

Civics Lesson Plans Designed with Teachers in Mind

Civic Life Project’s highly successful, proven approach to engaging students in citizenship includes online live seminars and suggested lesson plans that also allows teachers to meet state standards. The Project’s Lesson Plans are student-centered, but also provide a guide that teachers may follow throughout each of the lessons.

The Program is easily tailored to existing civic and social studies classes, while also integrating storytelling, digital media, and literacy. The Democracy 2022 Youth Film Challenge is the perfect project to accompany these materials.

Lessons: Citizen/Filmmaker

Lessons’ Objective:

- Students will unpack and begin to understand the concepts of “citizen” and “filmmaker” and the relationship between them.

Suggested Instructional Strategies:

- Practice short narrative writing, writing to reflect
- Practice selecting and transcribing from reading, listening, viewing
- Collaborate in small and large groups
- Summarize key concepts through written and oral discussion
- Online key word research
- Practice civil discourse

Materials Needed:

- Notebooks for students
- Handouts of readings, selected videos, any activity sheets chosen by the instructor
- Technology: computer access for students, camera on tripod for teacher to film

Lesson Progression

(The amount of time allocated for lessons will vary for schools. Teachers will need to determine the amount of time needed for each lesson and adjust accordingly. These lessons are listed in a sequenced order. The lessons can be combined or split, depending on the time available for the lesson.)

Lesson 1	<p><u>Introduction</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher initiates open class discussion:<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) <i>What does it mean to be an engaged citizen?</i>2) <i>How can documentary filmmaking communicate important issues?</i>• Students will individually write their reflections on today’s discussion in their notebooks.* <p><i>Teachers will want to consider how they want to have students organize their notebooks, in order for the teacher to be able to review the students’ recordings.</i></p> <p><i>The teacher may wish to film any of the classroom discussions. The teacher may involve students or technology staff with camera experience to assist with some tapings.</i></p>
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	<p><i>*Throughout the lessons, teachers will want to establish a means to assess each student's participation and written work.</i></p>
<p>Lesson 2</p>	<p><u>Researching, Reading, Writing to Understand</u></p> <p>Teacher will form student groups (suggested to have 3-5 students in each group) and assign different text for each group that specifically speaks to “citizen/citizenship.”</p> <p>After students read individually in their group, they then share their understanding of their reading, 1) first with others in their group, 2) then through a jigsaw with other groups.</p> <p>Teacher asks students, in the whole group, to summarize the classroom discussion.</p> <p>Students record their reflections and understandings from the classroom discussion in their notebooks.</p> <p><i>(There are a variety of sharing/communicating strategies that teachers may wish to use in this lesson.</i></p> <p><i>A suggested reading: Nikole Hannah-Jones essay: “The Idea of America”</i></p>
<p>Lesson 3</p>	<p><u>Connecting “Citizen” and “Filmmaker”</u></p> <p><u>Processing of Video to Amplify “Citizen” and “Filmmaker” Understanding</u></p> <p><u>Suggested length of video 10-15 minutes. Many online videos are available. One resource teachers may wish to use: Darnella Frazier video: https://www.fox9.com/video/687903</u></p> <p>Teacher will project the video and ask students to record, in their notebooks, any words/actions they see/hear that speaks of “citizen/citizenship”.</p> <p>Students “pair share” (or discuss in small groups) to articulate what they’ve noticed in the video that make the “shooter” of the film a “citizen” and a “filmmaker.”</p> <p>Students free-write to articulate key concepts/ understandings from this viewing Teacher prompt: <i>“Is this “video-shooter” a filmmaker??? What do you see/hear that tells you so or not?”</i></p> <p>Teacher asks students to select a sentence of two from their writing that’s key to their thinking and worth sharing.</p> <p>Whole-Class Conversation to articulate and record understanding of “Filmmaker”</p> <p><u>End of lesson:</u> Students write notes from the whole-class conversation. <i>“Are there new concepts that are significant to an understanding of a ‘filmmaker?’”</i></p>

<p>Lesson 4</p>	<p>Gathering up connections, Citizen↔Filmmaker: (Reinforcement and Follow up to previous lesson)</p> <p>Teacher prompts to class: <i>“Based on what you’ve seen and heard in this class so far, what are you thinking at this point about the relationship between <u>citizen</u> and <u>filmmaker</u>?”</i> <i>“Referring to specific moments, share up some thoughts on how a <u>citizen</u> and a <u>filmmaker</u> are alike.”</i></p> <p>Share a viewing of a film from a Civic Life Project Challenge.</p> <p>Students will 1) watch the video and 2) watch again, this time taking notes of the video’s key attributes, any observations they made.</p> <p>Students select one statement they wish to share from their writing.</p> <p>Whole group sharing of each student’s observations</p>
<p>Lesson 5</p>	<p>Further defining “civil discourse” and “civic engagement”</p> <p>Teacher selects a piece from a Congressional hearing and some clips from a community’s “discourse” (examples: local community meeting, school board meeting, local televised and/or published news, etc.).</p> <p>Following showing/sharing this information with students-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A classroom discussion of these references/resources can be through small groups or whole group. Question: <i>What is “civil discourse” and “civic engagement”?</i> <i>“How do these intersect?”</i> 2) Students record notes from their discussion in notebooks. <p>Teacher assigns the reading “Idea of America” by Nikole Hannah Jones, and asks students to highlight <i>what</i> she communicates and <i>how</i> she does it, through your lenses of “citizen” and “filmmaker.”</p> <p>Students write an open question to either the writer of/ filmmaker of/ or one of the people portrayed in the Hannah-Jones or the video from the prior lesson. <i>“What do you want to know from either the writer or the filmmaker?”</i></p>
<p>Lesson 6</p>	<p>Students are to find an article on the internet or library database that addresses WHAT IS A <u>DOCUMENTARY</u> FILM? Use the term “documentary” and one or two other keywords</p>

Processing of Video to Amplify “Citizen” and “Filmmaker” Understanding

Possible Resources:

Darnella Frazier full video George Floyd murder <https://www.fox9.com/video/687903> from Fox 9 Minneapolis/full video shown --10

BNF “Suppressed...” trailer https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s_KPW3ftwT0

Suppressed 2020: The Right to Vote (a Robert Greenwald YouTube TV film)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9rynnRBQwrU>