.htm (accessed July 30, 2008).

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