

Title: The Need for Government

Lesson Developed by: Donna Paoletti

Grade Level: 4-8

Duration: 2 Class periods

Maryland Learning Outcome(s):

- A. Give examples of how the rule of law has impacted the rights and responsibilities of people.
- B. Explain the meaning and importance of the democratic values and principles fundamental to government in the United States
Describe the importance of rules and laws in a civil society.

“We the People...” Curriculum: Unit 1, Lesson 2

Objective: Upon completion of this lesson, students will be able to

Vocabulary: *State of nature, laws, natural law, rights, responsibilities, anarchy, social contract* (depending on the level for which this lesson is used, some terms may be eliminated if beyond or below the scope of the students’ ability and/or readiness)

Materials: 6 sets of the “Win as Much as You Can” directions, 6 score cards, overhead transparency of the scorecard, class set of “We the People...” level 1 books

Resources for Teacher Preparation: Teachers should be familiar with Unit 1 of “We the People...” This lesson will teach students in a “hands-on way the benefits of a system of law. The debriefing period after the simulation is essential so students can make the connection between the outcome of the game and why everyone benefits under a government. This lesson is best used after Lesson 1, Unit 1 or after students are somewhat familiar with early colonial history.

Lesson Development:

Review/Motivation:

1. Read page 15, “Problem Solving” activity together as an introduction.
2. In small groups, direct students to answer the three questions on the top of page 16.
 - a. What are rights?
 - b. List the rights you think you should have. Why do you think it is important to have these rights?
 - c. Which rights, if any, seem most important? Why?

3. After students have answered these questions, ask for their responses.
4. Start a list of "rights" on an overhead or chalkboard.
5. As students give their responses, try to sort them into three categories (*life, liberty, property*)
6. Read together with the students the rest of page 16.
7. Ask students to label the columns of rights generated by the class (*life, liberty, property.*)
8. Ask students how they think these rights should be protected?
 - Can everyone do it himself or herself?
 - Do we really need government and laws? (Try to get the some students to argue both sides while you play the devil's advocate.)
9. Leave the issue unresolved and tell the students that we are going to play a game that might help us answer the question.

Activities:

1. Have students form groups of 5-7 people per group.
2. Each group should sit in a circle facing one another and the groups should be as far away from each other as possible.
3. Pass out a set of directions for "Win as Much as You Can" to each group.
4. Read the directions out loud to students.
5. Answer any questions they may have but be vague about the strategy. Emphasize that the name of the game is "Win as much as you can" and that students should simply follow directions."
6. Give students exactly 2 minutes to discuss their strategy and make their decisions.
7. Direct all students to "anti up".
8. Students then reveal their decisions to each other and record their scores o the score sheet.
9. Repeat this process 2-3 more times, each time making sure students keep a running tally of each group members' score on the score sheet.
10. Instruct students to tally their scores and ask the score keeper to record them on the data sheet.

Debriefing of Game:

1. Ask the students their immediate reactions to the game. (*They may mention that they thought everyone would be fair and honest and not everyone was, that is was difficult to win a lot of points because students wanted to win more for themselves, etc.*)
2. Ask different students for their total points. Try to find the high scorers. Students with rather high scores will be in groups whose members all have lower scores.
3. Ask these students if they won. (*they will think they did, because they scored the highest*)
4. **Now**, ask the score keepers in each group to add up the **team's** points and fill in the bottom of the scorecard with the total (marked by an *)

5. There should be more of an evening out of scores. The high scores will be offset by the negative scores of the other group members.
6. Display the score sheet for teachers on an overhead and fill in team scores.
7. The team with the highest should be the team whose members most consistently chose all "X"s.
8. Reward this team for "Winning as much as **they** could."
9. At this point, there should be a lot of "I didn't know that was strategy" etc. (Actually, you may have a group or two who figures out this strategy before the game ends. Allow these students to explain how they won so many points.)
10. Explain to the students that the "you" in the title of the game was referring to the group, not the individual.
11. Ask students how they would have played differently if they had know the meaning of the game from the beginning. (List some of these responses on the board/overhead. Try to elicit the moral of the game was to work together to protect everyone's "property")

Medial Summary

1. Refer students back to the lists of rights from the beginning of class.
2. Ask students, based on what they learned from the game, if government is **really** necessary to protect our rights?
3. Read page 17 together. Use the cartoon to make an analogy between the *state of nature* and how the students played the game.

Thoughtful Application of Knowledge/Assessment:

Based on what students were able to learn from the game, the **Problem Solving** activity on page 18 should either be a review or reinforcement. Allow students to complete the activity together. Use page 19 to check the student's responses.

Conclusion/Closure:

Ask students to define the purpose of government in their own words. Read Page 20 together and compare student responses with the book's definition. Be sure to read the caption under the picture about John Locke. Explain to students, that as they learned in the game, Locke believed that people would agree to give up some rights in order to have the most important rights protected. Ask students what they would give up individually in order for their group to win as much as they can. (Individual points for group points.)

Possible Extension Activities:

To test for understanding and retention, use Questions 2,3,4 & 5 from the *Test on the History and Principles of the United States Constitution*, level 1.

Have students complete #4 on page 20; "Draw a cartoon that illustrates your own definition of the word "government" and share it with your classmates."