

Subject: Civics

Grade Level: 6-8

Lesson Title: *What Can We Do to Bring About Positive Change?*

Lesson Overview: This lesson guides students in deepening understanding of civic action through a focus on the empowerment that citizens gain through building coalitions. During this lesson, students will explore the accomplishments of young people to help bring about changes through civic action. Referencing LOC Resources and sources of the Columbine school shooting, students will identify the potential of young people in creating positive change through civic action. Students will examine current problems or causes about which they are passionate and draft an action plan. The length of this lesson segment is 30 – 40 minutes and can have follow up activities to extend student civic action project development.

CONCEPT : Civic Action		THEME: Empowerment
Overarching Essential Question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How can we work together? 		Lesson Essential Question(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do students like you have the potential to change important issues in America? What does it take to become a civic activist? What is worth fighting for?
Lesson Objectives: Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the effects of the Columbine school shooting on this generation of young people and how they have acted positively in response to gun violence in America. Define the concept of coalitions in civic action. Define characteristics of young people who have been civic activists in America. Identify current challenges facing our country and young people. Develop an action plan to participate in civic action to address a cause. 		
CIVIC KNOWLEDGE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purposes, values, and principles of American democracy established by the Constitution Roles of citizens in American democracy 	CIVIC SKILLS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying and describing information and arguments Explaining and analyzing information and arguments Evaluating, taking, and defending positions on public issues Working with others Clearly articulating ideas and interests 	CIVIC DISPOSITIONS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing as an independent member of society Respecting individual worth and human dignity Assuming the personal, political, and economic responsibilities of a citizen Participating in civic affairs in an informed, thoughtful, and effective manner Promoting the healthy functioning of American constitutional democracy
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS RESOURCES & ADDITIONAL RESOURCES		
Library of Congress Resources: Image: The Columbine Memorial's Wall of Healing in Littleton, Colorado, designed to honor those who were injured, the first responders and all those who were touched by a shooting rampage at Jefferson County's Columbine High School on April 20, 1999. Two teens shot and killed 13 people and injured 20 more that day. A separate Ring of Remembrance at the memorial remembers those who were killed https://www.loc.gov/item/2017885343/		

Funded by a grant from the Library of Congress as part of its *Teaching With Primary Sources* program, the Barat Education Foundation, in collaboration with the Constitutional Rights Foundation and the DePaul University College of Education, has developed this lesson as part of a larger initiative, *Citizen U*[®], which aims to integrate civic learning across the curriculum for students in grades 3-12. Content created and featured in partnership with the TPS program does not indicate an endorsement by the Library of Congress.

Primary Source Analysis Tool: <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/primary-source-analysis-tool/>

Materials Needed:

Library of Congress Resources (listed above)

Article: ‘Generation Columbine’ Has Never Known a World Without School Shootings

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2018/02/22/generation-columbine-has-never-known-world-without-school-shootings/361656002/>

Article: Civil Conversation Challenge for Teenagers <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/04/learning/civil-conversation-challenge-for-teenagers-issue-2-guns.html>

Jigsaw directions <http://www.teachhub.com/jigsaw-method-teaching-strategy>

Quick write <https://ablconnect.harvard.edu/quick-write>

SMART Goal Sheet <https://www.sparkpeople.com/resource/SMARTgoalsWS-NN.pdf>

Supporting Question 1 ENGAGE	Supporting Question 2 EXPLORE	Supporting Question 3 EVALUATE
Do students like you have the potential to change important issues in your community?	What does it take to become a civic activist?	“What is worth fighting for?”
PERFORMANCE TASK 1	PERFORMANCE TASK 2	PERFORMANCE TASK 3
Analyze primary sources and other sources citing youth in civic action.	Identify characteristics	Civil Conversations challenge SMART goals for civic action

TEACHING PLAN

PART 1 – INQUIRY INTRODUCTION

1. Begin by asking students, "How do students like you have the potential to change important issues in your community?" Ask students to do a [quick write](#) with their personal answer. (1-2 minutes)
2. Ask students to identify groups of people that are working together to bring about change and making history as civic activists today. List those on the board. (3 minutes)

PART 2 – INQUIRY EXPLORATION WITH PRIMARY SOURCES

1. Provide students the Library of Congress Resource Image: [Columbine Memorial Wall](#). (1 minute)
2. Divide the students into 5 groups and use a [Jigsaw](#) assigning a different piece of the photo to each person in the group. Have groups put image together and answer the

question, “What can we learn from this?” (5 minutes)

3. Give students the [Primary Source Analysis Tool](#) and ask them to use this tool to analyze the image. (5 minutes)
4. Ask each group to summarize their responses to the above question. Have one student from each group share the group’s summary from the [Primary Source Analysis Tool](#). (3 minutes)
5. Have students use the [Primary Source Analysis Tool](#) as they listen to each group’s summary.
6. Give students the article to read, ['Generation Columbine' Has Never Known a World Without School Shootings](#). (3-5 minutes)
7. Ask students “How does living in the world since the Columbine school shooting change your life?” and “What does this article tell us about working together?” (3-5 minutes)

PART 3 – APPLYING INQUIRY AND ACTION

1. Share the article: [Civil Conversation Challenge for Teenagers](#) on gun control. Ask students to read through the article and answer, “What do you think is the best way to bring about safety?” (2-3 minutes)
2. Have students read all of the issues in the article. Have each student report back their interest areas and form affinity groups to discuss the ways they can become civic activists for this cause. (5 minutes)

PART 4 – INQUIRY TO DRAW CONCLUSIONS

1. Direct each affinity group to use the [SMART Goal Sheet](#) to create a goal for their selected cause. (3-5 minutes)
2. As a closing and possible homework, ask students to take one action toward their goal.

Citizen U[®]

Preparing tomorrow's citizens today



CitizenU Teacher Guide

Lesson Title: *What Can We Do to Bring About Positive Change?*

Subject: *Civics*

Grade Level: 6-8

Overview

This lesson guides students in deepening understanding of civic action through a focus on the empowerment that citizens gain through building coalitions. During this lesson, students will explore the accomplishments of young people to help bring about changes through civic action. Referencing LOC Resources and sources of the Columbine school shooting, students will identify the potential of young people in creating positive change through civic action. Students will examine current problems or causes about which they are passionate and draft an action plan. The length of this lesson segment is 30 – 40 minutes and can have follow up activities to extend student civic action project development.

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Analyze the effects of the Columbine school shooting on this generation of young people and how they have acted positively in response to gun violence in America.
- Define the concept of coalitions in civic action.
- Define characteristics of young people who have been civic activists in America.
- Identify current challenges facing our country and young people.
- Develop an action plan to participate in civic action to address a cause.

Teacher Instructions

- Make copies (one for each student) of the Library of Congress Resource Image: The Columbine Memorial's Wall of Healing in Littleton, Colorado, designed to honor those who were injured, the first responders and all those who were touched by a shooting rampage at Jefferson County's Columbine High School on April 20, 1999. Two teens shot and killed 13 people and injured 20 more that day. A separate Ring of Remembrance at the memorial remembers those who were killed <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017885343/>
- Make copies (one for each student) of Article: 'Generation Columbine' Has Never Known a World Without School Shootings <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2018/02/22/generation-columbine-has-never-known-world-without-school-shootings/361656002/>
- If students do not have access to a computer, make copies (one for each student) of Library of Congress Primary Source Analysis Tool: <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/primary-source-analysis-tool/>
- Make copies (one for each student) of the Article: Civil Conversation Challenge for Teenagers <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/04/learning/civil-conversation-challenge-for-teenagers-issue-2-guns.html>
- Make copies (one for each student) of SMART Goal Sheet <https://www.sparkpeople.com/resource/SMARTgoalsWS-NN.pdf>

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PART 1 – INQUIRY INTRODUCTION

I. Introduction

The lesson will be introduced by having students consider the people/groups they of whom they are aware that work together to bring about change through civic action.

- Begin by asking students, "How do students like you have the potential to change important issues in your community?"
- Ask students to do a [quick write](https://ablconnect.harvard.edu/quick-write) with their personal answer. **(1-2 minutes)**
- Ask students to identify groups of people that are working together to bring about change and making history as civic activists today. **(2 minutes)**
- List those on the board. **(1 minute)**

Quick write is a brief written response to a question or probe" that requires students to rapidly explain or comment on an assigned topic (Green, Smith & Brown, 2007; Nunan, 2003).

Quick write <https://ablconnect.harvard.edu/quick-write>

**PART 2 – INQUIRY EXPLORATION
WITH PRIMARY SOURCES**

I. Exploration with Primary Sources

By working in groups, students will analyze a primary source and apply their learning to the shooting at Columbine High School.

- A. Provide students the Library of Congress Resource Image: [Columbine Memorial Wall](#). (1 minute)
- B. Divide the students into 5 groups.
- C. Use a [Jigsaw](#) assigning a different piece of the photo to each person in the group.
- D. Have groups put image together and answer the question, “*What can we learn from this?*” (5 minutes)
- E. Give students the [Primary Source Analysis Tool](#) and ask them to use this tool to analyze the image. (5 minutes)
- F. Ask each group to summarize their responses to the above question.
- G. Have one student from each group share the group’s summary from the [Primary Source Analysis Tool](#). (3 minutes)
- H. Have students use the [Primary Source Analysis Tool](#) as they listen to each group’s summary.
- I. Give students the article to read ["Generation Columbine" Has Never Known a World Without School Shootings](#). (3-5 minutes)
- J. Ask students “*How does living in the world since the Columbine school shooting change your life?*” and “*What does this article tell us about working together?*” (3-5 minutes)

The “Jigsaw Method” is a teaching strategy of organizing student group work that helps students collaborate and rely on one another. This teaching strategy is effective for accomplishing multiple tasks at once and for giving students a greater sense of individual responsibility. (The Jigsaw Method Teaching Strategy – TeachHub.com)

Jigsaw directions <http://www.teachhub.com/jigsaw-method-teaching-strategy>

“Primary sources are the raw materials of history — original documents and objects which were created at the time under study. They are different from secondary sources, accounts or interpretations of events created by someone without firsthand experience.

Examining primary sources gives students a powerful sense of history and the complexity of the past. Helping students analyze primary sources can also guide them toward higher-order thinking and better critical thinking and analysis skills.”

(Using Primary Sources, Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/>)

Primary Source Analysis Tool: <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/primary-source-analysis-tool/>

PART 3 – APPLYING INQUIRY AND ACTION

II. Applying Inquiry and Action

In this section students will explore the various civil challenges facing teenagers today and choose which one they have an affinity to explore.

- A. Give students the article: [Civil Conversation Challenge for Teenagers](#) on gun control.
- B. Ask students to read through the article and answer, “*What do you think is the best way to bring about safety?*” **(2-3 minutes)**
- C. Have students read all of the issues in the article.
- D. Have each student report back their interest areas and form affinity groups to discuss the ways they can become civic activist for this cause. **(5 minutes)**

PART 4 – INQUIRY TO DRAW CONCLUSIONS

III. Draw Conclusions

Students will conclude the lesson by charting the goals necessary to set as they work on the issue of their choice from the previous section.

- A. Give each student a copy of the [SMART Goal Sheet](#).
- B. Direct each affinity group to use the [SMART Goal Sheet](#) to create a goal for their selected cause. **(3-5 minutes)**
- C. As a closing and possible homework, ask students to take one action toward their goal. **(2 minutes)**

The SMART Goal Sheet is a goal-setting worksheet that allows students to write out their goals so that the goals are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely.

SMART Goal Sheet <https://www.sparkpeople.com/resource/SMARTgoalsWS-NN.pdf>