

Subject: Civics
Level: Middle School

CIVIC ACTION LESSON PLAN

This lesson plan offers teachers resource links from the **Library of Congress** and **inquiry-based teaching strategies**, using middle school Civics content and primary source analysis to engage students in developing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to engage in positive civic action.

Title: You Matter		
ESSENTIAL QUESTION: How do you make sure your voice is heard?		
<p>Lesson Overview: Students will analyze primary sources to examine examples of voting. Students will discuss who votes and how ballots have changed to make voting equitable for all eligible voters.</p>	<p>Lesson Objectives Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze primary sources to understand types of voting in the US. Note problems and solutions related to voting. Review the basic structure of our voting types. 	
<p>Inquiry Standards <u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.3</u> Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.</p>		
Supporting Question 1 ENGAGING	Supporting Question 2 EVALUATING	Supporting Question 3 TAKING ACTION
Does every vote count?	How does voting matter to your life?	What can you do to make voting matter?
PERFORMANCE TASK 1	PERFORMANCE TASK 2	CULMINATING TASK
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divide the class into small groups or pairs of students and distribute the images below. Students should spend a few minutes analyzing each source and answering the questions posed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note: Give students the photos with bibliographic information on back or on a separate page. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divide the class into small groups or pairs of students and distribute primary sources. Students should spend a few minutes analyzing the sources and answering the questions posed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note: Give students the sources with bibliographic information on back or on a separate page. 	<p>Download a current ballot from your area through your county clerk's office.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take a look at the ballot. What is similar to the previous ballots? What is different? Is there anything on the ballot that would make it more equal for different people to vote? <p>Lead the following discussion:</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think you saw in the documents? • Write the definition of voting on the board. • Lead a discussion with the whole class regarding the process of voting. <p>Write the following quote on the board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “A man without a vote is a man without protection.” – President Lyndon Johnson • Ask the student to think about the quote and write down what the quote means to them on a piece of paper. • Ask students to go back to the images they analyzed and choose the picture that they feel best represents the quote. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What categories do you see on the ballots? ○ What do you notice about the ballots that might make them equal? ○ What do you notice about the ballots that might make them unequal? ○ What evidence can you point to on the ballots that might make voting unequal for people who are eligible to vote? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there anything that can be done within the voting process to make it more equal for citizens? • Ask students how they might go about changing the voting process if they see ways to improve it. • Refer back to the quote from Part I: “A man without a vote is a man without protection.” – President Lyndon Johnson • Ask students to think about the quote and let them revise what they originally wrote down as their reaction to that quote.
---	---	---

**LIBRARY OF CONGRESS RESOURCES
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whitman voting image bibliographic record • Voting in Prince George's County, Md. image bibliographic record 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official ballot for Precinct No. 33, City of Portland, Oregon, at the special city election to be held November 8, 1910 source bibliographic record • Official ballot General municipal election City of Grand Junction Colo. November 2, A.D. 1909 source bibliographic record 	<p>Additional LOC resources on voting</p> <p>https://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/elections/election-process.html</p>
---	--	--

TEACHING STRATEGIES

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct instruction • Primary source analysis and discussion • Interview strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary source analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured academic controversy
--	---	---

This lesson is part of a larger initiative, Citizen U, which aims to integrate civic learning across the curriculum for students in grades 2-12. For more lessons like it, in Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies, or to learn more about related creative, community, and professional development opportunities, please visit our [Citizen U website](#)...