

Civic Engagement

Inquiry Question: How can we work together for the good of the community?

Inquiry Product: Written Product (Whole Class)

Unit Description:

You are never too young to engage in the civic life of your community! In this unit, students explore different forms of participation and investigate key civics topics such as rights, responsibilities, fairness, rules, and laws. Students reflect on ways that they, too, can work together for the good of their community.

LAUNCH

Module 1: Launch the Unit

[Materials and Prep Guide](#)

This module is designed to hook students into the inquiry process through an engaging, thought-provoking activity. The Inquiry Question is introduced and students' initial Investigation Questions begin to surface. There is no pre-teaching required to start students on their inquiry journey.

Objectives

- Explore the concept of citizenship
- Explore the rights and responsibilities of all citizens
- Determine what our responsibilities are to ourselves, each other, and the wider community

Checkpoint Assessment

- As an informal pre-assessment, observe the class and gauge their general entry point to key concepts and skills; look for:
 - Gives examples of rights and responsibilities that we have as citizens

Lesson & Description

Outcome

Core Lesson

1. Hook Activity: What a Citizen Can Do

The hook activity is designed to spark interest in the main themes of the unit. Students begin by unpacking what it means to be a citizen through a read-aloud of the book *What Can a Citizen Do?* by Dave Eggers. Then, they start to explore rights and responsibilities, two concepts that are woven throughout the unit. They are also introduced to the Inquiry Question that will guide their investigation throughout the unit.

- Identify and define what a citizen can do
- Identify rights we all share as citizens
- Determine what our responsibilities are to ourselves, each other, and the wider community

Core Lesson

2. Generating Investigation Questions

Students are introduced to a modified version of the Question Formulation Technique (QFT) to generate Investigation Questions that will guide their exploration of how we can work together for the good of the community!

- Generate meaningful questions about working together as citizens for the good of the community with support of question words (Who, What, Where, When, Why, How)
- Evaluate and select Investigation Questions

INVESTIGATION

Module 2: How do rights and responsibilities shape our roles in a community?

[Materials and Prep Guide](#)

Students investigate a variety of civics concepts, including rules, laws, rights, responsibilities, fairness, and leadership. They examine how these concepts are interrelated and draw connections between home, school, and the wider community.

<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the purpose and function of rules and laws • Describe rights and responsibilities we have as citizens of our community • Describe different leadership roles and responsibilities • Explain connections between key concepts and vocabulary (fairness, rights, responsibilities, rules, laws, leadership) 	<p>Checkpoint Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review "Rights and Responsibilities" handouts to assess understanding of key concepts from the module; look for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Represent in pictures and words how key civics concepts are connected (fairness, rights, responsibilities, rules, laws, leadership) • Use the "Module 2 Observations" teacher worksheet during the discussion activity to assess developing understanding of concepts that repeat throughout these lessons; look for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Gives examples to describe rights and responsibilities in different contexts ◦ Gives examples to describe connections between key concepts (fairness, rights, responsibilities, rules, laws, leadership) ◦ Gives examples to describe the purpose of rules or laws in different contexts
Lesson & Description	Outcome
<p>Core Lesson</p> <p><u>1. Rules and Laws</u></p> <p>Students are introduced to the concepts of rules and laws, and draw connections to their rights and responsibilities. They examine text and video sources to learn about the purpose and function of rules and laws, who makes them, and why they might differ from place to place.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize that there are different rules and laws that govern behavior in different settings • Analyze details in a text to identify evidence about rules and laws • Use evidence from multiple sources to describe the purpose and function of rules and laws • Engage in collaborative discussion
<p>Core Lesson</p> <p><u>2. Determining Fairness</u></p> <p>Students generate ideas about fairness and explore a variety of sources to investigate and discuss what it means to be fair, drawing connections to rules, rights, and responsibilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a common understanding of what it means to be fair • Analyze scenarios to identify aspects of fairness or unfairness • Describe actions that might promote fairness, equity, and respect • Engage in collaborative discussion
<p>Core Lesson</p> <p><u>3. Exploring Leadership Roles</u></p> <p>Students learn about different leadership roles and what responsibilities come along with these roles. They read the book <i>Grace Goes to Washington</i> by Kelly DiPucchio to learn about a variety of leadership roles, including the President and the principal of the school, as well as leadership roles that students hold. Students come to the understanding that different leadership roles involve different responsibilities – and more responsibilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use text evidence to describe various leadership roles, such as the school principal and the President of the US • Analyze details in the text to identify evidence related to leadership and government • Explore the purpose and function of government • Engage in collaborative discussion
<p>Extension Lesson</p> <p><u>4. What It Means to Be a Leader</u></p> <p>Students recognize that a leader is a member of a group who takes on a different role and has more responsibilities. They look at different leadership roles to see how a leader can inspire a group, organize a team, and help make key decisions. Then, they think about how they are already leaders. Select this Extension lesson for students to dig deeper into what it means to be a leader.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how all people, not just official leaders, play important roles in a community • Describe different leadership roles and responsibilities that come along with the role • Represent themselves as a leader in words and images • Engage in collaborative discussion

<p>Core Lesson</p> <p><u>5. Reflecting on Key Concepts</u> Students reflect on their learning about rights and responsibilities, rules and laws, fairness, and leadership. They demonstrate understanding of how these concepts are interrelated, which they've been practicing throughout the module.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain why we need rules and laws • Describe the rights and responsibilities we have as citizens of our community • Describe different leadership roles and the responsibilities that come along with those roles • Explain connections between key concepts and vocabulary of the module (citizens, citizenship, rights, responsibilities, rules, laws, leaders, fair) • Engage in collaborative discussion
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INVESTIGATION

Module 3: How do citizens in a community make informed choices? *Materials and Prep Guide*

Students explore the process of making informed choices, distinguishing between personal choices and those that impact the community. In order to make fair and informed choices, they must gather information, then share opinions and listen to other perspectives respectfully.

<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the difference between fact and opinion • Use facts to support an opinion • Demonstrate respect for the rights and opinions of others in discussions, and agree or disagree respectfully • Explain fair ways to make informed choices for the good of the community 	<p>Checkpoint Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Parts 2 and 3 of "Making Fair and Informed Choices" handouts to assess content understanding; look for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Accurately identifies statements of fact or opinion ◦ Provides evidence to support an opinion about which pet the class should get • Use the "Module 3 Observations" teacher worksheet during the discussion activity to assess content understanding; look for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Gives examples to describe ways to be informed (listen to other points of view, distinguish fact from opinion, analyze different types of media and sources, choose sources carefully) ◦ Shares opinions respectfully ◦ Listens and responds to differing points of view respectfully
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Lesson & Description	Outcome
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<p>Core Lesson</p> <p><u>1. Sharing Our Ideas and Opinions</u> Students explore the work that goes into making choices. They consider the differences between personal choices and those that impact a community. Then, they establish that in order to make a fair and informed choice, they must learn more about the issue, share points of view respectfully, and listen to other perspectives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain what it means to be informed • Describe how information impacts making choices • Compare and contrast opinions related to a topic or issue • Practice sharing different points of view respectfully with a partner
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<p>Core Lesson</p> <p><u>2. Making Informed Decisions</u> Students consider the importance of knowing facts and opinions when it comes to being informed and making choices. They practice distinguishing between fact and opinion as a class, then examine a nonfiction text to identify facts that can support their own opinions about a topic. They generate their own informed opinions and share them respectfully with a partner.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinguish between fact and opinion • Create an informed opinion by using facts to support their opinion and reasoning • Share personal informed opinions with a partner
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<p>Extension Lesson</p> <p><u>3. Determining What Information Is Valuable</u> Students consider how the maker and purpose of a source impact its content, and how source analysis can help citizens be informed. Using an imaginary choice ("What breakfast should we make as a class?"), students use questions to compare an informational text about healthy breakfast written by a doctor to a cereal advertisement. Select this Extension lesson for students to practice determining the validity of sources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify different types of media and sources • Analyze various sources to determine who made it, why they made it, and what it can tell us • Describe how the maker and purpose behind a source influence its content • Ask critical questions to determine the validity of sources of information
<p>Extension Lesson</p> <p><u>4. Practice with Respectful Discourse</u> Students consider two imaginary scenarios to walk through the process of making a fair and informed choice together as a group. Select this Extension lesson for continued practice with discourse.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate respect for the rights and opinions of others • Identify how individuals work together to make fair and informed choices • Participate in making a fair and informed choice about a given scenario • Engage in collaborative discussion
<p>Core Lesson</p> <p><u>5. Reflecting on Making Fair and Informed Choices</u> Students have been practicing the various steps to take when making informed and fair choices throughout the module. They need to: Listen, Read, Talk, and Ask. They will use their expertise to give advice to a class trying to determine which class pet they should get. Finally, students revisit their Investigation Questions and draw connections to the broader inquiry of the unit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinguish between fact and opinion • Explain how to make fair and informed decisions • Explain the importance of hearing multiple points of view • Engage in collaborative discussion

INVESTIGATION

Module 4: How can people stand up for fairness? *Materials and Prep Guide*

Students investigate how people stood up against rules in sports that historically excluded girls and women. They use case studies to identify actions people can take to stand up for fairness, drawing connections for how they too can be champions for change.

<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use historical case studies to investigate how people worked to change unfair rules and laws • Reflect on historical examples to identify ways they can stand up for fairness themselves • Describe themselves as champions for change in words and images 	<p>Checkpoint Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review finalized "Champion for Change" handouts using the "Champion for Change Rubric" to assess progress toward Success Criteria and application of feedback; look for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Uses evidence to identify how someone took action to stand up for fairness ◦ Identifies a way they can take action to stand up for fairness, related to an historical example ◦ Illustration represents the action ◦ Revisions show progress toward Success Criteria • Use the "Module 4 Observations" teacher worksheet during the discussion activity to assess content understanding; look for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Gives examples of actions people can take to stand up for fairness ◦ Uses evidence from the source to identify problems, actions, or impacts ◦ Uses evidence to describe similarities and differences between the past and present
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Lesson & Description	Outcome
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<p>Core Lesson</p> <p><u>1. Standing Up Against Unfair Rules (Part 1 of 2)</u> Students are introduced to a module-long investigation into the unfair rules and laws that excluded women from sports. They are introduced to what it means to be a champion for change, looking at ways to stand up against rules and laws that are unfair.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore rules or laws related to the case study of girls and women playing sports • Make observations from primary sources and secondary sources to learn about sports throughout history • Use historical sources to draw possible conclusions about girls and women playing sports in the past • Investigate individuals and groups who have shaped a significant historical change • Engage in collaborative discussion
<p>Core Lesson</p> <p><u>2. Standing Up Against Unfair Rules (Part 2 of 2)</u> Students continue to investigate how citizens and lawmakers are champions for change in the fight for equal opportunities for women in sports and the passing of Title IX. They gain the understanding that to bring about change, individuals need to work together. Then, students reflect on ways to stand up for fairness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe different ways to stand up for fairness within a case study • Compare life in the past to life today for women in sports • Investigate individuals and groups who have shaped a significant historical change • Compare perspectives of people in the past to those of people in the present • Engage in collaborative discussion
<p>Extension Lesson</p> <p><u>3. Comparing Past and Present for Women in Sports</u> Students learn about the continuous battle for equal pay for women in sports. They examine Billie Jean King as a champion for change for women in sports and then read an article about how the US Women's Soccer Team is continuing this fight for equal pay and opportunities. Select this Extension lesson for students to draw connections to present-day barriers to equality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine case studies to identify how people have fought for and continue to fight for equal opportunities for women in sports • Compare barriers to equality in the past and present • Engage in collaborative discussion
<p>Extension Lesson</p> <p><u>4. Be an Upstander, Not a Bystander!</u> Students learn the difference between an upstander and a bystander. They read <i>Catching the Moon: The Story of a Young Girl's Baseball Dream</i> by Crystal Hubbard to see how Marcenia and the people around her were upstanders or bystanders. Select this Extension lesson for students to analyze another real-world example of a female athlete overcoming barriers to stand up for fairness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze a source to see how a female athlete took action to stand up for fairness • Generate questions about female athletes and their personal experiences of overcoming barriers and taking action to stand up for fairness • Engage in collaborative discussion
<p>Core Lesson</p> <p><u>5. Champion for Change</u> Students reflect on their learning from the module by discussing the many ways that people have stood up for fairness for women in sports. Then, they express how they themselves can be champions for change by creating a mini-poster that will be critiqued in the following lesson.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how an individual or group stood up for fairness • Reflect on historical examples to explain how they can stand up for fairness themselves • Describe themselves as champions for change in words and images • Engage in collaborative discussion
<p>Core Lesson</p> <p><u>6. Small-Group Critique</u> Students use a small-group Critique protocol to give and receive kind, helpful, and specific feedback on the "Champion for Change Mini-Poster" handouts. Then, students apply the feedback they received and finalize their work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give meaningful critique feedback • Accept and use feedback to make improvements • Analyze progress and identify if a particular Criterion is being met in a piece of work • Engage effectively in group discussion

INVESTIGATION

Module 5: How do people work for change in their communities?

Materials and Prep Guide

Students analyze various case studies about how kids have taken action to address challenges in their community. They learn how to identify a challenge or opportunity and respond with civic action to create a positive change. Then, they use this framework as a model for taking action in their own community.

Students conclude this module by reviewing the key learning from the unit to help them prepare to take action. They work together to develop an Inquiry Challenge Statement that describes the action they will take, the product they will create, the people they will affect, and the goals they will work toward in the Action Module.

Objectives

- Recognize how all people play an important role in their community
- Use case studies to analyze community challenges, strategies for action, and outcomes
- Reflect on findings about how citizens can work together for the common good
- Generate ideas about ways to address challenges and opportunities in their community

Checkpoint Assessment

- Review "Stand Up for My Community" handouts to assess content understanding; look for:
 - Identifies a community issue that they would like to address
 - Describes 1 civic action they can take
 - Describes their desired outcome
- Use the "Module 5 Observations" teacher worksheet during the discussion activity to assess content understanding; look for:
 - Identifies challenges that communities face
 - Describes the civic actions people take to address community challenges and their outcomes

Lesson & Description

Outcome

Core Lesson

1. Taking Action for Change

Students read *Carl the Complainer* by Michelle Knudsen and engage in discussion about how Carl led the community to address the challenge of the park closing too early. They are introduced to the format in which they will analyze various case studies throughout the module to identify a challenge and the civic action taken to create a positive change.

- Use a case study to identify steps people can take for civic change
- Explain how people, even children, can act as change agents
- Engage in collaborative discussion

Core Lesson

2. Case Study: Passing of the Americans with Disabilities Act

Students learn about the passing of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the long road for people to see disability rights as a civil rights issue. They read and discuss *All the Way to the Top* by Annette Bay Pimentel as a case study to see how a community took action to pass this new law and improve the lives of people with disabilities across the country.

- Use a case study to analyze issues of fairness, equity, and civic participation
- Identify causes and consequences of exclusion and unfair laws
- Explain how all people, not just official leaders, play important roles in a community
- Engage in collaborative discussion

Extension Lesson

3. School Community Decisions

Students revisit *Grace Goes to Washington* by Kelly DiPucchio from earlier in the unit, but they look at it with a new purpose this time. They zoom in to see how Grace and the other students in her school took civic action to solve a challenge they saw in their school community. Small groups employ the skills they have been practicing to identify the actions and outcome together, then connect back to the learning from previous modules on how they arrived at the best decision for their school community.

- Use a case study to show how a group of students came together to make a decision for the good of the community
- Explain how all people, not just official leaders, play important roles in a community
- Describe the effects an action or event has on members of a group
- Engage in collaborative conversation

<p>Extension Lesson</p> <p><u>4. Inspirational Kids Changing the World</u> Students further investigate stories of children around the world who are taking action to address challenges or opportunities that they see in their communities. They focus on individuals who have taken action, such as Bellen, the 10-year-old crayon activist who started a movement called More Than Peach, which aimed to ensure all children would have a crayon that represents their skin color while teaching others about awareness of skin color.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze various ways that kids around the world identify problems, take action, and make positive changes Engage in collaborative discussion
<p>Core Lesson</p> <p><u>5. Reflecting on Working Together for the Community</u> Students reflect on their learning from throughout the unit to draw conclusions about how we can stand up for the common good in our community. They collaborate to generate ideas about challenges and opportunities that they might address as a class as they prepare to take action in the next module.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how any and all community members can stand up for the common good by identifying a problem and making a plan to take action Generate ideas about ways to address challenges and opportunities in the community, create action steps, and make a desired positive change Reflect on findings about how citizens can stand up for the common good Engage in collaborative discussion
<p>Core Lesson</p> <p><u>6. Issuing the Inquiry Challenge</u> In this pivotal lesson, students transition from investigation to action. They consider the content they have explored, the relevant knowledge they have gained, and the questions they have asked (acknowledging that some may have remained unanswered and new questions may have emerged) to decide how to create an Inquiry Product that has an authentic impact.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflect on learning about citizenship to identify opportunities to work together as citizens for the good of the community Construct an Inquiry Challenge Statement that will guide them in taking informed action Collaborate with peers

ACTION

Module 6: Take Informed Action [Materials and Prep Guide](#)

Students shift focus in this module, using the conclusions and key findings from their investigation to impact the world beyond their classroom. Preview the module in order to determine how to customize the lessons and accompanying materials to best fit your selected product. Add Flex lessons from the Flex Lesson Library to introduce or reinforce important skills. For additional support, refer to the ["Preparing for Your Written Product" unit resource](#).

<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draw on disciplinary concepts to explain opportunities for addressing local, regional, or global problems Generate, evaluate, and implement ideas to act on civic challenges in the school or wider community, and predict possible results of those actions Use a range of deliberative and democratic procedures to make decisions about effective courses of action Take ownership of work in terms of quality, degree of challenge, revision, and completion 	<p>Checkpoint Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess students' final Inquiry Products using the "Inquiry Product Rubric" created using the <u>"Inquiry Product Rubric Guide"</u> Use the "Action Module Observations" teacher worksheet to assess developing understanding of concepts that repeat throughout these lessons; look for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gives examples to identify what makes the work strong or areas for improvement Explains connection between work and "Inquiry Product Rubric" Success Criteria Work shows progress toward "Inquiry Product Rubric" Success Criteria Gives kind, helpful, and specific feedback Demonstrates a growth mindset by accepting and considering feedback Follows protocol: contributes ideas, takes turns to speak
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Lesson & Description	Outcome
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<p>Core Lesson</p> <p><u>1. Brainstorm: Comparing Models to Develop Success Criteria</u> Students compare models of the products they will create, identifying specific elements that make these examples successful and generating ideas for Success Criteria that they can use to guide and evaluate their own work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critically analyze models to identify what makes a product successful or unsuccessful • Generate ideas for Success Criteria • Engage in collaborative discussion
<p>Extension Lesson</p> <p><u>2. Brainstorm: Team Norms</u> Students work together to define what they need from each other to be successful as a team. Select this Extension lesson for students to develop awareness of how they collaborate with others and to form a common language to use when challenges arise.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate ideas about effective team dynamics • Select ideas to generate team norms • Engage in collaborative discussion
<p>Core Lesson</p> <p><u>3. Brainstorm: Generating Ideas for the Work</u> Students use a Rapid-Fire Brainstorm protocol to generate, evaluate, and select ideas for their Inquiry Product. In the next lesson, they will use these selected ideas to create a prototype of their product.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate ideas for the content of the Inquiry Product • Evaluate and select ideas for an effective product using Success Criteria in the "Inquiry Product Rubric," and any constraints, as a guide • Give meaningful feedback to peers • Use feedback to develop work
<p>Core Lesson</p> <p><u>4. Prototype: Outlining the Written Work</u> Prototyping, or creating a rough draft, is the next step in the design process. For Written Products, the prototype is an outline. Students use the ideas that they generated in the brainstorm session to create their outlines.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and create an outline to plan the Inquiry Product • Explore a variety of solutions for the most effective product
<p>Core Lesson</p> <p><u>5. Improve: Critiquing Rough Drafts</u> Students use a small-group Critique protocol to give and receive kind, helpful, and specific feedback on their rough drafts. They use feedback to identify next steps in their work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give meaningful critique feedback • Accept and use feedback to form a revision plan • Engage effectively in group discussion
<p>Core Lesson</p> <p><u>6. Improve: Developing the Work</u> In this teacher-guided work session, students apply critique feedback to develop the next draft of their work. If needed, this lesson could be repeated to allow for multiple work sessions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make changes to work based on feedback and a set of criteria
<p>Extension Lesson</p> <p><u>7. Share: Practicing to Present the Work</u> Students practice talking about their work to prepare them to present, either formally or informally. They also give and receive feedback in order to help strengthen their ability to present. The resulting verbal explanations of the work can provide the teacher with additional assessment insights.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice and reflect upon ability to present work • Give meaningful feedback to peers • Engage effectively in group discussion

Core Lesson**8. Reflect: Revisiting the Inquiry Challenge**

Students reflect on the unit as a whole now that they have shared their completed Inquiry Products. They reflect upon their successes, struggles, and strides by revisiting content and skills that were the focus of the unit. In doing so, students lay a groundwork for continued growth in future projects.

- Identify successes, struggles, and personal growth
- Reflect upon the degree to which the project was successful in meeting the overall goal