

# Benchmark for Rubric Score 1

Appendix

## I. Project Information:

A. "Participation in Democratic Society" Grade 11

B. Democracy: How did it happen and how can a citizen use it to their advantage?

C. Author Information

i.

ii.

iii. January 2003

## II. Unit Outline

A. Summary of Content Standards Addressed in the Unit (Framework, 1998<sup>1</sup>)

Content Standard 4: Applying History

- "Initiate questions and hypotheses about historic events they are studying"

Content Standard 6: Rights and Responsibilities of Citizens

- "Evaluate whether or when their obligations as citizens require that their personal desires, beliefs, and interests be subordinated to the public good"
- "Identify and explain characteristics needed for effective participation in public life"

Content Standard 7: Political Systems

- "Compare two or more constitutions and how they promote the principles of their respective political systems and provide the basis for government"

### B. Goal of Unit

The goal of this unit is to help students who are close to or at the voting age to become better citizens. They have the information and resources to be informed voters and will be able to take the skills they learn and use them in future elections.

<sup>1</sup> The shortened title "Framework" is used to designate "Social Studies Curriculum Framework," Connecticut State Department of Education, Division of Teaching and Learning, May 1998.

## C. Content Outline

The students will be learning much of the vocabulary necessary for learning about the government, and many of these words will be learned through New York Times articles they will be reading. The students will also keep a Political Dictionary in their notebook which will be used throughout the course. I feel this dictionary will be helpful for students who are having difficulty in the class or who have a limited English vocabulary. All the students will be required to list, define, and give an example of each term. The students will be taking an in-depth look at the politicians who are running in that year's election and also looking at people such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, Frederick Douglass and other figures important in getting the women's and minorities the right to vote.

## III. Five Class Session Outline

### A. Description of Five Classes

#### **Session One: "A Brief History of Getting the Right to Vote"**

Lesson Objectives: As a result of this lesson students will be able to:

- a) Identify the struggle that minorities and women went through to get the right to vote.
- b) Explain why democracy became so important to the United States.
- c) Recall the issues surrounding the Constitution.

Resources:

Students will need their notebooks. The classroom will need an overhead or chalkboard to put notes on, and pictures of the prominent figures in the fight for the right to vote for men, women, and minorities.

Activity:

Students will take notes on the issues surrounding the Constitution (hopefully to refresh what they have previously learned). Then students will receive copies of pictures of people like Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, Frederick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony—leaders in the minority right to vote. Students will take notes on the 15<sup>th</sup> amendment and 19<sup>th</sup> amendment and the issues surrounding them. The class will then debate whether they feel the U.S. had a true democracy if not every one had the right to vote. And was everyone's voice heard *and* listen to? This discussion question will be turned into an opinion essay for homework.

**Session Two: “Comparing Democratic Systems around the World”<sup>2</sup>**  
*(Adopted from a New York Times Lesson Plan)*

Lesson Objectives: As a result of this lesson students will be able to:

- a) Define “democracy” and demonstrate their current understanding of democracy by developing a concept map with related to words and phrases.
- b) Compare and contrast the current state of two democratic systems (England’s and the United States’) by reading and discussing the article “As Labor Lost Ideology, U.S. Parties Found It.”
- c) Define vocabulary from the article that is important to understand government and put it in their political dictionary.
- d) Participate in a “democracy round table” and compare and contrast the two democracies.

Resources:

Each student will need their journals and a copy of the article, “As Labor Lost Ideology, U.S. Parties Found It” by Adrian Wooldridge.

Activity:

Students will respond in their journals to a prompt—“Think about what the world ‘democracy’ means. Write a definition for the word, and then create a list of as many words and phrases that come to mind when you think of democracy.” These responses will be shared with the class and their responses will be turned into a concept map which will be on the board and copied into their notes. For homework the night before the students would have read the article and have answered questions and definitions that would be gone over in class in a round table discussion. For homework the students will turn the class discussion into a compare/contrast essay which will be handed in the next day.

**Session Three: Effects of Media on Candidates and Voting**

Lesson Objectives: As a result of this lesson students will be able to:

- a) List ways in which Americans learn about candidates running for political office.
- b) Discuss the factors involved in deciding which candidate to vote for in an election.
- c) Explain how media can skew or stretch the truth of each candidate and their position.

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<sup>2</sup> Full lesson is included.

- d) Debate if what a politician has done in the past or in his/her private life should influence how voters cast their votes.

**Resources:**

The classroom will need a television and V.C.R. and their copy of "Where 10,000 saw Lincoln and Douglas, Apathy Now Rules."

**Activity:**

The teacher will show a variety of campaign commercials and news clips of issues such as Monica Lewinsky and Bill Clinton, Waterbury's Mayor Giordano, or Bridgeport's Mayor Ganim to the class. The class will first debate how mud-slinging commercials versus informational commercials change how they view the candidates and then debate how a candidate's personal life affects their ability to serve the public. For homework the students will write or draw what they feel is a good campaign commercial. They will need to explain why they set up the commercial this way and how it will help the voters to make their decision.

**Session Four and Five: "Making Informed Decisions: Assessing Where Political Candidates Stand on Important Issues."**

*(Adopted from New York Times Lesson Plan)*

**Lesson Objectives:** As a result of this two-day lesson students will be able to:

- a) Learn about and evaluate Project Vote Smart's National Political Awareness Test (NPAT).
- b) Determine which issues of nation importance they feel, as a class, are important to them; respond to NPAT questions on those issues.
- c) Read and discuss "Where 10,000 Saw Lincoln and Douglas, Apathy Now Rules," an NYT article discussing why some people choose not to vote.
- d) Present and discuss comparative charts.
- e) Write a journal discussing which candidate they would vote for based on the NPAT response and reflecting on other methods that one could use to find out information.

**Session Four:**

**Resources:**

Student will need a copy of the "Background and History of the National Political Awareness Test" which can be found on their website, <http://www.vote-smart.org>. Students will also need a copy of the National Political Awareness Test and a copy of Dirk Johnson's article, "Where 10,000 Saw Lincoln and Douglas, Apathy Now Rules."

**Activity:**

Class will brainstorm different ways in which they can learn about candidates running for political office and then discuss how voters make their decisions about which candidates will receive their votes. Students will be given a very brief history of what the NPAT is and using the article, "Background and History of the National Political Awareness Test," will be able to answer questions about what the NPAT does. The students will also circle five issues that are mentioned that are most important to them. All issues will be written on the board and a "blind vote"<sup>3</sup> will be taken to pick the top five for the class. Then students will use their blank copies of NPAT and respond to the questions for the five issues selected by the class<sup>4</sup>. For homework the students will read the article, "Where 10,000 Saw Lincoln and Douglas, Apathy Now Rules," and respond to questions which the teacher will hand out.

**Session Five:****Resources:**

The students will use all the resources they have from the previous class, the comparisons of candidates' NPAT responses on five issues deemed most important by the class on Session two which the teacher will have gotten off the web site, five pieces of poster board, markers, rulers and their journals.

**Activity:**

The class will review the five issues that were selected and discuss why the class felt these issues were the most important ones and then discuss which of the other issues could be important to their parents, to different minority groups, or to special interest groups. The class will be divided into five groups and they will each have the comparisons of their state's candidates for either congressional or gubernatorial offices. Each group will create a comparisons chart for their issues. Groups will present these to the class and take note as to which of the candidates they agree or disagree with. For homework, the students will reflect on their responses to the five NPAT issues selected and figure out which candidate's responses best coincide with their own. Students will write a journal entry that answers questions handed out by the teacher—Who would you vote for and why? What other issues do you feel are important? And how could you go about finding out how these candidates view these other important issues?

<sup>3</sup> By blind vote I am referring to students putting their heads down and raising their hands to vote for while the teacher tallies the votes.

<sup>4</sup> It is important to note that the teacher should tell their students that their response are private and will not have to share this information with each other.

## B. Assessment for the Unit

Teacher will informally assess student understanding throughout the unit by observing class discussion, participation and by reviewing written work. The teacher will also be periodically checking their Political Dictionary which the students will be updating throughout the unit, some left to their discretion and others the teacher will ask them to put in.

- i. **Session One:** Students will hand in essay constructed from group discussion.  
→Teacher will be looking for specific and accurate references from class notes, class discussion, and their opinion is justified and explained.
- ii. **Session Two:** Teacher will check for a completed in-class journal entry and concept map. The homework questions will also be collected as well as their compare/contrast essay.  
→Teacher will look for accurately supported content in the essay and complete homework questions.
- iii. **Session Three:** Students will hand in their written or drawn positive campaign commercial.  
→Teacher will look for a valid explanation for why the student chose to set up their commercial in the fashion which they did and an explanation as to how this will help voters make more informed decisions
- iv. **Session Four:** Students will hand in the question they had to complete on the five issues.  
→Teacher will look for accuracy and effort on the assignment.
- v. **Session Five:** The students will be presenting the chart on their groups' issue.  
→Teacher will look for accurate information and a clearly presented presentation.
- vi. **Final Assessment:**  
The students will be broken into small groups of three or four and will create a campaign for the candidate they are assigned. The students will be required to create what they feel is a good commercial and pick four issues they feel are the most important to share with a panel of voters (the class). Their commercials will be presented to the class and will make campaign posters to advertise their candidate's stances on their issues. They will defend their candidate to the panel of voters and will

answer the voters' questions. The presentation will be graded on accurate information and a clearly presented campaign. Grading rubrics A and B will be used, see Appendix A and B.

C. Learning Styles Addressed in Unit

As we have learned, teaching material using multiple intelligences is the best way for all students to get the most out of the classroom experience. By eleventh grade, many of the students have learned to control themselves as opposed to teaching ninth grade or lower but it is still very beneficial for students to get information through as many different channels as possible. In this unit, there are a lot of class discussion and group activities which will be beneficial for linguistic, bodily-kinesthetic, and interpersonal learners. The journal entries and opinion/reaction papers will appeal to the intrapersonal and the logical-mathematical learners because they will be able to present their own arguments and workout why they feel a certain way. I think this unit allows all learners to be reached; the final assessment is good for all learners as well because there are many different aspects to getting that project together and everyone can find their niche within the group.

D. Bibliography of Teacher Sources

“Delegating Authority: Comparing Democratic Systems Around the World.” [www.nytimes.com/learning](http://www.nytimes.com/learning).

--This New York Times Lesson Plan allows the students to see how democracy can be different and how some issues are more important to one group of people and totally different for another.

Driggs, Lorin and Alison Zimbalist. “Making Informed Decisions: Assessing Where Political Candidates Stand on Important Issues.” [www.nytimes.com/learning](http://www.nytimes.com/learning).

--This New York Times Lesson Plan is very useful for future voters because it gives the students links to important sites that gives an objective view of all the candidates in every election. This lesson will also help students learn how to make informed decisions when they are in the voting booth.

Kelman, Steven. American Government. Austin, Texas: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1999.

--This is an American Government textbook which helped in creating Session One and the brief summary of how democracy came to be.

#### E. Bibliography of Student Sources

Johnson, Dirk. "Where 10,000 Saw Lincoln and Douglas, Apathy Now Rules." *New York Times*: November 3, 1998.  
(Used with "Assessing Where Political Candidates Stand on Important Issues" Lesson Plan and Session Three)

--This article shows mud-slinging and the low morals of Bill Clinton which have disgusted some voters so much they refuse to vote.

Wooldridge, Adrian. "As Labor Lost Ideology, US Parties Found It." *New York Times*: July 23, 2001.

(Used with "Delegating Authority" Lesson Plan)

--This article will help students see that while England and the U.S. are so similar and inseparable allies there are differences on where they stand on certain issues.

#### IV. Complete Lesson Plan

##### **Session Two: "Comparing Democratic Systems around the World"** (Adopted from a NYT Lesson Plan)

Lesson Objectives: As a result of this lesson students will be able to:

- a) Define "democracy" and demonstrate their current understanding of democracy by developing a concept map related to words and phrases.
- b) Compare and contrast the current state of two democratic systems by reading and discussing the article "As Labor Lost Ideology, U.S. Parties Found It."
- c) Define vocabulary from the article that is important to understand government.
- d) Participate in a "democracy round table" and compare and contrast the two democracies.

##### Resources:

Each student will need their journals and a copy of the article, "As Labor Lost Ideology, U.S. Parties Found It" by Adrian Wooldridge.

**Initiation:**

Ask students if they have ever run in a class election, team captain, etc. Ask how they became or could become a candidate. List all the responses on the chalkboard.

**Development of lesson:**

Students will respond in their journals to a prompt—"Think about what the word 'democracy' means. Write a definition for the word, and then create a list of as many words and phrases that come to mind when you think of democracy." These responses will be shared with the class and their responses will be turned into a concept map which will be on the board and copied into their notes and will also be compared and contrasted to the "initiation" list. For homework the night before the students would have read the article and have answered questions and definitions that would be gone over in class in a round table discussion.

**Learning styles:**

The styles addressed in this lesson are visual, spatial, linguistic, auditory, and interpersonal learners.

**Adjustments:**

The students who would be having problems with the lesson have their Political Dictionaries to keep the understanding the lingo that might be used also the map would be done by the teacher as well as the student so the student could copy it off the board if they could not think conceptually.

**Closure:**

Teacher will ask students to name two things they have learned about how democracy can differ in different countries.

**Homework:**

Students will turn the class discussion into a compare/contrast essay which will be handed in the next day.

**V. Reflective Journal****A. Challenges of Researching this Topic**

As I stated in the first unit plan, my lack of experience of actually teaching lessons to students in a classroom also made this task difficult. I do not know how much information can be covered in an average class length. There was only one occasion during my time

in Quinnipiac University in which was able to actually teach a lesson plan that I created and found I had planned an exorbitant amount of work to be covered. I wish that there had been more chances to actually teach our plans rather than explain what we would do in the classes which we took.

There are also endless ways to teach a unit such as this. The teacher can start from the historic, using the Constitution and discuss how people during that time dealt with democracy, or a teacher could have students participate in a mock election. I had a very tough time deciding which aspect I wanted to take in order to best fit the age group and ability level that I was teaching.

#### B. Challenge of Creating an “Integrative” and “Constructivist” Unit

I did not feel it was difficult to make this unit integrative because of the age of the students that would be in the eleventh grade class. The students would be close to if not at the voting age and therefore the route I took to teach this information was a way for them to make better educated decisions when they get into the voting booth.

I feel that using the comparison between England and the United States was a good way for students to see that democracy is not always the same in all countries. This way the students were able to use what they already knew about democracy and see how it can be changed. Also the brainstorming/concept map that is done Session Two is a good way to help students understand all of the main concepts of government and help them to sort out issues that they might not understand.

#### C. Reasons for Choosing the Materials Found in the Lesson

As I have mentioned above, in eleventh grade students are anywhere from sixteen to eighteen years old and therefore very close to the voting age. When I first became a voter I did not know where to go to find information about the candidates and to see where they stood on certain issues that were very important to me. When I found the lesson plan on the New York Times website I knew this would be the perfect way to teach the students about democracy while also giving them a lot of resources to find out what they would need to know when stepping into the voting booth for their first time. The resources can also be adapted every time there is another election so

the students can always make intelligent and informed voting decisions.

Also in helping students who deal better with the concrete rather than the conceptual, most of the work is done in groups and as a class so those students will be able to follow along and get help from their group members. All of the information that would be used in class can also be seen on the internet before class so students who have problems can read the information before class would begin.

#### D. Alternative Concepts, Goals and Objectives

There are many different ways to teach this lesson and many different time periods which this topic could be coupled with. I think this subject would be a wonderful topic to continue going back to, having mock votes in your classroom and first only letting males vote and then women and so on to show how frustrating it must have been to people who could voice their opinion. Another alternative to this unit could be to split the class up into different groups and have them be from different countries to show how hard it is for agencies such as the United Nations to come to conclusions on issues. There are many different ways to approach this lesson which would be equally good if not better than the approach I took.

#### E. Specific Relations to the CSSC Framework

Content Standard 4, Applying History is addressed because students will be recalling facts from past history classes where they had learned about the Constitution and a young America's struggle for freedom to understand why democracy had become so important to the nation. The first session of this unit plan would highlight the major issues and how women and African Americans struggled for the right to vote. The class will be asked to think about why it took so long for everyone to get the right to vote and was it *really* a democracy when not everyone could vote.

Content Standard 6, Rights and Responsibilities of Citizens is the majority of this unit. The students will learn how to make informed, intelligent and educated decisions about their rights as a citizen of the United States. They will learn to work together as a class to get what they feel is right done and understand how much power their one vote can have.

**Content Standard 7, Political Systems is addressed in session two. They will be comparing and contrasting U.S. democracy with a very similar country, they United Kingdom and how democracy can change and how some rights and issues are more valued by different countries.**

**Appendix A**

1=Weak, 2=Moderately Weak,  
3=Average, 4= Moderately  
Strong, 5= Strong.

Name of Presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

**Oral Presentation:**

1. The topic of the presentation meets the requirements of the assignment.	1	2	3	4	5
2. The presentation appears to be well researched.	1	2	3	4	5
3. The presentation is well organized and cohesive.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The presenter is adequately prepared for the presentation.	1	2	3	4	5
5. The presentation indicates an understanding of the topic presented.	1	2	3	4	5
6. The presenter employs a speaking and delivery style appropriate to the presentation topic.	1	2	3	4	5
7. The presenter delivers ideas in a clear and concise fashion, without too much reliance on notes.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The presenter speaks loudly and clearly enough to be heard by the audience.	1	2	3	4	5
9. The presenter maintains eye contact with the audience.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Overall, the work represents the presenter's full potential.	1	2	3	4	5

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Total Points/Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix B**

1=Weak, 2=Moderately Weak,  
3=Average, 4= Moderately  
Strong, 5= Strong.

Name of Presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

**Poster Presentation:**

- |   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. The poster contains appropriate items and information.                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. The poster is clean and neat and the information on it is well organized.      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. The poster is colorful and creative.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. The spelling, punctuation, and grammar of any text on the poster are accurate. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Any artwork on the poster is appropriate and carefully executed.               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. The information on the poster is appropriate to the topic.                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. The poster shows an understanding of the topic and related concepts.           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. The poster fulfills the requirement of the assignment.                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. The student or group did a good job presenting the poster to the class.        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. Overall, the final result represents the student's or group's full potential. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Total Points/Grade: \_\_\_\_\_