

Research Lesson Plan: Introduction to the Preamble

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Targeted Grade Level: 3-5

Essential Question: How does the Constitution allow Americans freedoms?

Formative Assessment Prompts:

Instructional Chunk #1: What is freedom?

Instructional Chunk #2: Why was the Constitution written?

Instructional Chunk #3: How does the Constitution allow Americans freedoms?

Standard Addressed:

Civics One 4-5a: Students will understand that governments have a variety of structures and exist for many purposes and that in America these are explained in the United States and State constitutions.

Problematic Prior Knowledge (PPL) Addressed

- Little prior knowledge of the Constitution
- The Constitution and Declaration of Independence are the same document
- Confusion about when the Constitution was written

Activating Strategies:

Strategy 1: Anticipation Guide

Strategy 2: Classroom rules

Strategy 3: World Splash for Constitution

Key Vocabulary to preview

- Constitution
- Document
- Freedom
- Government
- Preamble

Teaching Strategies:

- Video
- Think-Pair-Share
- Pre-reading prediction for vocabulary
- Open-ended Questioning

Graphic Organizer(s) Used:

- Anticipation Guide
- Preamble Organizer
- Word Splash

Materials Needed:

ELMO (helpful), Smart Board (helpful), copy of Constitution, *We the Kids* by David Catrow, video clips from United Streaming, Anticipation Guide, Preamble Organizer

Differentiation Strategies:

- Pre-written graphic organizer for student with IEP
- Open-ended questions allow students to respond at different levels

Instructional Plan:

Instructional Chunk #1: What is freedom?

1. Procedures:

- Instruct students to complete Anticipation Guide (**Handout 1**)
- Ask students, what is freedom? Tell students to think about this silently, then turn to an elbow partner and come up with a definition in a Think-Pair-Share.
- Ask student partners to share their definitions with whole class.
- Ask students, do we have freedoms in school? Students share answers.
- Ask students, How do we know how to act in school? How do rules help in the classroom? Students share answers.

2. Debrief: ask the students...

- Does our government have rules? Who made up these rules? Does the president have to follow the rules? What are our rules called?

Teacher should check to be sure that all students understand that the **Constitution is the set of rules for our country and all Americans must abide by these rules.**

3. Check for Understanding/Summarizing Activity: Ask students to explain verbally how rules can ensure freedom.

Instructional Chunk #2: Why was the Constitution written?

1. Procedures:

- Display a “Constitution” word splash on the Smart Board. Students volunteer words that they associate with the Constitution to add to the splash.
- Students view “A painless guide to the U.S. Constitution” on United Streaming. Direct students to look for terms and ideas to add to their Word Splash.

2. Debrief: ask the students...

- What new information did you learn about the Constitution?
- What is a document? (show copy of Constitution)

3. Check for Understanding/Summarizing Activity:

Return to the Word Splash from the beginning and add student-generated terms to the splash. Ask students to define verbally the Constitution and its purpose.

Instructional Chunk #3: How does the Constitution allow Americans freedoms?

1. Procedures:

- Continue video to show clip on the Preamble
- Distribute Preamble graphic organizer (**Handout 2**)
- Read aloud *We the Kids*. For each clause of the Preamble, display the accompanying picture on the ELMO and re-write clause in kid-friendly words in graphic organizer.

2. Debrief: ask the students...

What is the purpose of the Preamble? How does the Constitution allow Americans freedom?

3. Check for Understanding/Summarizing Activity:

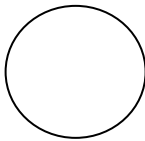
Show students “We the People” video from Schoolhouse Rock.

Summarizing Strategy:

- In pairs or small groups, students create a picture to illustrate the ideas in one clause of the Preamble. Staple illustrated clauses together to form a class booklet.
- Return to the Anticipation Guide and have students complete the “After lesson” column and explain one of their responses. Ask students to share what they may have changed their mind about after the course of the lesson.

Reflections on the Lesson:

- Lesson could be broken into two days to allow students more time to work with clauses.
- Perhaps interpret ½ of the clauses, draw pictures, then interpret the remaining clauses to break up the reading.
- Some pictures in “We the Kids” do not clearly illustrate the idea of the clause. Perhaps look for other picture books?
- Teach this lesson around Constitution Day



HANDOUT 1

Name _____ Date _____

Anticipation Guide

Part I

Directions: In the left-hand column labeled **Answer before Instruction**, place a letter “A” next to any statement with which you agree. **Do not** write in the right-hand column until your teacher gives you those directions.

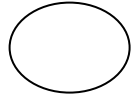
Answer before instruction	Topic: The Constitution	Answer after the lesson
	Freedom means I can do whatever I want to when I feel like it.	
	Since the constitution was written over 200 years ago, it is no longer useful today.	
	The constitution is a written set of rules for the United States.	
	The constitution was written to take away the freedoms of Americans.	

Directions: Select any statement in the chart above, circle it, and explain on the lines below why you agreed or disagreed with the statement.

HANDOUT 2

Name _____

Date _____



Preamble of the Constitution

We the people of the United States,

In order to form a more perfect union,

Establish justice,

Insure domestic tranquility,

Provide for the common defense,

Promote the general welfare, and

Secure the blessings of liberty,

To ourselves and our posterity,

Do ordain and establish this constitution

For the United States of America
