

Megan Chapman

Constitution lesson plan – 4th grade

I. Content Standards

4.2.1 Explain the major purposes of Indiana's Constitution as stated in the Preamble.

4.2.2 Describe individual rights, such as freedom of speech, freedom of religion and the right to public education that people have under Indiana's Bill of Rights (Article I of the Constitution).

II. Instructional Objectives

1. The student will discuss the purpose, parts, history and content of the United States Constitution.
2. The student will compare and contrast the United States and Indiana Constitution using an outline.
3. The student will create a class constitution using the concepts they learned.

III. Assessment of Instructional Objectives

1. The teacher will listen for students' response during discussion.
2. The teacher will assess the students' outlines/graphic organizers.
3. The teacher will review each group's constitution drafts.

IV. Materials and Instructional Tools

We the People: The Bill of Rights, Michael Burgan

We the Kids: The Preamble to the Constitution of the U.S. , David Catrow

Shh! We're Writing the Constitution , Jean Fritz (pages 4-11)

Our Communities, Macmillan/McGraw-Hill (textbook)

Indiana's Constitution in a Nation of Constitutions, Patrick Baude

Transparencies and overhead

Classroom computers

Replica of U.S. Constitution

Paper and pens

VII. Description of Learning Activity

A. Motivational Strategy:

Q1R: We will divide the students into two groups. For this presentation, one half of the group will be “required to follow very strict rules” and the other half will have “no rules.”

Q1L: Teacher will prompt students to respond about how they felt during the “hook,” such as “How did it feel to have no rules? What do you think might happen if there were never any restrictions or rules?” This exercise will help them start thinking about the purpose of the Constitution.

The "Bridge" Activity

Q2R: We will present a replica of the U.S. Constitution to the class. We will have the students feel the paper, observe the script, and read the words.

B. Steps in Implementation

1. Teach

Q2L: We will teach the students about the contents, parts, and history of the U.S. Constitution. We will use overhead transparencies to distinguish the different sections of the Constitution and its contents. We will read We the People: the Bill of Rights by Michael Burgan. We will read pages four through eleven out loud to the class and then discuss what we read.

2. Practice

Q3L: The students will choose whether they want to find a partner or work individually to research the Indiana Constitution. They will use the children’s literature and textbooks found on their desk to complete this assignment. We will also allow students to rotate turns to use the internet to find more information. We will provide them with outlines, diagrams, and graphic organizers to guide them through their research. We will also ask them to compare and contrast the Indiana and U.S. Constitution.

3. Apply

Q3R: Students will return to their tables to create their own version of a class constitution. We will provide a preamble for the class, but the constitution they create will comprise a Bill of Rights that contains at least five amendments.

3. Closure

Q4L: After each group has created their constitution, they will edit and revise their document.

Q4R: When all groups are ready, they will present their constitution to the class. After all the groups have presented, the teacher will facilitate an election for which amendments should comprise the class constitution. Once the class has reached their decisions, each student will sign the new document.

C. Approximate time needed to complete the lesson: 2-3 days, 1 hour each day.