



GeoCivics Lesson: *Civic Action Project-Public Policy*

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Teacher(s): Armijo, Juan M.	Unit Title: Founding Documents and Westward Expansion Lesson Title: Civic Action Project-Public Policy	Grade Level: 9-12
Notes: Lesson #3 of 3 is a Civic Action Project.		
Pre-existing Knowledge: Students should have some knowledge of civic engagement, the ideas and goals behind community service, public policy and the goals of informational change. Students should have some commonality or knowledge of the community culture and be able to identify a proposed public policy. Students should be familiar with the definition and examples of public policy. Students should have some familiarity with the process of public policy development and engagement.		
Overview of Content: Civic engagement includes communities working together or individuals working alone in both political and non-political actions to protect public values or make a change in a community. The goal of civic engagement is to address public concerns and promote the quality of the community. In practice, students identify an issue that affects them and their community, collect and analyze more information about the issue, and use data to plan a course of action. Civic engagement and community service among students has positive effects including: Increased civic engagement later in life ¹ , Greater civic knowledge ² , Improved self-efficacy, or the belief in one's own ability to succeed ³ , Improved academic outcomes and attendance ⁴ https://rossier.usc.edu/news-insights/news/what-action-civics-six-things-educators-should-know Civic action projects can involve proposed public policies in the legislative (Congress, state legislature), Executive (President or Governor), and Judicial (United States Supreme Courts or state courts). Content		

can also be derived from local government (city or municipalities, counties or school and other local subject districts).

Purpose: What students will learn:

Students will learn about civic engagement, and will learn and experience how we, as citizens, can play a significant role in impacting public policy.

National Social Studies Standard(s):

- (C3 Framework D2. Civ. 7. 9-12 p. 33): Apply civic virtues and democratic principles when working with others
- (C3 Framework D2. Civ. 10.9-12): Analyze the impact and appropriate roles of personal interests and perspectives on the application of civic virtues, democratic principles and constitutional rights, and human rights

New Mexico Social Studies Standard(s):

- New Mexico K-12 Social Studies Standards Civics Strand: (9-12. Civ. 12.) (Inquiry 27. Take Informed Action): Apply a range of deliberative and democratic strategies to procedures to make decisions and take action in their classrooms, schools and out of school contexts.

National & State Geography Standard(s):

National GEOGRAPHY STANDARDS

Standard 9: The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface

New Mexico Geography Standard(s):

(9-12. Geo. 23.) New Mexico K-12 Social Studies Standards, Geography Strand: Describe how human systems, perceptions and identities shape places and regions over time.

ELA Standards:

New Mexico ELA Standards:

(CCSS-ELA Grades 11-12): Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g. visually, quantitative as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

ISTE Teacher

(ISTE 1.3 Knowledge Instructor 1.3.a): Students plan and employ effective research strategies to locate information and other resources for their intellectual and creative pursuits

Language Functions:

- **Inquiry/Seeking Information:** Students use language to observe and explore the environment, acquire information, inquire.
- **Summarizing and Informing:** Students use language to identify, report, or describe information
- **Justifying and Persuading:** Students use language to give reasons for an action, decision, point of view, convince others.

Culturally Responsive Lesson Strategies:

- **Connection-** Lesson/Activity incorporates real-life connections and representations from various cultures and life experiences.
- **Social Justice** - Lesson/Assignment provides avenues for students to connect learning to social, political, or environmental concerns that affect them and their lives and enact change.

Objective(s):

- SWBAT describe the different ways and methods of gathering information by asking questions and conducting research.
- SWBAT construct a method of showcasing or presenting factual information to provide evidence of civic engagement and civic action through the use of poster exhibits, social media, or an online presence.

SIOP

SIOP Elements		
Preparation Adapting content Linking to background Linking to past learning Strategies used	Scaffolding Modeling Guided practice Independent practice Comprehensible input	Grouping Option Whole class Small groups Partners Independent
Integrating Processes Reading Writing Speaking Listening	Application Hands-On Meaningful Linked to objectives Promotes engagement	Assessment Individual Group Written Oral

Evidence of Mastery:**Formative:**

(EXPLAIN) The teacher will observe and make note of students' responses to questions about what they have learned about conducting research on proposed public policies and communicating with government officials, and provide students with feedback. Throughout the lesson the teacher will monitor students' claims and evidence development.

Summative:

(EVALUATE) Students will conduct research in order to locate a proposed public policy before a government body such as the local school board, city council, county commission or the state or Congress, and will create a presentation product to share their position on the proposed public policy with an

appropriate government body/individual. (See Research and Presentation of Position on Proposed Public Policy -Rubric in Lesson Materials document.)

Key vocabulary:

- CAP- Civic Action Project
- Public Policy- the strategy the government uses to do its job.
- Laws- governments create laws in order to maintain order and ensure the effective functioning of society.
- Congress- the legislative branch of the federal government organized under Article I of the United States Constitution.
- State Legislature- the legislative branch of state governments organized under state constitutions.
- City Council- the legal governing authority of a municipality.
- County Commission- an example of a governing and law making authority of a county (in some states have other names such Board of Supervisors, County Court, etc.).
- School Board- the policy making body of a local school district.

Materials:

- 4 sheets of poster size 'post-it' papers - each with one of the following headings: knowledge, skills, attitude, and action- one sheet for each of 4 table groups
- 4 sets of colored Markers - a separate color of markers for each of 4 table groups
- Timer
- Teacher's Computer and Projection tools
- Video: High School Project Saves the Beach: [High School Project Saves the Beach](#) (5:32)
- Video: *Intro to Public Policy*: [Intro to Public Policy](#).
- Student access to computers/laptops to conduct their research
- Website examples to locate proposed public policies:
 - Congress.Gov: <https://www.congress.gov/>
 - City of Las Cruces (New Mexico): [City of Las Cruces](#)
 - Dona Ana County (New Mexico): [Dona Ana County](#)
 - Engage Arizona Podcast: In the Know: Keeping up with Public Policy: [In the Know: Keeping up with public policy that impacts you](#)
- Website to support student research: *New Guide to Help Middle and High School Students Conduct Research with Library Resources* [New Guide to Help Middle and High School Students Conduct Research with Library Resources](#).

Websites for students to learn about communicating with elected officials:

1) 8 Tips for a Successful Visit to Your Elected Official's Office:

[8 Tips for a Successful Visit to Your Elected Official's Office | Mental Health America](#)

2) Lobbying: Tips on contacting, writing, and meeting with your elected officials:

[LOBBYING: Tips on Contacting, Writing, and Meeting With Your Elected Officials | ACLU of Maryland](#)

3) Civic Action Project: Toolkit -A step-by-step guide through the civic-action process for students.:

[Dashboard: Toolkit: A step-by-step guide through the civic action process for students.](#)

- Government Body Websites for students to locate a proposed public policy that is important to them and will be used for their civic action project:

<https://www.congress.gov/>

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/>
<https://www.lascruces.gov/1487/City-Council>
<https://www.donaanacounty.org/government/board-of-county-commissioners?locale=en>
<https://www.lcps.net/page/board-of-education>
<http://www.laits.utexas.edu/gov310/PEP/policy/>
<https://guides.lib.berkeley.edu/ContactingOfficials/Tips>
<https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials>
<https://www.aclu.org/other/tips-meeting-your-elected-officials>

- Materials and tools needed for students to create a presentation product in their choice of format- either as a written, visual, video, or poster presentation
- Research & Presentation of Position on Proposed Public Policy - Rubric (In Lesson Materials Document Resources and Support Links for Teachers (in Lesson Materials Document)

Sources:

- Video: *High School Project Saves the Beach*:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cJ5Z53JAivE&list=TLPQMTgxMTlwMjlxpCGDVz-E1g> (5:32)
- Video: *Intro to Public Policy*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dAflRiw88E> (12:46)
- Website examples to locate proposed public policies:
 - Congress.Gov: <https://www.congress.gov/>
 - City of Las Cruces (New Mexico): <https://www.lascruces.gov/>
 - Dona Ana County (New Mexico): <https://www.donaanacounty.org/>
 - Engage Arizona Podcast: In the Know: Keeping up with Public Policy:
<https://soundcloud.com/azpolicy/in-the-know-2021>
- Website: *New Guide to Help Middle and High School Students Conduct Research with Library Resources*:
<https://blogs.loc.gov/teachers/2021/01/new-libguide-to-help-middle-and-high-school-students-conduct-research-with-library-resources/>.
- Websites for students to learn about communicating with elected officials:
 - 1) 8 Tips for a Successful Visit to Your Elected Official's Office:
<https://mhanational.org/blog/8-tips-successful-visit-your-elected-officials-office>
 - 2) Lobbying: Tips on contacting, writing, and meeting with your elected officials:
<https://www.aclu-md.org/en/resources/lobbying-tips-contacting-writing-and-meeting-your-elected-officials>
 - 3) Civic Action Project: Toolkit -A step-by-step guide through the civic-action process for students.:
<https://crfcap.org/mod/page/view.php?id=225>
- Government Body Websites:
<https://www.congress.gov/>
<https://www.nmlegis.gov/>
<https://www.lascruces.gov/1487/City-Council>
<https://www.donaanacounty.org/government/board-of-county-commissioners?locale=en>
<https://www.lcps.net/page/board-of-education>
<http://www.laits.utexas.edu/gov310/PEP/policy/>
<https://guides.lib.berkeley.edu/ContactingOfficials/Tips>

<https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials>

<https://www.aclu.org/other/tips-meeting-your-elected-officials>

- **Teacher Resource:** *What is Action Civic? Six Things Educators Should Know:*

<https://rossier.usc.edu/news-insights/news/what-action-civics-six-things-educators-should-know>

Engage:

Teacher Will:

1. Engage students in a class discussion of what it means to be a good citizen by asking them, *What does being a good citizen mean to you? and Can you think of ways you may have acted as a good citizen in the past? At home? At school?*
2. Conduct an understanding citizenship activity by preparing four poster size 'post-it' papers, each with *one* of the following headings: knowledge, skills, attitude, and action.
Put students into four table groups, strategically grouping them to provide language and/or learning support for ELLs/SPED/Gifted students as needed, and give each group one poster and a pack of markers (each table uses a different color of marker). Set a timer for three minutes and have students brainstorm what they believe is needed to be a good citizen as related to their poster heading. After each 3-minute period is up, rotate the posters so each table group has a chance to brainstorm on every heading, then put all 4 posters on a wall for the whole class to see.
3. Use the students' poster responses to lead the class in a whole-group conversation about what students think it takes to be a good citizen.
4. Then ask students: *What are civic actions?*
Introduce what civic action projects are and show the video [High School Project Saves the Beach](#). After watching the video, discuss with the class the components of the students' activities shown in the video and talk about how these compare to what they had written down on their posters about what it takes to be a good citizen.
5. Then engage the class in a deeper discussion to describe what the civic action plan shown in the video involved by asking the class the following questions:
What was the point of the CAP?

Student Will:

1. Reflect on the questions asked by the teacher about being a good citizen and engage in the class discussion by sharing out their ideas about what it means to be a good citizen and sharing out examples of ways they have acted as a good citizen in the past at home and at school.
(Preparation: Linking to background)
(Grouping: Whole class)
2. Work with their table group to brainstorm and write down on each poster as it rotates around the room to their table, what they believe is needed to be a good citizen in terms of knowledge, skills, attitude, and action.
(Grouping; small groups)
(Application: Hands-on/Meaningful/Promotes engagement)
(Integrating Processes: Listening/Speaking/Writing/Reading)
3. Engage with the whole class in talking about what they believe it takes to be a good citizen.
(Grouping: Whole class)
4. Reflect and share out what they know/understand about what civic action means and then watch the video, *High School Project Saves the Beach* to learn about a high school that engaged in a civic action project and how it was done. After watching the video students will engage in a discussion of the video by responding to the teachers' questions and then reflect on and share out what issues they feel are important to them.
(Grouping: Whole class)
(Application: Meaningful/Promotes engagement)

<p><i>What were they trying to do?</i> <i>“How did they do it?”</i> <i>“Who was involved?”</i></p> <p>6. Then tell the students that they are going to have an opportunity to engage in their own Civic Action Project, and ask them the question <i>What issues are important to you?</i> and discuss their responses as a class.</p>	<p>(Preparation: Linking to background)</p>
<p>Explore:</p>	
<p>Teacher Will: <i>IQ #1: In what ways can students research and stake positions on proposed public policies that are of interest or matter to them individually?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin by discussing with the class, “What are Public Policies?” and have students share with the class any public policies they have heard of or know about and talk about how these policies may have an impact on their lives. 2. Show the class the video: Intro to Public Policy, and then discuss what they have learned about what a public policy involves, how it is carried out, who is involved in it, and what role citizens play in public policies. 3. Then tell students that they will use their computers to explore and learn about some proposed public policies with the aim of identifying policies that address issues that are important to them. The teacher will provide students with resource links to search for proposed public policies and provide time for students to conduct their research, and tell them to write down notes about any policies they find that are important to them. Some website examples to locate proposed public policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Congress.Gov: https://www.congress.gov/ ● City of Las Cruces (New Mexico): City of Las Cruces ● Dona Ana County (New Mexico): Dona Ana County 	<p>Student Will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reflect on what they know about public policies and share out with the class any public policies they know about, and tell how they feel these public policies impact their lives. (Preparation: Linking to past learning) (Grouping: Whole class) 2. Watch the video about public policy and then share with the class what they learned about public policy from the video they watched by answering the questions asked by the teacher. (Grouping: Whole class) (Integrating Processes: Listening/Speaking) 3. Use the links provided by the teacher to do research on proposed public policies, keeping in mind that they are looking for policies that address issues that are important to themselves. Students will take notes as they read/learn about policies that they find important to themselves. (Preparation: Lining to Background) (Grouping: Independent (Application: Hands-on/promotes engagement))

- Engage Arizona Podcast: In the Know: Keeping up with Public Policy: [In the Know: Keeping up with public policy that impacts you](#)

NOTE: Teachers can provide their students with similar links for cities, counties, or states located in their own area.

4. After doing their research to learn about proposed public policies, the teacher will engage the students in talking about their research findings and tell them that they will soon be choosing one public policy that will become the focus of a Civics Action Project that they will conduct. The teacher will then tell them that once they choose a public policy as their focus, they will do a deeper research on it as part of their project. The teacher will then present Inquiry Question #1 to the class: asking them: ***In what ways can students research and stake positions on proposed public policies that are of interest or matter to them individually?***
5. The teacher will then engage the class in a discussion of how they will be able to do a deeper research on a proposed public policy that they choose to do with the aim of coming to their own position about the policy and gathering facts and important information that they will need in order to communicate their position to a government official who is in charge of the policy that they choose. The teacher will then share the resource link below to provide students with further information on how to do their research on a proposed policy that they will choose: Website: *New Guide to Help Middle and High School Students Conduct Research with Library Resources* [New Guide to Help Middle and High School Students Conduct Research with Library Resources](#). The teacher will then provide time for the students to read through the website and gather information about conducting their research.

4. Engage in a class discussion, sharing out what they learned about proposed public policies. Students will then reflect on Inquiry Question #1 presented by the teacher and consider how they could research and stake a position on any public policy they have just read about.

5. Reflect on what the teacher tells them about how they will be researching a public policy with the purpose of coming to their own position about the policy and gathering facts to share out with government officials. Use the link provided by the teacher to read about how to conduct research on a proposed public policy and write down notes that they feel are important to remember when they do their own public policy research in the future.
(Integrating Processes: Listening/ Speaking/Reading/Writing)
(Grouping: Whole class/Independent)
(Application: Meaningful)

6. The teacher will also provide students with the following three links to provide them information on how to communicate with government officials and will provide time for them to read through this information.

8 Tips for a Successful Visit to Your Elected Official's Office:

[8 Tips for a Successful Visit to Your Elected Official's Office | Mental Health America](#)

Lobbying: Tips on contacting, writing, and meeting with your elected officials:

[LOBBYING: Tips on Contacting, Writing, and Meeting With Your Elected Officials | ACLU of Maryland](#)

Civic Action Project: Toolkit -A step-by-step guide through the civic-action process for students.:

[Dashboard: Toolkit: A step-by-step guide through the civic action process for students.](#)

6. Use the links provided by the teacher to read and take notes about how to communicate with government officials and consider how they will use this information to do this in the future.

(Integrating Processes: Listening/ Speaking/Reading/Writing)

(Grouping: Whole class/Independent)

(Application: Meaningful)

Explain - Formative Assessment:

Teacher Will:

1. Organize students in pairs or small discussion groups, grouping students strategically to provide language and/or learning support as needed, and have students talk to one another about what they have learned about:
 - how to locate proposed public policies;
 - how to research and stake one's positions on proposed public policies;
 - how to communicate with government officials
2. The teacher will listen in on the students' conversations and make note of the information students' share with one another, and the teacher will also provide feedback to the students to provide clarification and additional information when needed.
3. After the group sharing, the teacher will lead the class in a discussion to summarize their learning and let the students know that they will now use what they have learned to engage in their own civic action project.

Student Will:

1. Work with partners or in small groups to share out their learning from the readings they have done. They will discuss how to locate proposed public policies, how to research and stake their own positions on proposed public policies, and how to communicate with government officials about their position. Students will also compare and contrast their understanding of these to what their partners say and work together to clarify any misconceptions.

(Grouping: Partners or Small groups)
(Application: Promotes engagement/ Meaningful)
3. Engage with the teacher and fellow students to summarize their learning from their reading and discussions. The students will also reflect on and make note of how they will use what they have learned to engage in their own civic action project.

<p>4. The teacher will then present the list of vocabulary words on the board (<u>CAP</u>, <u>Public Policy</u>, <u>Laws</u>, <u>Congress</u>, <u>State Legislature</u>, <u>City Council</u>, <u>County Commission</u>, <u>School Board</u>) and have the class share out what they have learned from their readings about the meanings of these words. The students who share accurate definitions will be asked to write them on the board next to the word. The teacher will add correct definitions to any words that students are not able to give a correct definition for.</p> <p>(Scaffolding: Guided Practice)</p>	<p>4. Share out their understanding of each of the vocabulary word meanings written on the board based on their prior knowledge and/or what they have read recently about the words, and help to write down some of the definitions of the words on the board for all of the class to see.</p> <p>(Preparation: Linking to past learning) (Application: promotes engagement)</p>
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Elaborate:

<p>Teacher Will: IQ #2: <i>How can students' voices be used in a positive manner to take action and showcase their position on a proposed public policy to a government official?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The teacher will tell the class that they will begin their civic action project by conducting research to locate a proposed public policy before a government body such as the local school board, city council, county commission or the state legislature or Congress. The teacher will guide students to do their research to locate a proposed public policy that is important to them by using one of the following: <u>Government Body Websites</u>: https://www.congress.gov/ https://www.nmlegis.gov/ https://www.lascruces.gov/1487/City-Council https://www.donaanacounty.org/government/board-of-county-commissioners?locale=en https://www.lcps.net/page/board-of-education http://www.laits.utexas.edu/gov310/PEP/policy/ https://guides.lib.berkeley.edu/ContactingOfficials/Tips https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials https://www.aclu.org/other/tips-meeting-your-elected-officials 2. The teacher will let the students know that they will be required to research all 	<p>Student Will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with their partners using the links provided by the teacher to locate a proposed public policy that they feel is important to them and they want to use as their civic action project. 2. Students will work together to develop their position on that policy by researching all
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<p>sides/positions of the proposed policy and stake a position in order to articulate their knowledge with strong and meaningful supporting evidence from their research.</p> <p>3. The teacher will partner students to work together and provide support for one another as they choose the public policy they will focus on and develop their position by listing and describing the evidence that both supports and refutes their position. The students also need to work with and support one another to be able to articulate and explain opposing and opposite positions on the proposed public policy. Following their research on a proposed public policy and their articulation of their position, the teacher will direct students with how to make contact with the appropriate government body/ individual in order to present their position, and will present Inquiry Question #2 to the class, asking: <i>“How can students' voices be used in a positive manner to take action and showcase their position on a proposed public policy to a government official?”</i></p> <p>4. The teacher will engage the class in a discussion of how they can use their voices to showcase their position on the proposed public policy that they have chosen in ways that will have a positive impact on the government official/s that they will be communicating with, and will talk with the students about the importance of showing respect and consideration for the official as well as showing a strong interest and passion for what they are wanting to communicate to them.</p>	<p>sides/positions of the policy and will write down notes to record evidence that both supports and refutes their position so they can use these to support their argument.</p> <p>3. Students will also work with their partners to figure out how to best articulate their position using the evidence they have gathered to explain the opposing and opposite positions on the proposed public policy.</p> <p>(Grouping: Partners) (Integrated Processes: Reading/Writing/Listening/Speaking) (Application: Hands-on/Linked to Objectives)</p> <p>4. Students will participate in group discussion on how they can use their voices to showcase their position on the proposed public policy that they have chosen in ways that will have a positive impact on the government official/s that they will be communicating with.</p>
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Evaluate - Summative Assessment:	
<p>Teacher Will:</p> <p>Evaluate:</p> <p>1. Following the students’ research and their selection of an issue and plan to communicate their position on the issue to a government body</p>	<p>Student Will:</p> <p>1. Students create a written, visual, video, or poster presentation product to use in sharing their policy position with a government</p>

or individual, the teacher will have the students create a written, visual, video, or poster presentation that includes their policy position supported by a list of items that analyze and articulate the pluses and minuses of all sides of the argument on the public policy position. Students will also incorporate feedback and discussion into their presentation product, and the teacher will direct students to develop a plan and process for reaching out to public officials in order to articulate and advocate their position on the proposed public policy (using an electronic, in-person, or presentation means).

2. The teacher will then check the students' presentation product and provide feedback and support as needed and when students are done presenting to the government officials, the teacher will check in with the students to make sure they have completed the process to advocate for their position and provide opportunities for students to reflect on and discuss with their peers their process and results of their civic engagement.
3. The teacher will use the Research and Presentation of Position on Public Policy -Rubric (in Lesson Materials Document) to assess.

official and ensure that it includes a list of items that analyze and articulate the pluses and minuses of all sides of the argument on their proposed public policy position. The students will also develop a plan for how and when they will articulate and advocate for their position on the proposed public policy by reaching out to public officials associated with their particular proposed public policy.

2. The students will then present their presentations to the appropriate government official/s and then turn in their presentation product to the teacher for grading.
(Assessment: Individual/Written/Oral)
(Application: Linked to Objectives)
3. Students will engage with their peers in discussing how they felt about the civic engagement process that they engaged in, how it impacted them, and what they learned from it.
(Grouping: Whole class)
(Application: Meaningful/promotes engagement)

Extensions: Students can extend their learning by continuing to research new proposed public policies in the city/county or state they live in and be encouraged and supported to engage in new civic action projects based on what they learn.

The teacher could also invite government personnel to come to their class and talk with the students about upcoming public policies and have students follow-up with more civic engagements related to what they learn.