

ESTIMATED TIME

2 class periods. Action Project may take a few weeks to an entire school year, depending on the projects and time available.

PREREQUISITES

- Establish a Forum in *Sakai* for a discussion of Action Project ideas.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE

- *Introduction to Civic Responsibility Rubric*
- *Reflection on Change*
- *Action Project Explanation*
- *Action Project Rubric*
- *Civic Responsibility Vignettes*

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Helping students understand and reflect upon their responsibilities as global citizens is an objective of every discipline in some way. In science students can grapple with their role in climate change and leaving a carbon footprint. In English students can read the writings of great social thinkers and activists. In art class students can see how the visual arts can communicate the need for change and illustrate how people have stepped up to take action. Mathematics can look at numerical representations of change in society. Social studies is the most common place civic responsibility is discussed and has hundreds of inroads to explore how individuals and groups have created change and taken their civic responsibility seriously. As educators, we are always working toward this goal of teaching students how to recognize and enact change, no matter what discipline.

LESSON GOAL

Explore the meaning of civic responsibility, reflect on what needs to be changed in students' lives, and brainstorm practical ways to practice civic responsibility.

Essential Question

What is civic responsibility? How can I be civically responsible?

Student Expectations

1. Explore meaning of civic responsibility as a class.
2. Reflect on what needs to be changed and brainstorm ways to respond.
3. Learn about what other high school students have done to practice civic responsibility.
4. Develop a list of potential ideas for an action project in a small group.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Explore definitions of *civic* and *responsibility*.
2. Empower students to act on something they care about.
3. Expose students to examples of what other high school students have done to take action.
4. Introduce Action Project.

RATIONALE

Every day our students face the mounting problems of our world reflected in the news and experienced in their own lives. Often students feel powerless when encountering these difficulties. It is an overwhelming task to break down a problem and look for real, attainable solutions. When thinking about what it means to be civically responsible, many students feel disconnected with their communities and don't know that they have a voice to share their ideas and concerns. This series of three lessons on Civic Responsibility (Lessons 14, 16, and 27) explores ways to take action and support students in their attempts to create change. Sometimes we mistake students as apathetic, but they may not know how to take action and demonstrate how they care about something. These lessons seek to expose students to possibilities and give them the tools and structure needed to make real, practical change in their lives and communities.



Introduction to Civic Responsibility Rubric



Reflection on Change



Action Project Explanation

PROCEDURES: WHAT TO DO

1. WHOLE GROUP Distribute the *Introduction to Civic Responsibility Rubric* to introduce the lesson and explain how students will be evaluated. Then write the word *civic* on the board. Lead a discussion about the word using the following questions.

- What do you think the word *civic* means?
- How have you seen the word used and what other words has it been connected with (i.e. civic center, civics class, civic responsibility, civic action, civic leadership, etc.)?
- What are some related words? What words start the same way? (civilization, civil rights, citizen, city, citizenship, etc.)

The Latin root of *civic* is *civis* or *civilis* and the meaning of the root is *citizen* or *community*. Webster's Dictionary defines *civic* as "of or relating to a citizen, a city, citizenship, or community affairs."

- What do you think *civic* means when paired with *responsibility*?
- How do you think people can demonstrate civic responsibility in our nation? In our community? Across the globe?

Explain that the second year of the *21st Century Skills* curriculum is focused on Civic Responsibility. In this lesson students will brainstorm ideas for an action project. This project is an opportunity to make a difference in the neighborhood, school, or community. Through this project they will be using many different skills such as problem solving, time management, communication, resourcefulness, and collaboration. Encourage students to take time to identify a project they really care about. The more invested they are in the cause, the more they will enjoy making their plans a reality. There are multiple steps to this project, but if they focus on one step at a time, they will not get overwhelmed.

ASSESSMENT

Large Group Discussion Participate in discussion about civic responsibility.

2. INDIVIDUAL Have students summarize their ideas about change by completing the *Reflection on Change* worksheet in which they reflect on the Mahatma Gandhi quotation "Be the change you wish to see in the world." Encourage students to begin thinking about what matters most to them and what influence they have as students and citizens. When finished, have students use the *Sakai* Assignments Tool to submit their reflection for evaluation.



ASSIGNMENT 1

ASSESSMENT

Reflection on Change Complete thoughtful and thorough reflection on what needs to be changed.

3. WHOLE GROUP Introduce the Action Project by handing out the *Action Project Explanation* and *Action Project Rubric*. Explain that students will be

- a. brainstorming ideas as a class,



Action Project Rubric



Civic Responsibility Vignettes



Student Pages

- b. breaking into small groups,
- c. choosing a project that they want to enact,
- d. creating a proposal,
- e. delegating tasks to group members,
- f. keeping a journal of their progress,
- g. writing a final reflection on the project, and
- h. presenting their action project as a small group.

Encourage students that this project will happen over many weeks and they will not have to complete it overnight. Also, admonish them to avoid procrastination on this project because diligent work over time is critical to its success.

4. **SMALL GROUP** Divide the class into groups of 3 or 4. Distribute *Civic Responsibility Vignettes* to each small group to read aloud together. Ask the group to respond to the following questions and report back to the class.
 - What need did the student(s) identify that needed improvement or change?
 - What did the student(s) do to respond to that need? What was the action plan?
 - What was the result? Was the goal accomplished?
5. **WHOLE GROUP** Spokesperson from each small group shares the group's responses to the *Civic Responsibility Vignettes* questions. Identify common threads among the various examples as a class.
6. **SMALL GROUP** Reconvene the small groups and have them brainstorm a list of at least 10 ideas for an Action Project. Each project should have a demonstrated need for improvement or change.

ASSESSMENT

Small Group Brainstorm Participate in small group discussion, brainstorming ideas for the Action Project.

7. **SMALL GROUP** Have students post their Action Project ideas on the *Sakai* Forum that you have established for the entire class to view. Encourage students to respond to each other's ideas and post new thoughts. This online conversation will provide the groundwork for creating an action plan proposal in an upcoming lesson. They will be deciding an action project group soon, so the Forum is a good place to find people with similar passions and talk with them about being in an action project group together.

ASSESSMENT

Forum Discussion Post ideas for Action Project on Forum. The ideas are required for each small group, not each individual student.

REFLECTION

Have students write a reflection on the following prompt.

Have them use the *Sakai* Assignments Tool to submit their reflection for evaluation.

Make a list of all the reasons you can think of *not to do* a civic action project. Then make a list of all the reasons *to do* a civic action project.



ASSIGNMENT 2

INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY

FORUM

- Establish a Forum for a discussion of Activity Project Ideas.

ANNOUNCEMENT

- Use Announcements to remind students of assignments and due dates.
- Announcements should be coordinated with Assignments and Schedule.

SCHEDULE

- Add Assignments to the Schedule.

EVALUATE/REVIEW

- Student Assignments
- Student Portfolio
- Add a test or quiz if desired.

LESSONS

- Review Lessons.
- Add Resources if desired.
- Change a Lesson if desired.
- Schedule a Lesson.
- Unschedule a Lesson.

COMMUNICATE IF DESIRED

- Blogger
- Chat Room
- Drop box
- Mailtool
- Roster

Ohio Academic Content Standards

English Language Arts Grade 10

Research

1. Compose open-ended questions for research, assigned or personal interest, and modify questions as necessary during inquiry and investigation to narrow the focus or extend the investigation.

Speaking Applications

8. Deliver informational presentations (e.g., expository, research) that:

- demonstrate an understanding of the topic and present events or ideas in a logical sequence;

Technology Grade 10

Use of Communications 1. Contribute to organized e-mail discussions (e.g., discussion list, list serv, threaded discussion list, courseware discussion).

Reflect on how you can and why you should overcome objections and obstacles to taking civic action.

ASSESSMENT

Reflection on Action Reflect on overcoming obstacles to taking action.

ASSESSMENT

Assess students with the **Introduction to Civic Responsibility Rubric** for this lesson. When the Action Project is complete, use the **Action Project Rubric** for evaluation.

DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION

SPECIAL NEEDS

Students with IEPs can have extended time when working on the reflection. For the Action Project, it would be beneficial to give an intervention specialist the details of the project. Because of the many steps, students with special needs may need extra support through greater structure and reminders for follow through.

GIFTED AND TALENTED

These students can act as leaders when small groups meet. If the students have done a similar project before, they can use that knowledge to guide and encourage others. Also, challenge these students to be ambitious in their ideas for the Action Project. Because this project is so student-centered, gifted and talented students should dream big and then plan big in the upcoming lessons.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

WEBSITE SOURCES

Preview sites for appropriateness before recommending them to students. If links are broken, search for similar information.

- Check out the Community Building Resource Exchange at www.commbuild.org. According to the website, they provide “a broad array of resources and information about innovative community building efforts to revitalize poor neighborhoods and improve the life circumstances of residents and their families.” Take a look at their initiatives to find inspirational ideas for students.
- At www.Grass-roots.org you can familiarize yourself with community service efforts happening around the country. This website seeks to support those who are trying to make a difference in their communities on a grass-roots level.
- The Points of Light Foundation’s mission statement is to engage more people more effectively in volunteer service to help solve serious social problems. Check out www.pointsoflight.org to find out how they are equipping people to make a difference.

PRINT SOURCES

Use these resources to learn more about service learning.

- Coles, Robert. *The Call of Service*. Mariner Books, 1994.
- Cousins, Emily, and Amy Mednick eds. *Service at the Heart of Learning: Teacher’s Writings*. Kendall/Hunt Publishing, 1999.
- Kahne, Joseph, and Joel Westheimer. “In the Service of What? The Politics of Service Learning.” *Phi Delta Kappan*, May 1996.