

Voting Rights

WebQuest Description: Want to know more about voting? Want to know what the bill of rights has to do with your voting opportunities? Do you know the history of voting? You can learn all of these things by checking out this webquest.

Grade Level: 6-8

Curriculum: Social Studies

Keywords: democracy, voting, bill of rights

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Introduction

Introduction Who's controlling your life and future? Do you feel that other people are making decisions for you? Are you bothered by restrictive laws for youth? Do the youth of America have a say in this matter? Know your individual rights! Become involved! Decisions are made by adults every day that can and will affect your life and your future. Today you have been given the opportunity to change your community by taking on an active role in the governmental decision making process. Rock the vote! The National Youth Commission has been established to solicit the viewpoints of today's young people. The commission is seeking out the youth of today to help produce a series of advertisements directed to issues affecting young people. You and your teammates will become a part of national history by effectively contributing your points of view and ideas to the National Youth Commission advertising campaign. The theme of the advertisements will be "Establishing Yourself Today in Yesterday's World." The purpose is to educate young people about the components and importance of America's Bill of Rights; and demonstrate how a well researched, persuasive viewpoint can be created about a controversial issue relating to the rights of individuals. You have been selected by the commission to participate in the creation of the Commission's first advertisement in the series created by youth, for youth!

Tasks

The Task You have been selected by the National Youth Commission Advertising Campaign to be a member of their ad production crew. You and your team will: Analyze the the Bill of Rights. Identify the current social/political issues that are connected to the constitutional interpretation of the Bill of Rights. Examine the voting records of political representatives for legislation introduced or supported that relates to constitutional issues. Select a controversial issue which affects today's youth and is related to the interpretation of an article in the Bill of Rights. Investigate opposing points of view on this issue and formulate your team position on this issue. Create an advertising campaign that takes a stand on the chosen issue, inform others of their basic rights, and encourages other young people to become involved. Good luck!

Process

You have been assigned to a team of 3-4 students. You and your team will accomplish the following six tasks. At the end of the six tasks, each team member will be responsible for turning in the task forms packet. You will be working as part of a design team to produce your power point ad campaign. Your team needs to decide who will assume each of the following roles. Manager--coordinates between group members--keeps group members on task--monitors time and speed of work--ensures continuity between all parts of the power point to produce a polished final product. Chief Researcher--locates, reads, and records pertinent information from websites. Chief Writer--composes and types the words for the power point. Graphic Artist--locate, modify, and inset graphic images (pictures, charts, maps, etc.) into the power point--creates a visually pleasing layout for the entire power point presentation. Task 1 - Analyze the Bill of Rights. Using the links provided, work with your group to locate, research, and discuss the Bill of Rights. Please take notes as you accomplish your research. Discuss the information you found on the Bill of Rights with your team. Compare and contrast your ideas about the Bill of Rights based on the information you have collected. Create a summary of the Bill of Rights using words or pictures using the "Task 1" form. <http://www.usconstitution.net/constkids4.html> <http://bensguide.gpo.gov/3-5/citizenship/rights.html> <http://www.quia.com/cc/142682.html> Task 2 - Identify the current social/political issues that are connected to constitutional interpretation of the Bill of Rights. Once your group has completed research about the Bill of Rights, begin identifying and researching issues related to the Bill of Rights which are related to today. Takes notes as you work through your research and create a list of issues that interest you from your investigation. You may use the following web sites to find information related to today's issues. <http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK> <http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/http://news.nationalgeographic.com/kids/> As a team, identify two issues that are related to the Bill of Rights. Remember you may have to compromise on the issues you would like to work on in order to agree upon your team's two issues. Investigate and analyze those issues and discuss how they relate to the Bill of Rights. When you have enough information, write a new amendment or expand on an existing amendment. Record your information on the "Task 2" Form. Task 3 - Examine the records of political representatives for legislation introduced or supported that relates to constitutional issues. As a team, use the web sites below to research who represents you in the House of Representatives from your district. Your team will research the bills your representative has voted on during the last session and choose one. Find out the details of this bill and decide as a team if you would have voted for or against that piece of legislation. Record your information

on the "Task 3"

form.www.house.gov/http://clerkkids.house.gov/congress/members/index.html<http://writerep.house.gov/writerep/welcome.shtml>
 Task 4 - Select a controversial issue affecting today's youth that is related to your team's interperation of the Bill of Rights Your team will brainstorm important issues that affect today's youth. Your team will select one issue and relate it to the Bill of Rights. You will need to gather information about the issue and why people should support your team position on the issue. You will need two supporting references for your issue. Record your information on the "Task 4" form. Some sites to look for research arehttp://staffweb.peoriaud.k12.92.us/SMHS_Library/Teens.htmwww.theta.com/youth-issues/index.phpwww.naphs.org/youth_services/youth_services2004forum.htmlwww.nclr.org/content/publications/detail/41645
 Task 5 - Investigate opposing points of view on an issue and formulate a position on the issue Now your team must find two supporting references in opposition to your team's position on the issue. Record your information on "Task 5" form. You may use the websites listed above to help your team. Task 6 - Produce an ad that takes a stand on the chosen issue, informing others of their basic rights, and encourage other young people to become involved. Now that your team has researched the Bill of Rights, identified your House of Representatives member and researched their voting record, identified an important youth issue, and found support for and against the issue; your team will now create an ad that takes a stand on your youth issue. 1. Your team must decide if you are for or against the youth issue.2. You must present the issue to your teacher for approval to ensure it is appropriate to discuss in school.3. Your team will create a Power Point that takes a stand on the youth issue, informs others of their basic rights from the Bill of Rights, and encourages other young people to becomed involved in the political system. Your Power Point presentation will be graded using the "Advertisement Presentation" rubric.Good Luck!!

Evaluation

Category and Score	Beginning 1	Developing 2	Very Good 3	Exemplary 4	Score
Analyze the Bill of Rights.	Able to state what one or two of the articles are in the Bill of Rights and what rights these articles give them.	Able to state what three, four, or five of the articles are in the Bill of Rights and what rights these articles give them.	Able to state what six, seven, or eight of the articles are in the Bill of Rights and what rights these articles give them.	Able to state what nine or ten of the articles are in the Bill of Rights and what rights these articles give them.	%30
Find and evaluate the political records of your congressmen relating to the Bill of Rights	Able to identify which congressmen represent them.	Meets the beginning requirements and also able to find and evaluate one or two decisions made by their representative.	Meets the developing requirements and also able to determine what impact these decisions have on their life.	Meets the very good requirements and also able to create an opinion about what they would change if they had the chance.	%15
Identify a controversial issue relating to youth and the Bill of Rights. Create a team position on this issue and identify opposing view points.	Able to identify a controversial issue relating to the Bill of Rights and youth.	Meets the beginning requirements and also able to create a team position which has some bearing on the issue.	Meets the developing requirements and also able to identify one or two opposing view points.	Exceeds the very good requirements by creating a team position which is fully involved with the issue and opposing view points are well stated and relevant to the issue.	%35
Create a political ad for your position which will also encourage other youth to be politically active for your position.	Power Point Presentation shows lack of understanding. Design is unprofessional and confusing. Graphics are inappropriate and detract from design.	Power Point Presentation contains basic information with little or no support. Design is somewhat disorganized and amateur. Graphics are appropriate and neither add nor detract from the design.	Power Point Presentation's content is appropriate and appealing. Shows understanding and has adequate support. Design is mostly organized and professional. Graphics somewhat enhance design.	Power Point ad is well thought out and compelling. Content is appropriate, appealing and shows application of knowledge. Design is professional and organized. Graphics are used effectively and enhance design.	%20
				Total Score	%100

Conclusion

At the end of this activity you will have learned in detail about the rights of citizens guaranteed by the Bill of Rights. You will know how to search for issues related to the Bill of Rights. Also, you will have identified your elected official in the House of Representatives and researched bill(s) your Representative has voted on. Your research skills and knowledge of the Bill of Rights and House of Representatives will assist you in producing an ad stating your team position on a controversial issue affecting youth. This activity will give you an idea about the protections afforded by the Bill of Rights for you and every citizen of our nation. As an extension of this activity, consider the following: 1) When researching issues related the Bill of Rights, were there any issues that kept resurfacing? Why do you think this happened? 2) Are there any special interest groups you think you would want to join when you are an adult?3) Did this

activity help you understand your rights as a voting citizen? If it did, would you consider running for a political office in the future? Why or why not?

Teacher Page

This webquest is intended for middle school students in grades 6-8. This webquest addresses the standard, indicator, and objective from the Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum Standard 1The student will understand the historical development and current status of the fundamental concepts and processes of authority, power, and influence, with particular emphasis on the democratic skills and attitudes necessary to become responsible citizens Indicator 2The student will analyze historic documents to determine the basic principles of the United States government and apply them to real-world situations (1.1.1) Objective1. Identify the rights of citizens in the Bill of Rights and how these rights protect the citizens and limit the power of government. Core Learning Goal(1) The student will analyze historic documents to determine the basic principles of the United States government and apply them to real-world situations.(2) The student will evaluate the degree to which the principles of government assist or impede the functioning of government and protect the rights of individuals and groups.(3) The student will evaluate the roles and policies the United States has assumed regarding public issues.

Standards

Credits

Other