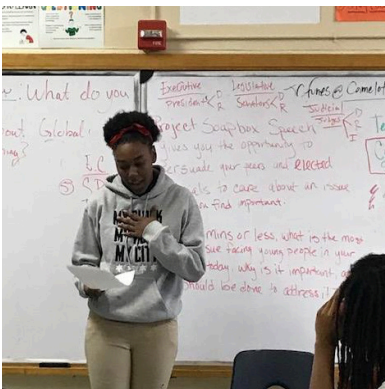
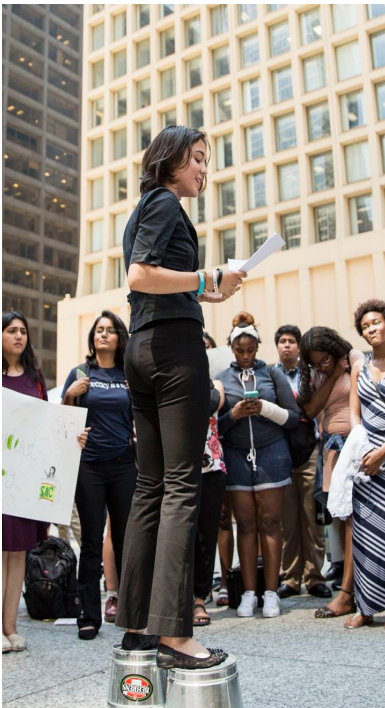
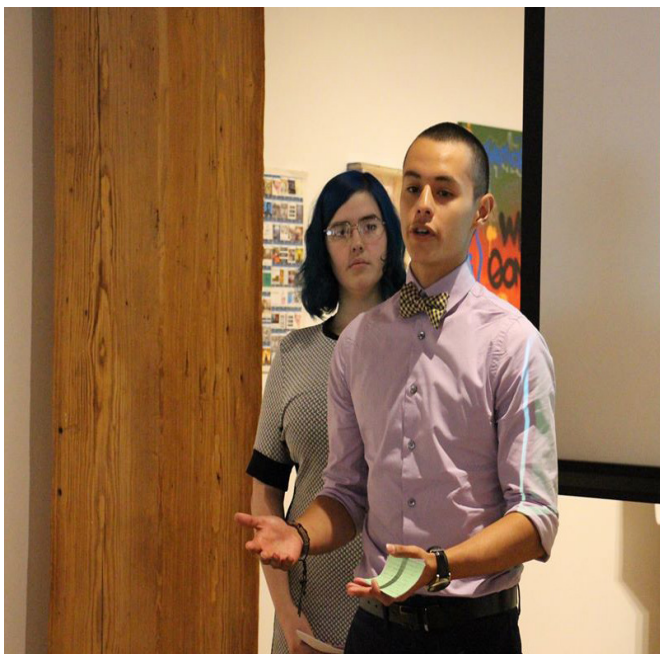


Project Soapbox



**Mikva
Challenge**

Introduction

What is Mikva Challenge?

Mikva Challenge is a nonpartisan 501(c)3 organization, founded in 1997 as a tribute to former White House Counsel, Judge, and U.S. Congressman Abner Mikva and his wife Zoe, a lifelong education activist. Mikva Challenge develops youth to be empowered, informed and active citizens who will promote a just and equitable society. We believe that the best way to learn leadership and to learn democracy is to experience both.

The most important cornerstone of our work is our belief that young people have knowledge and deserve to fully participate in our democracy. Young people know what's happening in their neighborhoods. They understand the strengths and challenges of their schools. Young people are experts on issues affecting them, their peers, and their communities. Mikva Challenge was founded on the simple premise that youth voice and participation matter, and that our civic and political life will be stronger when youth participate and help shape their own future. To learn more about getting involved with Mikva Challenge, go to www.mikvachallenge.org.

What is Action Civics?

Mikva Challenge believes that the best means of training young people for their roles as citizens and leaders is actually to allow them a real chance to participate in authentic democratic activities—from elections to advocacy, from public debates to creation of new civic media. We believe that this is the best way to begin cultivating a vibrant democratic ethos in young people.

We facilitate this learning for students through an Action Civics process in which:

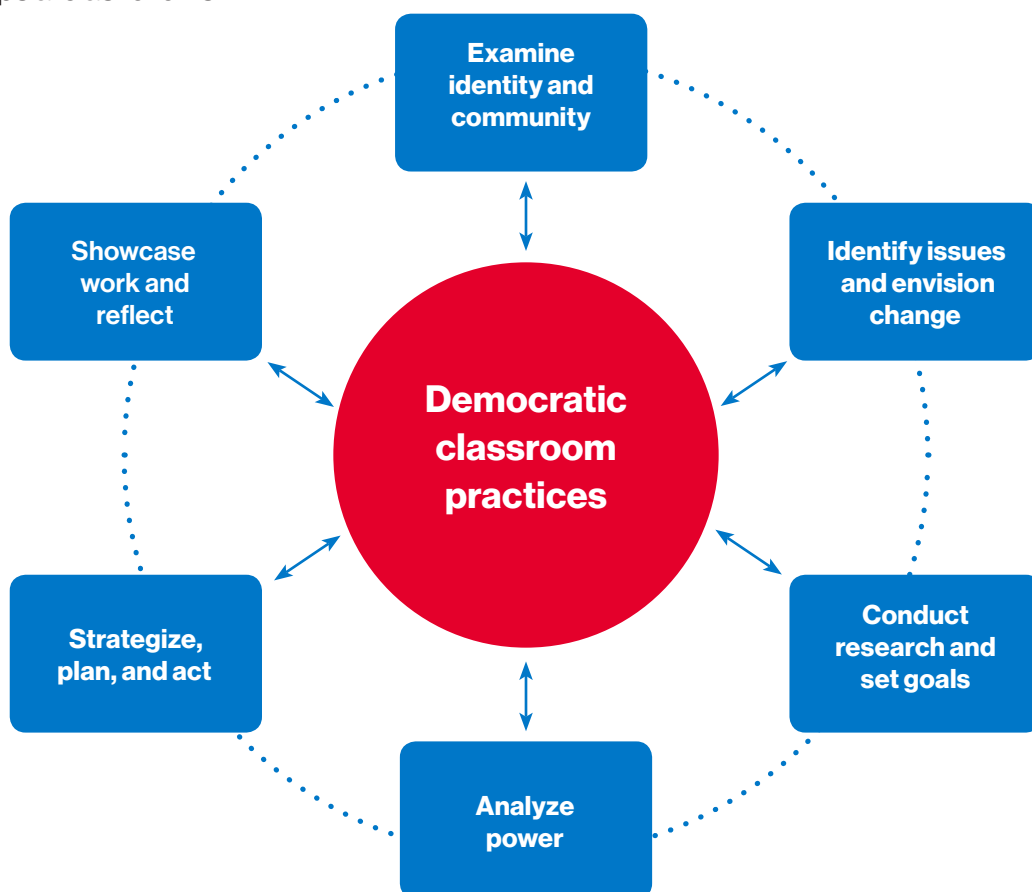
- youth voice is encouraged, valued, and incorporated to the fullest extent possible;
- experiences, knowledge, perspectives, and concerns of youth are incorporated;
- students learn by doing, with a focus on collective action; and
- student reflection and analysis are central to the process

Introduction

What is Project Soapbox?

Project Soapbox is a series of lessons to help student identify an issue they care about and develop and deliver a persuasive speech on why others should care about that issue. Project Soapbox is part of Step 2 of Mikva's *Issues to Action* curriculum. In this step students identify issues that they care about and envision what change would look like.

The six steps are as follows:



How to use this Curriculum

This curriculum is by no means a one-size-fits-all manual. The *Project Soapbox* curriculum was expressly designed by and for educators to pick and choose lessons that best suit their needs and the needs of their students. Teachers use this curriculum in a variety of different contexts including integrating it into various subjects, in advisory, as an elective course, or in an after school club, and across a wide range of grade levels. Given this range, we have designed the lessons to allow for maximum flexibility and adaptability. You may find the need to modify some lessons in order to differentiate for the needs of your students by providing more challenge, or more scaffolding. We offer

Introduction

modifications and adaptations to provide scaffolding and enrichment and extension to provide depth and extra rigor. Pick and choose according to your needs. We know no one curriculum can meet the needs of every classroom so we try to offer many options and opportunities for choice and flexibility.

Each lesson includes Common Core State Standards and C3 Standards. The lessons have been mapped to the 11th-12th grade standards but can be modified for use with younger students. Lessons are written for a 45 minute period, with the understanding that pacing is flexible.

Format

The lessons in the *Project Soapbox* curriculum follow a **Before**, **During**, and **After** format, beginning with a **Bell-Ringer**. Here is a brief explanation of this format:



BELL-RINGER: Helps get students settled and ready for the day's lesson. The purpose of the **Bell-Ringer** is to activate prior knowledge. The **Bell-Ringer** is inquiry based, activating student expertise and interest as a jumping off point for deeper learning. Ideally a **Bell-Ringer** should take no longer than five minutes and can be done independently by students (with minimal teacher direction) so the teacher can attend to logistics in the first few minutes of class like taking attendance and conferring with individual students if necessary.



BEFORE: This part of the lesson usually builds off of the **Bell-Ringer** and acts as a transition to the day's lesson (e.g., students sharing their responses to the **Bell-Ringer** in a discussion or pair-share). The purpose of the **Before** is to set the intention for the lesson.



DURING: Generally consisting of new knowledge or skill acquisition, the **During** can be accomplished through the teacher modeling a skill, direct instruction of a concept, or deep student-directed inquiry.



AFTER: Students apply their new knowledge in some way, either through guided work or independent practice to demonstrate their understanding of the new material. The **After** can act as the daily assessment, so the teacher can gauge whether students understood the day's objectives. If the students do not seem to have understood the objectives, the teacher may want to stop and re-teach what was missed.

Introduction

Non-Partisanship

Mikva Challenge is a non-partisan, not for profit organization. We do not impart political ideologies on our students, but instead work to create a space for them to examine, explore and analyze so they can form their own opinions. We guide them in skills and tools to be effective civic actors, without telling them how to act or what to act upon. We work to provide exposure so there is balance and choice. We encourage you to follow this framework as well.

Addressing Equity

“The great force of history comes from the fact that we carry it within us, are unconsciously controlled by it in many ways, and history is literally present in all that we do.”

— James Baldwin

The mission of Mikva Challenge is to develop youth to be empowered, informed and active citizens who will promote a just and equitable society. We ground all of our Action Civics process on students improving their community in ways that address root causes of problems. In order to understand today's issues and political challenges, students need to understand the history that brought us to our current world. This version of the curriculum provides some of that context and perspective so students can place their civic action work within a continuum. This curriculum embraces student exploration of topics of social identity and it how it shapes civic identity, privilege and oppression so that students can form their own opinions and work to effectively solve root causes to societal problems. The *Issues to Action* process includes attention to developing empathy and engaging in civic discourse to encourage a diversity of opinions with the understanding that sustainable change requires engaging people of all viewpoints and experiences.

Gender Pronouns

This iteration of *Project Soapbox* has paid particular attention to issues of equity and inclusion. To this end, we utilize the non-gender pronoun of “they” throughout. For more on gender neutral pronouns go to <https://www.glsen.org/article/pronouns-resource-educators>.

Introduction

Acknowledgments

We're excited to offer this resource to teachers across the country because of the generous support that begins in Illinois. We would like to thank the McCormick Foundation, for their tireless and visionary efforts to extend meaningful civic learning to students across Illinois, and for their ongoing support for Action Civics and Mikva Challenge. We would also like to thank the MacArthur Foundation for their generous support which has made this version of the curriculum possible.

Thanks to Jessica Marshall, Heather Van Benthuyssen and the hardworking team at Chicago Public Schools who have partnered with us to make Action Civics a priority in Chicago, Mikva Challenge's hometown.

Mikva Challenge curricula are inspired by and written by teachers. Thanks to our Teacher Advisory Board: Linda Becker, Colby Chapman, Donald Davis, Juanita Douglas, Maria Gaspar, Scott Goldstein, Sasha Guzman, Adam Kubey, Karen Lee, Stormie McNeal, Erik Peterson, Erika Ramirez, Elizabeth Robbins, Roberto Vega, and Shelina Warren for their brilliance, insight and challenge. Thanks to the amazing curriculum writing of Molly Buren, Scott Goldstein, Meredith Lewis, Freda Lin, Sara Martinez, Duane Davis, Mia Salamone, Kayla Cruz, and Leah Schneck.

A great deal of thanks to our allies in Mikva Partner Cities. Our work continues to grow and evolve thanks to your partnership. Special thanks to Trudy Delhey and Ashley Mellville who showed us what Action Civics can look like with elementary aged students.

Thanks to all the teachers and students who have participated in our *Project Soapbox* program throughout the years and told us straight up what works and what doesn't work. We hear you and hope you see your feedback reflected in this version of the curriculum.

Special thanks to our Mikva program team in Chicago, DC and LA — for field testing activities and tweaking them until they work! Thanks to our wonderful, multi-talented and patient designer Erika Harano.

Jill Bass

Chief Education Officer

Editor

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Creating a Democratic Classroom

Lessons

- 1** Building Community
- 2** What Makes a Leader?
- 3** Tools for Civic Dialogue
- 4** Setting Agreements and Norms

Setting the Stage: Creating a Democratic Classroom

STOP!!!! We know you are eager to jump into getting students ready to stand up and speak out on an issue they are passionate about and would likely skip this section as “non-essential,” but let us make a quick case for why these lessons are perhaps the most important in this entire curriculum!

This section provides an on-ramp for you and your students to create a foundation to engage successfully in Action Civics learning. Much of Action Civics practice looks, sounds and feels different than traditional instruction. The expectation for youth leadership and ownership of the process is a shift in teacher-student dynamics. The centrality of youth voice and youth choice is also a shift. And the engagement with the larger community beyond the classroom in authentic democratic experiences is most definitely a new experience for most students (and teachers).

That’s why you need an on-ramp. During this time with each other, the foundation needs to be built on the following question: *“How will we be together?”* You need to create the “container” to hold this kind of learning.

We strongly encourage you make the time to build this foundation and nurture it throughout the year. In fact, without attention to the “how,” we cannot promise you see the outcomes you are looking for in the “what.”

In the high pressure world of schooling these days, time is a precious resource. But, deep learning requires creating the context for learning to happen.

Go slowly to move quickly. Build the structure. Provide the on-ramp.

You won’t be sorry. We promise.

¹ Hess, Diana E. *The Political Classroom: Evidence and Ethics in Democratic Education*. New York: Routledge, 2015. Print.

LESSON 1: Building Community

Overview:

Students will start building community in the classroom by practicing communication and collaboration as they get to know each other. We have provided a number of activities here but feel free to use others that you like as well as accomplish the same objectives. Plan to continue to integrate community building into your instruction throughout the year.

Objectives:

- Get to know classmates
- Work collaboratively to accomplish a task

- Icebreaker questions
- Copies of *Email Assignment* handout
- Index cards

and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.

Materials:

- M&M's or other small candy
- Plastic bags
- (Uncooked) spaghetti
- Tape
- String
- Marshmallows

Assessment:

- Email assignment response

Common Core State Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.B

Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions

C3 Standards:

D3.1.9-12.

Apply civic virtues and democratic principles when working with others.

PRIOR TO CLASS

Prepare bags that each contain: 20 sticks of spaghetti, one yard of tape, one yard of string, and one marshmallow. There should be one bag prepared for every 3-4 students.



BELL-RINGER: Icebreaker question (10 minutes)

Choose an icebreaker question from the list provided and go around the room having students share their responses.

It is essential to set the expectation right at the beginning that EVERYONE participates in this class. Starting with easy, fun and inclusive icebreaker questions sets that expectation and builds that practice. If students don't want to participate, find non-confrontational ways to get them to warm up and open up (e.g., allow one "pass," offer a different question).

LESSON 1: Building Community



BEFORE: Greeting circle (15 minutes)

Distribute an index card to each student and have students write down two questions on their card that would help them get to know their classmates in a deeper and more meaningful way (e.g., number of siblings, favorite color, favorite food, birthplace). Have them put their names on the cards. Instruct them that these should be questions they would feel comfortable asking their grandmother.

Collect and re-distribute cards so that each student gets a new question card. Explain that knowing how to introduce oneself is an important skill. In this activity, students will be paired with several classmates and will have to shake hands and participate in an introductory conversation. Model shaking hands with a student to demonstrate the importance of a firm (but not too firm) grip and eye contact.

Go around the room and have students count off by twos. Ask students in Group 1 to stand up and form a circle facing out. Now have students in Group 2 stand up and form a circle outside of Group 1's circle so that everyone in Group 2 (the outer circle) is paired with and facing someone from Group 1 (the inner circle).

In their pairs, have students shake hands, introduce themselves, ask their question cards, and share responses for one minute. Have them swap cards, instruct Group 2 to move two people to the left, and repeat. Have students move to new partners until at least three exchanges have happened.

Lead a reflection using the following prompts:

- How did that feel?
- Did anyone learn anything interesting about someone else?
- Does anyone have any advice on how to introduce oneself?



DURING: Tallest tower (15 minutes)

Divide students into teams of 3-4. Distribute the bags of supplies prepared prior to class.

Explain that teams have 10 minutes to build the tallest free-standing structure out of 20 sticks of spaghetti, one yard of tape, one yard of string, and one marshmallow. Explain that the marshmallow needs to be on top.

LESSON 1: Building Community

When time is up, have students step away from their towers, and see which group's tower is the tallest one standing!

You can also do this activity with other materials, such as: paper and tape, cups, balloons and tape, decks of cards, straws and paper clips, etc.

Debrief:

- How difficult did you find this activity?
- How did you work together to build the tower?
- What helped you work together? What hurt?
- In real life, we often face metaphoric falling towers. Did anyone ever have an experience in which they had to use good teamwork and leadership in order to overcome a frustrating situation?



AFTER: M&M game (10 minutes)

For the purpose of this activity, it is important to give the directions as they are described here:

- Tell students to find a partner. Tell students it is very important they listen carefully to directions.
- Tell students that partners should sit across from each other and get into “arm wrestling position.”
- Place a small pile of M&Ms on a napkin next to each pair of students.
- Explain that students are not to eat any of the M&Ms yet.

Explain to students that they will be given 30 seconds to complete this task. Explain that every time the back of their partner's hand touches the table, the student gets to take an M&M from the pile for themselves. Every time the back of their hand touches the table, the partner gets to take an M&M. The goal is to get the largest amount of M&Ms within 30 seconds.

Call “go” and time 30 seconds, watching to make sure students are not eating M&Ms. Call “time” at 30 seconds. Ask students to tally how many M&Ms they got.

LESSON 1: Building Community

Lead a debrief discussion. The goal was to get as many M&Ms as possible. Most students will assume that they need to arm wrestle to get the M&Ms, when in fact, if they cooperated with their partner and just alternated putting their arms back and forth, they would have earned the most M&Ms possible.

Key points to stress include:

- the importance of listening closely to directions (key word was “partner”);
- that we get more from cooperation rather than competition; and
- sometimes we need to think outside the box.

You may choose to reinforce this message by rewarding the students who successfully completed the task and allowing them to keep their M&Ms and collecting the M&Ms from the rest of the class.



HOMEWORK: Get to know me email

Distribute the *Email Assignment* handout and explain to students that they will each be writing you a personal but professional email to help you as the teacher get to know them better.

This is just the start! Action Civics requires students to take risks, ask questions, and practice new skills. Taking the time to build a safe and supportive atmosphere at the beginning of the course will create a foundation for student success, but it's necessary to regularly engage your class in community-building activities to establish a spirit of respect, familiarity, empathy, and collaboration that builds throughout the year. Remember to leave ample time to debrief following these activities.

Icebreaker Questions

The purpose of the questions is to build community and have fun!

1. If you could have breakfast with any famous person, who would you pick and what would you eat?
2. What song will get you up and dancing?
3. If your house was burning down and all of the living things were out, and you had time to grab one thing, what would you grab?
4. What person has influenced your life the most?
5. If you could be a famous singer, an amazing athlete, or the president, what would you be?
6. What would be the first thing you would do if you won the lottery?
7. If you could physically transport yourself anywhere in the world right now, where would you go?
8. What bad habit do you have that you would like to change?
9. If you could have one superpower, what would you pick?
10. What is your favorite thing about summer?
11. What is your favorite thing about winter?
12. If you could eat only one food for the rest of your life, what would you pick?
13. If you could know the truth about a really juicy secret, but couldn't tell anyone what you found out, would you want to know?
14. Would you want to know your future if you could?
15. If you could go back in time, what time period would you want to go to?
16. What is the best thing about your hometown?
17. If you were going to be stuck on a desert island with one other person, who would you want to be stuck with?
18. When you were 6, what did you want to be when you grew up?
19. What food do other people think is disgusting but you like?
20. If you had to choose between being a vampire or a pirate, which would you be and why?

Email Assignment

TO: Teacher

SUBJECT: Email assignment

Your assignment is to write a formal e-mail message introducing yourself to me as a student.

Answer at least two of the numbered prompts below.

1. Tell me what I should know about you as a learner. How do you learn best? What do you hate to do academically and why? What is a struggle for you? What do you love to do academically and why?
2. Describe any background or interest you may have with the subject of this course.
3. Are there things that you think might interfere with your ability to succeed in this class? Please explain.
4. What things do you think I need to know about you in order for us to work together this year?
5. What is the best way to get in touch with you?

In addition to reading the important information you are going to share in this email, I will be looking at your correspondence. Is the email appropriate for a teacher? Is it polite? Did you proofread it to check for errors? You will be sending emails to important people in this class and this is an opportunity for you to demonstrate how to write a professional email.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Your Teacher

LESSON 2: What Makes a Leader?

Overview:

In this lesson students will reflect on qualities of a leader and what their own strengths are. The class will take an inventory of all the skills represented in the class.

Objectives:

- Define the qualities of good leaders
- Self-assess their own leadership strengths
- Identify talents, and skills they possess
- Identify the collective skills and talents within the class

Materials:

- Chart paper
- Sticky notes
- *Leadership Self-Assessment* handout

Assessment:

- *Leadership Self-Assessment* handout

Common Core State Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2.B

Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.

C3 Standards:

D2.CIV.10.9-12.

Analyze the impact and the appropriate roles of personal interests and perspectives on the application of civic virtues, democratic principles, constitutional rights, and human rights.

PRIOR TO CLASS

Prepare four pieces of chart paper in different parts of the room, each with one of the four questions below written on it.

- What kinds of things do leaders do? (actions)
- What do leaders believe in? (values and beliefs)
- What skills do leaders have? (skills and qualities)
- Who are some leaders? (specific names)

LESSON 2: What Makes a Leader?



BELL-RINGER: Defining leadership (5 minutes)

Divide your students into four groups. Assign each group a question from one of the chart papers. Each group should write down answers to the questions on sticky notes and post them onto the chart paper.



BEFORE: Defining leadership (15 minutes)

Have groups rotate to the next chart paper. Explain to students that they should circle or put a check next to the 2–3 items they think are most important and add any additional items to the list on sticky notes. Rotate so that all groups return to their original document. Once each group is back to their original question, have them group the sticky notes into categories and then have them report out. You may want to record their responses.



DURING: Leadership self-assessment (10 minutes)

Explain to students that there are many ways to be a leader and that each person has a unique set of skills and gifts that define their type of leadership capacity. Distribute the Leadership Self-Assessment and have students complete it independently.



AFTER: Inventorying our class assets (15 minutes)

Have students pair up and, with their partners, share one leadership quality they think they already possess and one they would like to improve. Then, as a class, have each student share 1-2 skills and/or knowledge they feel they possess. Record their responses.

Explain to students that you will keep this inventory for later, so that when it comes time to take action, the class can build on its strengths. Explain that the class will also revisit the Leadership Self-Assessment throughout the year to track growth around different skills.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Leadership Self-Assessment

Read each of the skill areas below and circle the specific skills that you feel you are strong in. Put a check next to any skills you would like to work on improving.

COLLABORATION

- Consistently work with and get along with any member of group
- Work to maintain a positive atmosphere
- Consistently and actively work toward group goals without prompting
- Fulfill individual role within the group while supporting others in fulfilling their roles
- Seek the input of others when creating ideas and actions
- Work to make sure all members of the group are participating and focused

COMMUNICATION

- Actively listen
- Ask for the ideas of others
- Show respect to all audiences, regardless of their position or whether or not someone agrees with your point of view
- Include and expand upon the ideas of others
- Use appropriate language based on audience
- Thoughtfully reflect in writing about experiences
- Construct original, logical arguments with evidence, support, and examples in speech and in writing
- Speak out (verbally or written) on unpopular ideas, with evidence to support

CRITICAL THINKING

- Analyze causes of an issue and describes cause/effect relationships
- Connect own experiences to issue
- Identify assets and deficits
- Distinguish facts from opinions
- Use evidence to back up opinions
- Modify and adjust the ideas when presented with new information
- Reflect critically on self and behaviors
- Reference previous knowledge

COMMITMENT

- Reliable and responsible
- Arrive on time
- Passionate about at least one issue
- Feel a deep responsibility to improve community/society
- Believe in own capacity to make a difference
- Follow up and follow through on tasks

SPECIFIC SKILLS I HAVE:

e.g., I'm good at social media, I'm a good artist, I'm organized...

SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE I HAVE:

e.g., I'm good at math, I know a lot about my neighborhood, I know a lot about music...

LESSON 3: Building Tools for Civic Discourse: Growth Zones (Day 1 of 3)

Overview:

This series of lessons are designed to help students develop the skills and understanding to engage in civic dialogue across differences. Students will explore the idea of comfort zones and growth zones. They will also examine the importance of multiple perspectives and practice empathy through telling each other's stories. You can do these lessons separate from one another but they work well together.

Objectives:

- Define comfort zone, growth zone and panic zone and reflect on their own learning
- Establish a growth goal
- Describe the role perspective plays in telling a story
- Define empathy

Materials:

- **Optional:** masking tape (if creating lines on the floor)

Assessment:

- Creating a growth goal

Common Core State Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

C3 Standards:

D2.CIV.9.6-8.

Compare deliberative processes used by a wide variety of groups in various settings.

PRIOR TO CLASS

Optional: Create three lines on the floor with masking tape, about four feet apart from each other.



BELL-RINGER: Introducing comfort, growth and panic zones (2 minutes)

Post the terms "comfort zone," "growth zone" and "panic zone" on the board. Ask students to respond in writing to what they think each of those terms might mean in regards to one's learning.



BEFORE: Defining comfort, growth and panic zones (20 minutes)

Share student responses to the **Bell-Ringer** and provide these additional definitions.

- **Comfort zone** is when we feel confident about our ability to face a situation.
- **Growth zone** is an area in which we feel challenged.
- **Panic zone** is when we feel so overwhelmed that we are unable to succeed and shut down.

LESSON 3: Building Tools for Civic Discourse: Growth Zones (Day 1 of 3)

Lead a discussion using the following prompts:

- What happens if a person only stays in their comfort zone?
- What might help someone move into their growth zone?
- How can a person address the feeling of being overwhelmed if they find themselves in a panic zone so they don't shut down?

Explain that in order to learn and grow, we want to challenge ourselves to move outside our comfort zone into our growth zone.

You can implement this next activity a few ways, depending on the physical space available and the comfort level of your students. If you think students will be hesitant to share their responses to the activity below publicly, you can have them respond to the statements privately on paper instead.

Have students stand behind the three lines you made with masking tape on the floor. Explain that the first line is their comfort zone, the second line is their growth zone and the third line is their panic zone. Be sure to leave enough space between the lines so groups of students can stand on them.

Once everyone is standing behind the comfort zone line, explain that you will read a series of statements and they should go stand in the zone that best represents how they feel about that statement. Read from the list of prompts below or create your own prompts.

1. Speaking in front of a large group
2. Singing in a choir
3. Singing solo in front of a large group
4. Bungee jumping
5. Telling a family member that you love them
6. Confronting a friend about something they did or said
7. Taking a test
8. Introducing yourself to someone new

LESSON 3: Building Tools for Civic Discourse: Growth Zones (Day 1 of 3)

9. Answering a question in class
10. Interviewing for a job
11. Going places by yourself



DURING: We are not all the same (10 minutes)

Have students write three situations (they can be from the prompts used during the **Before** activity or brand new ones) — one for each zone for themselves.

Have students partner up and share with one another their examples in the three different zones. Explain that they should tell their partner:

- The situation and which zone it falls in for them.
- What about that activity makes them feel comfortable, challenged but willing to try it, or overwhelmed.



AFTER: Debrief (15 minutes)

Lead a discussion using the following prompts:

- Do we all have the same comfort, growth and panic zones?
- How can we challenge ourselves, as individuals, to grow?
- How can we be patient and understanding of how something that might be comfortable for us might cause panic in another person?
- How can we, as a community, support each other to move into our growth zones?



HOMEWORK

Have students set a growth goal for themselves: a skill or quality that they'd like to grow. You may also offer students the opportunity to share any things that cause them to panic as pertains to class.

LESSON 3: Building Tools for Civic Discourse: Understanding Perspective (Day 2 of 3)

Objectives:

- Examine how different viewpoints can tell different versions of a situation
- Use their own expertise to tell a more complete story

Materials:

- Prince William meme (link in lesson)
- “The Danger of a Single Story” Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie TED Talk (link in lesson)
- “The Danger of a Single Story” Notes handout
- *A Tale of Two Cities* (link in lesson)
- *More to the Story* handout

Assessment:

- “The Danger of a Single Story” Notes handout
- *More to the Story* handout

Common Core State Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

C3 Standards:

D2.CIV.9.6-8.

Compare deliberative processes used by a wide variety of groups in various settings.

PRIOR TO CLASS

Review the options provided for the **Bell-Ringer**. If choosing Option B, make necessary arrangements.

Cue up the following links for the **Before**:

<https://en.dopl3r.com/memes/dank/prince-william-its-all-about-point-of-view/287373>

https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en



BELL-RINGER: Perspectives matter (5 minutes)

Choose one of the following three options as the **Bell-Ringer**:

LESSON 3: Building Tools for Civic Discourse: Understanding Perspective (Day 2 of 3)

Option A:

Project the following scenario on the board:

A fight between two girls broke out in the hallway last period. The principal asked those who witnessed the fight to report what happened. The witnesses included:

- the best friend of one of the students who fought
- the sister of the other student
- a teacher who knows both students
- a teacher who does not know either student
- a student who was just walking by halfway through the fight
- a student who was in the hallway when the fight broke out

How might the witnesses' reports differ? Why?

Option B:

Before class, arrange with a student or colleague for them to create a ruckus about 10 seconds after the bell rings and then walk out of the room. (They can be complaining vocally about something, possibly spill supplies on the floor, mumble under their breath and then leave the classroom. But it should be loud enough to get their classmate's attention.) As soon as the student or colleague leaves, direct students to immediately and without talking write down in as much detail as possible what just happened.



BEFORE: Debrief Bell-Ringer (10 minutes)

Discuss responses from the **Bell-Ringer** and ask why there isn't simply one version of the "facts." Ask how someone's perspective, both literally (where they are sitting) and figuratively (who they are, their preconceived opinions, etc.) shape their understanding of a situation.

Project the meme found at the link below and pose the question: *"How does this relate to the discussion we just had?"*

<https://en.dopl3r.com/memes/dank/prince-william-its-all-about-point-of-view/287373>

LESSON 3: Building Tools for Civic Discourse: Understanding Perspective (Day 2 of 3)



DURING: The danger of a single story (20 minutes)

Distribute the *Danger of a Single Story* handout and instruct students to answer the questions as they watch the TED Talk. Show Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's TED Talk "The Danger of a Single Story" at:

https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en

You may choose to watch the talk in its entirety (18 minutes) or an abbreviated version. Accompanying times are provided on the handout.

Following the video, allow students to ask any clarifying questions they might have.



AFTER: A tale of two cities (7 minutes)

Project the screenshot of a Google search of the North Lawndale neighborhood in Chicago using the following link: <https://ibb.co/YhbYvRC>

Ask students to share their initial reactions about what they think this neighborhood is like based on the narrative presented here. Explain to students that you understand that these reactions may not be the full story.

Explain that youth in North Lawndale created a video to better portray the reality of the neighborhood from their perspective. Show the video at: <https://vimeo.com/146962272>

Ask students: "What other stories are one sided or lack depth and complexity of perspective?" Explain that their homework will be to draw on their experience and expertise to provide perspective on a story.



HOMEWORK

Have students complete the *More to the Story* handout.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

“The Danger of a Single Story” Notes

Complete this handout as you watch “The Danger of a Single Story,” a TED Talk by author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

LEARNING ABOUT A SINGLE STORY IN HER YOUTH [0:00 - 4:07]

What did Adichie learn about the world from the books she read as a child? How does this relate to the idea of creating a single story?

As a young girl growing up with her family in Nigeria, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie learned about the danger of a single story. How did this happen?

HOW ADICHIE HAS BEEN AFFECTED BY A SINGLE STORY [4:08 - 8:19]

How have others created a single story about Africa and what did Adichie learn from these experiences?

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

“The Danger of a Single Story” Notes

HOW A SINGLE STORY IS CREATED AND THE POWER BEHIND IT [8:33 - 10:58]

How did Adichie create her own version of a single story?

How do single stories get created?

How is power related to the single story? What examples does Adichie give to illustrate this?

CONSEQUENCES OF A SINGLE STORY [13:18 - 14:15]

Adichie discusses how a single story creates problematic stereotypes. Why does she think this is so harmful?

THE IMPACT OF MANY STORIES [15:34 - 18:49]

Why do many stories matter? How does Adichie relate this to her college roommate? How can stories be used positively and for the common good?

“The Danger of a Single Story”

Answer Key

Before completing this handout, watch “The Danger of a Single Story,” a TED Talk by author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

LEARNING ABOUT A SINGLE STORY IN HER YOUTH [0:00 - 4:07]

What did her childhood reading background teach her? How does this relate to the idea of creating a single story?

It demonstrates how impressionable and vulnerable people are in the face of a story, particularly as children. She grew up reading books by British authors and her writing was based on the British cultural values portrayed in these books. Once she began reading books by African authors, it taught her that people like her could be characters in literature and that it didn't have to be only foreigners like the British. The discovery of African writing saved her from having a single story of what books are.

As a young girl growing up with her family in Nigeria, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie learned about the danger of a single story. How did this happen?

The only thing her mother told Adichie about their houseboy was that he came from a very poor family, which made her mainly feel pity for him. When she visited his home and saw the beautiful basket that the houseboy's brother made, her view of him changed. She didn't know they could make things and only thought of them as poor.

HOW ADICHIE HAS BEEN AFFECTED BY A SINGLE STORY [4:08 - 8:19]

How have others created a single story of Africa and what did Adichie learn from these experiences?

Her college roommate told Adichie that she was shocked that she spoke English so well and knew how to use a stove. She assumed that Adichie listened to “tribal” music, didn't know about rock and pop music, and didn't know how to use a stove. To Adichie, her roommate created a single story of Africa as a place of catastrophe and a single country with people who could never be similar or equal to non-Africans like her roommate and that all there was room for was pity. She made these assumptions about Adichie before they even met. Adichie later realized that her roommate probably had this single story because of the way she was educated about Africa.

John Locke and Rudyard Kipling wrote about Africans as “half devils” and “beasts who have no houses” and “people without heads,” which represents a long tradition of telling a single story about Africa as a place of darkness and backwardness.

Her professor criticized her book for not being authentically African enough and wanted her to fit in his perceived mold of what a writer of African descent should be writing about — impoverished and starving. He thought that the Africans in her book were too educated and well-off to match the common view of Africans.

“The Danger of a Single Story”

Answer Key

HOW A SINGLE STORY IS CREATED AND THE POWER BEHIND IT [8:33 - 10:58]

How did Adichie create her own version of a single story?

While in Mexico she caught herself making assumptions about Mexicans as illegal immigrants who didn't do their fair share in paying for health care and taxes and realized she developed these ideas from the barrage of media coverage depicting Mexicans in this way.

How do single stories get created?

When a person shows another as one thing over and over again until this one thing is the only thing that defines the other.

How is power related to the single story? What examples does she give to illustrate this?

When someone has power to tell another person's story they can create a single story of this person and leave out the other perspectives and aspects. Power determines how stories are told, who tells them, when they are told, and how often. Examples: 1. Beginning the history of the US with how Native Americans constantly attacked colonists rather than beginning the story with the initial arrival of the British to America; 2. Teaching about Africa by beginning with the failure of the African states rather than starting with earlier history of colonialism and its effects on Africa.

CONSEQUENCES OF A SINGLE STORY [13:18 - 14:15]

Adichie discusses how a single story creates problematic stereotypes. Why does she think this is so harmful?

She believes that the harm isn't from it necessarily being untrue, but from telling an incomplete story that doesn't give the full picture of a people or place.

What other consequences are there of a single story?

It robs people of dignity and doesn't allow for people to find common ground with one another. One doesn't get to see the complexity of a person's life formed by his/her many diverse experiences and perspectives.

THE IMPACT OF MANY STORIES [15:34 - 18:49]

Why do many stories matter? How does Adichie relate this to her college roommate? How can stories be used positively and for the common good?

If her roommate knew about the many diverse stories of her life experiences and Nigerian background, she would not have created a single story of Adichie. Telling many stories can be used to humanize and empower and repair the broken dignity of a people.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Homework: More to the Story

What is a story that people tell about a person, place or thing in your life to which you would like to provide additional perspective? Something that you don't think is fully understood? Use your experience and your expertise to write a letter to the general public educating them on this person, place or thing so that you can deepen their understanding.

EXAMPLE:

Dear Public,

You may think you understand what it means to live with a chronic illness but let me tell you what you might not know...

YOUR STORY BELOW:

Dear Public,

LESSON 3: Building Tools for Civic Discourse: Developing Empathy (Day 3 of 3)

Objectives:

- Create and share a personal story
- Develop empathy and understanding for others
- Engage in active listening

Materials:

- *How to be an Active Listener* handout
- *Story Share Reflection* handout

Assessment:

- *Story Share Reflection* handout

Common Core State Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

C3 Standards:

D2.CIV.9.6-8.

Compare deliberative processes used by a wide variety of groups in various settings.



BELL-RINGER: Walking a mile in someone else's shoes (5 minutes)

Post the following quote and ask students to write down what they think it means:

"Don't judge a person until you have walked a mile in their shoes."

— Mary T. Latham



BEFORE: Introducing empathy (10 minutes)

Have students share their responses from the **Bell-Ringer**.

Ask students if they have ever heard of the word empathy before and what they think it means. Share the definition:

Empathy is the experience of understanding another person's thoughts, feelings, and condition from their point of view, rather than from one's own.

Explain to students that they are going to practice building empathy through story telling. Explain that while no one can tell their story but themselves, in this story exchange they are allowing someone to try and understand an experience through their perspective by telling their story. Remind students that this is a tangible opportunity to push out of our comfort zones and toward our growth zones.

LESSON 3: Building Tools for Civic Discourse: Developing Empathy (Day 3 of 3)



DURING: The story exchange (30 minutes)

Allow students 5-7 minutes to compose their stories. You can give them sentence starters or have them free write. Some possible story themes are below:

- **People:** Who is a person that is really important in your life? Describe that person and what they mean to you.
- **Events:** Describe an event in your life that had a big impact on who you are.
- **Values:** Describe a value that is central to your life. How did you come to hold it? Why is it important to you?

Explain to students that they will be paired with a partner and will tell their partner their story. The students who are the “Listeners” should not speak but can ask clarifying questions at the end. The Listeners can take notes as they listen. Each partner should take approximately two minutes to tell their own story.

Explain to students that while telling their own story is important, in order to practice empathy, listening is equally important. Distribute the *How to Be an Active Listener* handout and read through it together.

Create partners. We encourage using a method that creates random pairs (instead of friends choosing each other). After all students have told their stories, have a set of partners group up with another set of partners to create a group of four. Have each student tell their partner’s story to the other pair. Explain to students that they should speak in the first person (“I” statements) as if their partner’s story was their own.

My name is _____ and my story is about _____.



AFTER/HOMEWORK: Debrief

Distribute the *Story Share Reflection* handout and allow time for silent individual written reflection. Allow students time to finish for homework if necessary.

ENRICHMENT AND EXTENSION

For more on story sharing check out Story Corps (www.storycorps.org) and Narrative 4 (www.narrative4.com).

How to be an Active Listener

There are two parts to this activity: telling your story and listening to your partner's story. Remember, you will need to retell their story in the first person (as if it were your story) so you need to be able to actively listen.

Here are some ways to help you actively listen:



REMOVE DISTRACTIONS

Make sure that your full attention is on the person sharing their story with you. Don't try and check your phone or think about what you want to say next. To be a good listener you have to give the person speaking your full and undivided attention.



IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU

Becoming a better listener involves understanding that this person wants to be heard. Do not interrupt them. Hold on to any comments or questions until the end. Listen to learn, not to respond.



WATCH YOUR BODY LANGUAGE

Body language can speak volumes. Are you looking directly at the speaker? Are you fidgeting? You can nod in agreement as you listen.



ASK CLARIFYING QUESTIONS

Asking questions in response to what someone has been telling you can help you get more information and clarify anything that was unclear. It also shows you were really paying attention.

Examples of clarifying questions:

Can you tell me more about _____?

How did you feel when _____ happened?

I didn't quite understand _____. Can you explain it again?

Story Share Reflection

Write a reflection to the story share experience in paragraph form on a separate sheet of paper using a combination of the following prompts as a guide.

1. Why did you choose to tell this specific story?
2. What did you learn about your own views from having to tell your story?
3. Do you feel like your partner portrayed your story accurately?
4. How did it feel to have someone tell your story in the first person?
5. How did it feel to tell someone else's story as if it were your own? How did it feel to be responsible for someone else's story?
6. What did you learn from your partner?
7. What was the most challenging part of this process?
8. How might understanding each other's perspectives help bridge the political divide in our country today?

LESSON 4: Setting Agreements and Norms

Overview:

This lesson is designed to help teachers facilitate the creations of agreements/norms that will enable students to create a productive environment in which to learn. Choose which term you want to use with your students — agreements or norms. Both refer to an agreement among members of a classroom about how they will treat one another — some people prefer norms, which refer to standards for group behavior, and others prefer agreements, which refer to ways that we agree to be together.

Objectives:

- Identify what makes a positive learning environment
- Collaboratively create agreements/norms for class
- Practice using agreements/norms in a controversial conversation

Materials:

- Large paper to document the final list of discussion agreements/norms
- Markers
- *Exit Ticket* handout
- **Optional:** News article(s) on a controversial topic (examples in **Prior to Class**)

Assessment:

- Consensus on class agreements and norms
- Exit ticket

Common Core State Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.B

Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.

C3 Standards:

D4.1.9-12.

Construct arguments using precise and knowledgeable claims, with evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging counterclaims and evidentiary weaknesses.

PRIOR TO CLASS

Choose a controversial article and/or topic for discussion in your class. This requires that you know your audience and pick a topic that will generate interest and discussion, but not be SO controversial that the class will struggle to maintain composure. Students need time to practice holding each other accountable with the norms and building trust with one another before addressing more controversial topics.

LESSON 4: Setting Agreements and Norms

Possible topics include: gun control; the death penalty; sexism in schools (policies, curriculum, etc.); censoring violent music/video games; the impact of social media on society.

Sample articles include:

- Sanctuary Cities and Donald Trump: <http://fxn.ws/2vCM9oJ>
- Police & Black Lives Matter Movement: <http://bit.ly/2jklGsp>
- Sexism and School Policies: <http://bit.ly/2b2T3wA>
- Huckleberry Finn and the N-word: <http://cbsn.ws/1iYZJKN>

We recommend assigning the article the night before for homework.



BELL-RINGER: What makes a good learning environment? (5 minutes)

Ask students to describe a time when they learned a lot. Ask them to describe what about that experience enabled them to learn a lot (e.g., “I was interested in the topic,” “my ideas were respected”). Then ask them to describe an experience that was a bad learning environment and what made it bad (e.g., “nobody listened to each other”).



BEFORE: Bell-Ringer share (5 minutes)

Have students share their **Bell-Ringer** with a partner and identify any common ideas from their experiences.



DURING: Establishing agreements/norms (15 minutes)

Explain to students that they are going to participate in a lot of conversations in this class where everyone might not agree with one another. Explain that in order to be productive, we need to identify how we want this class to be. Explain that today we will create agreements/norms of how we will act with one another so that this classroom can be a productive, safe, and courageous learning environment.

Brainstorm what agreements/norms would we want in place for this classroom. Use the qualities of positive and negative learning environments as described in the **Bell-Ringer** and turn them into agreements/norms, using affirmative language when possible (e.g., “Use respectful language” instead

LESSON 4: Setting Agreements and Norms

of “Don’t swear”).

Tell students that ideally the class should have five to six discussion agreements/norms that EVERYONE agrees to uphold.

Ask if there are any agreements/norms that repeat or should be combined with another because of its similarity to something else on the board.

Ask students to nominate specific agreement/norms for the class list. Have the class vote on each agreement/norm. Ideally students will be unanimous on some of the agreements/norms, but allow students to advocate for particular agreements/norms if necessary.

Ask students if there is anything missing from the list.

Once you have a complete list, ask students if there is anyone that will not commit to upholding these agreements/norms. If you have agreement, write the list of agreements/norms on chart paper to be hung in the classroom. If anyone cannot commit, discuss why and problem solve.

Agreements/norms to consider include:

- Step Up, Step Back (share your ideas but don’t dominate the discussion — let others talk)
- Use “I statements” (speak for yourself , don’t generalize)
- Assume best intentions (allow others the space to make mistakes)
- Use evidence to support your opinions
- Three before me (allow three other people to talk before you talk again)
- Converse, don’t convince
- Be present
- Avoid assumptions (ask for clarification if necessary)

Once the agreements/norms are agreed upon, ask students how they wish to uphold the agreements/norms. What should they do to hold each other accountable? You may want to establish a sound or signal or a “magic word” that is agreed upon ahead of time if students feel uncomfortable with direct confrontation (e.g., “uh-oh” or “hmmmmm” or “banana split”). Practice upholding agreements/

LESSON 4: Setting Agreements and Norms

norms. For example, you can break an agreement/norm and have students hold you accountable by saying “we agreed that we were going to be present and you are not paying attention.”



AFTER: Practicing agreements/norms (20 minutes)

Practice the agreements/norms by using them. Explain to students that now they will have an opportunity to discuss the article/topic. If time allows, have students read the controversial article you have selected. Otherwise offer a statement for the students. Either way, explain that students will be holding each other accountable using the agreements/norms. Resist the temptation to call out violations of an agreement/norm. If students don't do it, use the signal.

Hand out the *Exit Ticket* handout for the last five minutes of class and collect as they leave or assign for homework. Spend time in the next few class periods to address and continue to practice the agreements/norms, modeling that they are a living and developing thing that can be amended as needed.



HOMEWORK (Optional)

The *Exit Ticket* can be done for homework if you're short on time.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Exit Ticket

Does having agreements/norms make you feel more comfortable to share your opinion with the class? Please explain your answer (even if you did not participate today).

How did we, as a class, do today in upholding the agreements/norms? Was it hard? What could we improve upon?

Based on the quality of our discussion today, identify any agreements/norms you think we need to add to our list.

Project Soapbox

Lessons

- 5** Introduction to Project Soapbox
- 6** What Makes a Good Speech?
- 7** Structuring a Speech
- 8** Spicing Up a Speech
- 9** Delivering a Great Speech
- 10** Listening to Learn
- 11** Soapbox Day!
- 12** Who Else Should Hear Our Speeches?

LESSON 5: Introduction to Project Soapbox

Overview:

The purpose of this lesson is to identify an issue that students care about and begin to explore that issue more deeply.

Objectives:

- Define “soapbox”
- Identify issues that students care about
- Explore those issues

Materials:

- Soapbox Image (to project)
- *Exploring an Issue* handout
- Computer and projector

Assessment:

- *Exploring an Issue* handout

Common Core State Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2

- Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

C3 Standards:

D2.CIV.7.9-12.

Apply civic virtues and democratic principles when working with others.

D1.4.9-12

Explain how supporting questions contribute to an inquiry and how, through engaging source work, new compelling and supporting questions emerge.



BELL-RINGER: What do you see? (5 minutes)

Project the Soapbox Image on an LCD projector and have students answer the accompanying questions.



BEFORE: Introduction to Soapbox (5-10 minutes)

Have students share responses from the **Bell-Ringer** and explain that the idea of a “soapbox” came about in the 19th century as people would use boxes to stand on to make speeches around issues they wanted to see change. Explain that today if “someone is getting on their soapbox” it means that they are talking about something they are passionate about.

Explain that in this unit, students will be “getting up on their soapboxes” and speaking out on an issue they care about in response to the following prompt: “*What is the most important issue facing your community?*” Remind students to take a broad view of the different communities they belong to, as we discussed in Step 1.

LESSON 5: Introduction to Project Soapbox



DURING: Exploring issues (15 minutes)

Distribute the *Exploring an Issue* handout and have students silently complete it for one of their issues.



AFTER: What would I get on my Soapbox about? (15 minutes)

Go around the room and have each student share an issue for which they would get on their soapbox based on their handout. They can briefly explain why this issue is important to them, or they can simply state the issue.

ENRICHMENT AND EXTENSION:

You may want to have your students explore a range of topics before deciding what to write about. You can distribute a master list of topics, have students (or groups of students) choose a topic (or assign one to them) and have them conduct some preliminary research and then make a short presentation to the class. This allows them time to learn about topics they might not automatically think of.

ADDITIONAL TOOLS

The tools below can be used throughout Project Soapbox:

American Rhetoric: <http://americanrhetoric.com>

This website includes a database of and index to 5000+ full text, audio, and video versions of public speeches, sermons, legal proceedings, lectures, debates, interviews, other recorded media events.

Toastmasters: www.toastmasters.org

This international public speaking organization offers great free resources on how to be a better public speaker.

One of the best ways to improve your students' public speaking ability is to film them (or have them film each other) giving their speeches. Have your students watch themselves and use the Project Soapbox Speech Rubric (page 49) to evaluate their speeches.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Soapbox Image



What do you see in this photo?

What do you think is happening?

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Exploring an Issue

1. What are you most proud of in your school/community/city/society?

2. What would you change in your school/community/city/society, if you could?

You can list multiple things here.

3. Choose one of the issues from Question 2 that you feel strongly about and write it here.

4. Who is impacted by this issue?

5. Why should people care about addressing this issue?

6. What would it look like if this issue were addressed?

LESSON 6: What Makes a Good Speech?

Overview:

The purpose of this lesson is for students to identify qualities of a good speech and begin to practice giving short speeches.

Objectives:

- Practice public speaking
- Determine qualities of good and bad speeches

Materials:

- *Project Soapbox Speech Rubric* handout
- *Evaluating speeches: Identifying the Qualities of a Good Speech* handout
- *Instant Speech Topics* handout
- LCD projector, computer with Internet, and speakers
- Container for slips of paper

Assessment:

- *Evaluating speeches* handout

Common Core State Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.3

Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used

C3 Standards:

D3.2.9-12.

Evaluate the credibility of a source by examining how experts value the source.

PRIOR TO CLASS

Print a copy of the *Instant Speech Topics* handout, cut each topic as slips of paper, and put the slips into a container.



BELL-RINGER: What makes a speech good? (5 minutes)

Have students work with a partner to list the qualities of a good speech. What makes it good? Have students be as descriptive as possible in their lists.



BEFORE: Qualities of a good speech (5 minutes)

Have partners share from their lists and compile a list on the board of the identified qualities of a good speech. Distribute copies of the *Soapbox Rubric* and compare the competencies with the ones

LESSON 6: What Makes a Good Speech?

identified by your students. Are there any on the rubric the students don't understand or disagree with?



DURING: Evaluating speeches (15 minutes)

Distribute the Evaluating Speeches: Identifying the *Qualities of a Good Speech* handout and explain to students that they will use the qualities discussed in class and those on the rubric to help evaluate a few sample speeches. Play a few excerpts of speeches from the Internet. We recommend using examples of good and bad speeches (but not telling students ahead of time). Have students use the *Evaluating Speeches: Identifying the Qualities of a Good Speech* handout to practice ways to give constructive feedback.

Below are a few speeches to critique how the speaker could improve:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ORfbBCYQm-4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YivQYel0vys>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ck5vVU8qQWA>

www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTKuyk5A7wQ

Below is a playlist of exemplary Project Soapbox speeches:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLFBBxTMJlIOP2vxR9gC1EopazQL7r_2gb



AFTER: Instant speech challenge (15 minutes)

Explain that public speaking is a skill that, like any other skill, requires practice. Explain that students will practice this skill every day both to improve but also to get more comfortable with speaking publicly.

Use the *Instant Speech Topic* slips provided in this lesson, create your own, or distribute slips of paper and have students submit their own topics. Place the topic slips in a container and explain that a few students each day will have the opportunity to pick a topic and then speak on it for 30 seconds. The topics should be things that are interesting, funny, silly and easy to talk about off the top of their heads. Model this first by choosing a topic and giving an impromptu speech. Then have a few volunteers go. Tell students that whatever they do, they need to keep talking through the whole 30 seconds.

LESSON 6: What Makes a Good Speech?

Introduce the practice of **Snaps for Support** and **Wild Applause**.

Explain that as an audience member you can communicate support to the speaker through snapping. Explain that students can snap when they agree with something the speaker is saying, or if they see the speaker getting flustered.

Then explain that giving a speech can be nerve wracking and that we want to acknowledge the efforts of EVERY speaker regardless of the quality of the speech simply because they had the courage to speak. Explain that Wild Applause is clapping, cheering, stomping their feet as loudly as they can (be so loud that people in the hall come in to see what's going on).

We recommend you set aside 3-5 minutes of class time each day (either at the beginning or the end) to make the Instant Speech Challenge a part of the daily routine.

MODIFICATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS

Allow students to pick their topics at the end of class for the next day's speech. This allows them the opportunity to gather their thoughts. For students who are not native English speakers or with cognitive delays, this modification will support their success.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Evaluating Speeches: Identifying the Qualities of a Good Speech

SPEAKER:		SPEECH TOPIC:	
T	Tell the speaker something that you thought they did well		
A	Ask a question		
G	Give the speaker a suggestion for how they might improve their speech		

SPEAKER:		SPEECH TOPIC:	
T	Tell the speaker something that you thought they did well		
A	Ask a question		
G	Give the speaker a suggestion for how they might improve their speech		

Instant Speech Topics

CAFETERIA FOOD	SOCIAL MEDIA
BEST CLASS	FRIENDS
WORST CLASS	FAMILY
VIDEO GAMES	MOVIES
SPORTS TEAMS	PETS
TEACHERS	HOMEWORK
RAPPERS	ICE CREAM
PRESSURE	HOT CHIPS
CELEBRITIES	RELATIONSHIPS
FAVORITE SONG	GOSSIP
WEEKEND	HATERS

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Project Soapbox Rubric

	EXCEEDS STANDARD (4)	MEETS STANDARD (3)	NEARS STANDARD (2)	NEEDS REVISION (1)
CONTENT	Explains the issue clearly and coherently, providing abundant evidence to support the significance of the issue	Explains the issue clearly, providing ample evidence to support the significance of the issue	Somewhat explains the issue, providing some evidence to support the significance of the issue	Issue is not explained clearly; little to no evidence provided to support the significance of the issue
	Describes a clear and detailed vision of what community would look like if issue was successfully addressed	Describes a clear vision of what community would look like if issue was successfully addressed	Attempts to describe a clear vision of what community would look like if issue was successfully addressed	Does not provide a description of what community would look like if issue were successfully addressed
	Contains a specific and actionable call to action that is linked to their vision	Contains a specific call to action	Contains a vague call to action	Does not contain a call to action
STRUCTURE AND STYLE	Includes both a compelling opener and closer that captures audience's attention	Includes both an effective opener and closer that captures audience's attention	Includes either an effective opener OR closer that captures audience's attention	Lacks opener or closer
	Incorporates multiple rhetorical devices effectively	Incorporates one rhetorical device effectively	Attempts to incorporate a rhetorical device	Does not incorporate any rhetorical devices
	Speech is exceptionally well organized, the speaker makes it very easy for audience to follow their progression.	Speech is well organized, easy to follow.	Speech is mostly well organized.	Speech loses focus at times, meanders, rambles or jumps around
DELIVERY	Presents speech clearly, using body language (eye contact, gestures, confident stance) to enhance the message	Presents speech clearly; maintains eye contact and has confident stance	Presents speech mostly clearly, partially reads speech	Does not present speech clearly; body language is distracting and/or simply reads the speech
	Masterfully uses tone, speed, pausing and volume as tools	Effectively uses tone, speed, pausing and volume as tools	Uses one of the following: tone, speed, pausing and volume as tools	Does not use speed, tone, volume and pausing as tools
	Student is expressive and demonstrates care and passion for the issue	Student is expressive and demonstrates interest in the issue	Student demonstrates some interest in the issue	Student does not demonstrate interest in the topic

TOTAL:**COMMENTS:**

LESSON 7: Structuring a Speech

Overview:

The purpose of this lesson is for students to structure their speeches around defining a problem and issuing a call to action.

Objectives:

- Write a rough draft of a speech
- Practice speech with peers
- Identify and explain problems and calls to action in speeches

Materials:

- Speech text
- *Examining the Structure of a Speech* handout
- *Project Soapbox Rough Draft Template* handout
- *Persuasive Appeals* handout
- **Optional:** computer with Internet, speakers, and LCD projector

Assessment:

- Rough draft of speech

Common Core State Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.1

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

C3 Standards:

D2.CIV.12.9-12.

Analyze how people use and challenge local, state, national, and international laws to address a variety of public issues.

PRIOR TO CLASS

Prepare by printing an excerpt from one (or more) of the following speeches (you may choose to play the speech and have students read along, or to just have them read the text since they are focusing on the structure of the speech, not the delivery). The speeches in the following playlist provide good examples for students of how to structure their speeches using the “problem–evidence–call to action” structure: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLFBBxTMJlIOM6pJuuXJd9NNv2Rno3B6TJ>

LESSON 7: Structuring a Speech



BELL-RINGER: Examining the structure of a speech (5 minutes)

Either provide students with the text for one of the speeches listed in **Prior to Class** OR play a video of one of the speeches above. Have them read silently (or watch) and complete the *Examining Speech Structure* handout.



BEFORE: Structuring a soapbox speech (10 minutes)

Discuss the **Bell-Ringer**. Explain that the body of their soapbox speech is going to use the same frame as the speech from the **Bell-Ringer**. They must consider their audience and:

1. Define the problem and support with evidence.
2. Describe a vision of what their community would look like if this issue were no longer present.
3. Explain what assets their school/community has that people could use to address this issue (e.g., what gives you hope?)
4. Issue a call to action (e.g., what specific actions do you want your audience to do?)

Explain that the goal of the speech is to persuade the audience to support their issue.

Distribute *Persuasive Appeals* handout and read aloud. Explain to students that as they begin to format and structure their speeches, they need to consider how they will persuade the audience to support their issue.



DURING: Preparing a rough draft (20-30 minutes)

Students should write a rough draft of the body of their speech using the *Project Soapbox Rough Draft Guide*.



AFTER: Reflection (5 minutes)

Divide students into pairs. Have each student read the rough draft of the structure of their speech to their partner while the partner writes down:

- The problem and supporting evidence

LESSON 7: Structuring a Speech

- The vision
- The assets that could be used to address it
- The call to action

Partners then share their notes with the speech giver and check for accuracy and understanding. If a section of the speech seems to be missing or underdeveloped, students should explain this to their partner.



HOMEWORK

Explain to students that they will need to do some research for homework to further flesh out their persuasive arguments. They can use personal experience to explain the problem but they should also find some other supporting evidence. They can also research their call to action. What do they want their audience to do after persuading them that they should care about this issue?

MODIFICATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS

Use Head, Heart, Feet graphic organizer to structure speech (handout provided).

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Examining Speech Structure

1. What problem does the speaker identify and what evidence do they provide?

2. What vision does the speaker provide of a world without this issue?

3. What assets does the speaker identify that could be used to address this issue?

4. What does the speaker want the audience to do?

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Persuasive Appeals

A good speech usually appeals to the audience's intellect (head) or their emotions (heart) through:



LOGICAL APPEAL

Appeal to the audience to use reason and analysis

Example: using statistics and facts

**AND/
OR**



EMOTIONAL APPEAL

Appeal to the audience's deep emotions

Example: using a personal story

Remember your audience: You will be delivering your speech to your classmates and teachers, but you never know who might be listening to your speech. Your principal, your alderman, or a guest might be present at the speech competition.

Write ideas for possible logical appeals you could use.

Write ideas for possible emotional appeals you could use.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Soapbox Draft Template

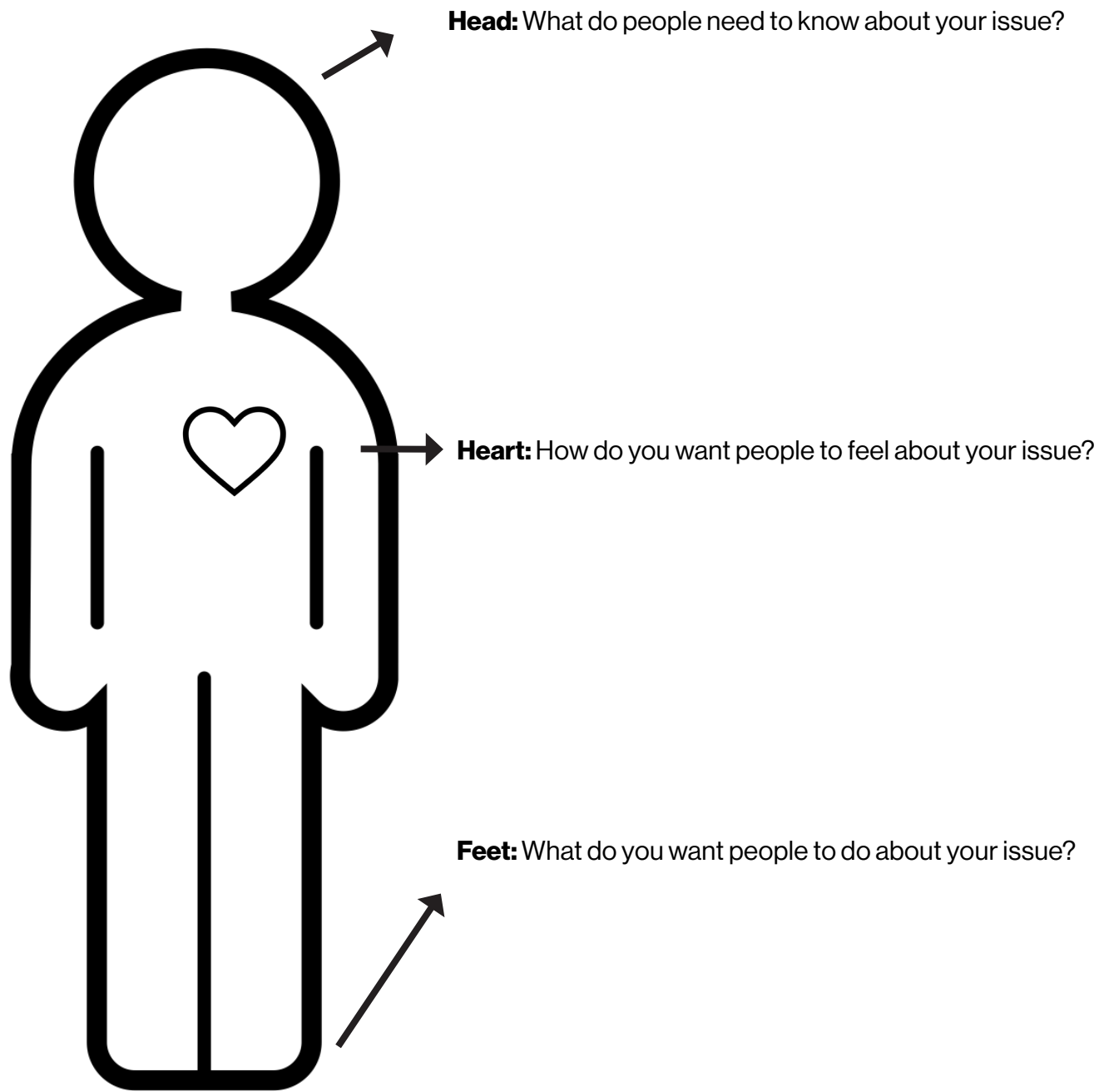
DEFINE THE ISSUE	<p>Today I am talking to you about....</p> <p>The reason this is such a big issue is... <i>(Use logical appeals—statistics, quotes—and/or emotional appeals—personal stories and so on—to support your argument.)</i></p>
DESCRIBE A VISION	<p>Imagine a world where... <i>(Describe what it would look like if we corrected this issue.)</i></p>
EXPLAIN THE ASSETS	<p>Tools we have to use to work on this issue are... <i>(What already exists that could help address this issue?)</i></p>
CALL TO ACTION	<p>I need you to... <i>(What do you want your audience to do as a result of your speech?)</i></p>

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Head, Heart, Feet Graphic Organizer

Today I am talking to you about:



LESSON 8: Spicing Up a Speech

Overview:

This lesson introduces various rhetorical devices for students to employ as they develop their speeches.

Objectives:

- Write an attention grabber and a closer
- Listen to speeches and evaluate rhetorical devices
- Apply one or more rhetorical devices in their own speech writing

Materials:

- LCD projector, computer with Internet, and speakers
- *Attention Grabbers/Closers* handout
- *Rhetorical Devices* handout
- *Great Speeches: Rhetorical Devices and Appeal* handout

Assessment:

- *Attention Grabbers/Closers* handout

Common Core State

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2.D

Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.

C3 Standards:

D4.3.9-12.

Present adaptations of arguments and explanations that feature evocative ideas and perspectives on issues and topics to reach a range of audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary).



BELL-RINGER: Capturing your audience (5 minutes)

Students should respond to the following prompts:

- *What catches your attention at the beginning of a speech?*
- *How should a good speech end? After a good speech, how should the audience feel?*



BEFORE: Attention grabbers/closers (5 minutes)

Have a few students share from their **Bell-Ringer**. Ask the class how it would sound if a speech started with “*In this speech I will explain to you why drugs are a big problem in our community and why you should stop this problem.*” Students should recognize that an opener like that would be very boring.

LESSON 8: Spicing Up a Speech

Then ask them how it would sound if a speech ended with “*And those are the problems with drugs. I’m done.*” Again, they should recognize that a closer like that would not be effective.

Distribute the *Attention Grabbers/Closers* handout and read together. Have students jot down notes for their own speeches.



DURING: Rhetorical devices (10 minutes)

Explain that we will examine the ways to spice up a speech with tricks of the trade: rhetorical devices. Explain that rhetorical devices are strategies used to solicit a particular response from your audience.

Distribute the *Rhetorical Devices* handout and read aloud together. Encourage students to think of their own examples. Remind students that today’s lesson is focused on how a speech is written, not how it is delivered.

Distribute the *Great Speeches: Rhetorical Devices and Appeal* handout. Have students read and/or listen to one of the speeches below and complete the handout.

- **Barack Obama’s “Yes We Can” speech, New Hampshire**
www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fe751kMBwms
repetition, imagery
- **Martin Luther King, Jr.’s “I’ve Been to the Mountaintop”**
www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkivebeentothemountaintop.htm
metaphors, repetition, imagery, hyperbole
- **Ronald Reagan’s “Evil Empire” speech**
www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/ronaldreaganevilempire.htm
storytelling, appeal to values, imagery



AFTER: Using rhetorical devices in your speech (5 minutes + homework)

Have students go back to their rough drafts and add rhetorical devices to their speeches, and continue for homework. They should pay specific attention to writing a good attention grabber to open their speeches and a compelling closer. Explain that they should integrate an opener, a closer and at least one rhetorical device to their rough draft and write out a complete speech for the following class period (or spend an additional day and give them time to work in class).

Attention Grabbers/Closers

ATTENTION GRABBER

A good speech grabs the audience's attention right at the very beginning. There are a number of ways you can do that:

- Use a quote (e.g., *As Abraham Lincoln famously said, "A house divided against itself cannot stand."*)
- Make a strong statement (e.g., *Our schools are failing young people.*)
- Use a statistic and cite the source (e.g., *According to the US Dept of Health and Human Services, almost 1/3 of students in grades 6-12 report being bullied.*)
- Tell a story (e.g., *I will never forget the day my grandmother died of cancer.*)
- Ask a rhetorical question that relates to your topic (e.g., *Have you ever felt so scared and unsafe that you would not get out of bed?*)
- Use spoken word poetry
- Pose a hypothetical situation (e.g., *Imagine being sent to a country where you don't speak the language or know a single person.*)

Think about an original and interesting attention grabber that would work well with your speech and describe it below.

CLOSER

The last thing you say to your audience should stick with them. That is why a good closer is so important. Some powerful ways to end a speech are:

- Summarize the main speech topics or main points
- Refer back to your opener
- Call the audience to act and offer them how-to-do-it steps (e.g., *If everyone in this room called their congressperson...*)
- Visualize the outcome of your call to action (e.g., *Imagine a world where...*)
- Transform your central idea into an easy to remember slogan (e.g., *The more we share, the more we care.*)
- Finish with a clinching personal anecdote (e.g., *My neighbor told me of a time...*)
- Provide a statistic or fact (e.g., *100 more teens will try to commit suicide by tomorrow...*)

Think about an original and interesting attention grabber that would work well with your speech and describe it below.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Rhetorical Devices

RHETORICAL DEVICE	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
Metaphor or simile	comparison of two unlike things	<p>"... freedom is like a beautiful kite that can go higher and higher with the breeze."</p> <p>George Bush, Inaugural Address, 1989</p>
Imagery	sensory details that paint a vivid picture in the audience's mind	<p>"It is cold, and we have no blankets; the little children are freezing to death. My people, some of them, have run away to the hills, and have no blankets, no food. No one knows where they are – perhaps freezing to death. I want to have time to look for my children, and see how many of them I can find. Maybe I shall find them among the dead."</p> <p>Chief Joseph, Surrender Speech 1877</p>
Humor	using a joke to connect to your audience	<p>"I have left orders to be awakened at any time in case of national emergency, even if I'm in a cabinet meeting."</p> <p>Ronald Reagan</p>
Alliteration	repetition of the beginning consonant sounds of a series of words	<p>"We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their selfhood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating "for whites only."</p> <p>Martin Luther King, "I Have a Dream"</p>
Repetition	continued use of certain words or phrases	<p>"We are a people in a quandary about the present. We are a people in search of our future. We are a people in search of a national community. We are a people trying not only to solve the problems of the present, unemployment, inflation, but we are attempting on a larger scale to fulfill the promise of America."</p> <p>Barbara Jordan</p>
Hyperbole	deliberate exaggeration or overstatement	<p>"If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down all alone, these women together ought to be able to turn it back and right side up again."</p> <p>Sojourner Truth</p>

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Great Speeches: Rhetorical Devices and Appeal

SPEAKER:

SPEECH TOPIC:

Give examples, if any, of how the speech appeals to the audience's intellect/logical appeals.

Give examples, if any, of how the speech appeals to the audience's emotions.

Give examples of any of the following rhetorical devices used in the speech:

metaphor or simile

imagery

humor

alliteration

repetition

hyperbole

LESSON 9: Delivering a Great Speech

Overview:

This lesson focuses on speech delivery. Students practice their speeches with their peers and examine the rubric before they go home to practice one last time.

Objectives:

- Assess themselves using the *Presentation Rubric*
- Read through *Presentation Guidelines*
- Practice their speeches
- Give and receive feedback

Materials:

- *Presentation Guidelines* handouts
- *Public Speaking Rubric* handouts
- *Peer Feedback* handouts

Common Core State Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.4

Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

C3 Standards:

D4.3.9-12.

Present adaptations of arguments and explanations that feature evocative ideas and perspectives on issues and topics to reach a range of audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary).

Assessment:

- Peer feedback and reflection



BELL-RINGER: Rubric review(5 minutes)

Have students read the *Presentation Guide* and look over their speech. Explain that they will be practicing delivering their speeches in class today.



BEFORE: Persuasive ABCs (15-20 minutes)

Explain to the class that so far this week they have learned how to structure their speech and how to appeal to their audience. Today will focus on presentation. Ask students: *What might a well-delivered speech sound and look like?*

Create a list on the board entitled “Good Speech Delivery” and list the student responses. Be sure

LESSON 9: Delivering a Great Speech

to include: dramatic pauses, raised volume, dramatic body language (e.g., arm gestures, facial expressions). After each suggestion, ask a student to demonstrate what that might look like, using the ABCs as your text (e.g., a student can recite the ABCs, beginning at a normal volume and then raise the volume for letters D–G to demonstrate the importance of that part of the “speech”). You may have to model for students first.

Solicit student volunteers to recite the ABCs as expressively and persuasively as they can, using as many of the qualities listed under “Good Speech Delivery” as they can. Alternatively, you can have students turn to the person next to them and each practice reciting the ABCs persuasively to one another.

Distribute copies of the speech rubric and have students read the “Meets Standards” column for the “Delivery” category. Do a **Fist to Five** to check for understanding: ask students to raise up five fingers if they have a clear sense of what good speech delivery entails and raise up their fist if they are confused (and raise any number of fingers in between to indicate their understanding). Then do a **Fist to Five** to gauge nerves -- Ask students to raise up a fist if they are super nervous and five fingers if they are super excited (and any number of fingers in between).



DURING: Peer feedback(20 minutes)

Explain to the students that this is their day to practice their speeches before the competition and receive constructive feedback from their peers. Spend a few minutes establishing expectations and guidelines for feedback (some suggestions include: be honest, no insults, save comments until the end). You may want to refer to the class agreements/norms as well.

Divide students into pairs or groups of three. In the groups, each student should read their speech and then receive feedback from their peers using the *Peer Feedback* forms. If time permits, they can practice their speeches more than once by having groups rotate.

MODIFICATION AND ADAPTATION

Allow multiple days for peer feedback and practice.



AFTER: Reflection (5 minutes)

Ask students: *What is the hardest part about delivering a speech?* Offer suggestions and solicit ideas from students on how to address those challenges.

LESSON 9: Delivering a Great Speech



HOMEWORK:

Have students practice their speeches.

ENRICHMENT AND EXTENSION

You can extend this lesson by watching examples of different well-delivered speeches and having students focus on the delivery of the speech. Some suggestions for well-delivered speeches are included in the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLFBBxTMJlI0O6Bvsr10Unh4xNYdP8gtUT>

Presentation Guidelines

Public speaking is a crucial civic skill. Whether you are running a meeting or persuading someone to agree with your plan of action, your ability to communicate is vital if you want people to listen to you and to accomplish your goals.

General presentation rules:

- **Consider your appearance.** How do you want your audience to perceive you?
- **Never chew gum** or have anything in your mouth.
- **Use language appropriate to your audience.** In other words, your speech might sound different if your audience is a group of your peers versus a group of business leaders.
- **Have a purpose.** Why should the audience listen to you?
- **Do your research** and know what you are talking about.
- **Be confident.** Practice, practice, practice and you'll feel ready to go.
- **Be yourself.** Even strangers can recognize someone who is fake or insincere. (Don't feel the need to be loud if you are a soft-spoken person. There are lots of effective ways to speak.)
- **Don't freak out if you stumble.** Nobody but you knows how your speech is "supposed" to go so just roll with it. Don't say "Wait, can I start over?" or "Oops." If all else fails, improvise. If you really care about your topic, speak from your heart.
- **First impressions are powerful.** Your presentation starts before you begin speaking. Once you are announced, you are on. That means the way you approach the podium and prepare yourself is all part of your presentation!

Components of a presentation:

- **Content:** What are you trying to say? Are your ideas and purpose clear? Do you have enough credible evidence to support what you're saying? Do you offer the audience a call to action? Do you describe a vision of what the world would look like if this issue did not exist?
- **Structure and Style:** Just because you care about your issue does not mean your audience does. Your job is to get them to care. How does your speech connect your audience to your issue? What rhetorical devices do you use to make that connection? Does your opener grab your audience's attention? Does your closer leave them thinking about your issue?
- **Delivery:** How do you look when you speak? Are your hands fidgeting? Is your foot wiggling? Is all your weight on one leg? Are your eyes glued to your paper? If you want your audience to be interested and have confidence in you, first you need to look interested and confident! If you are not passionate about your cause, why should anyone else be? Your tone can be serious and solemn or bold and impassioned (depending on the topic of your speech) but it **MUST** be evident that you care about the topic. You should speak naturally, not simply read a speech.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Peer Speech Practice Feedback

Complete this form as you listen to your classmate's speech. Check off when you hear the following:

	YES	NO		YES	NO		YES	NO
Attention grabber	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supporting evidence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rhetorical devices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
States an issue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Presents a vision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Closer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Explanation of the issue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Call to action	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

Was the speaker passionate about the issue? How could you tell?

What did the speaker do well?

What could be improved?

Complete this form as you listen to your classmate's speech. Check off when you hear the following:

	YES	NO		YES	NO		YES	NO
Attention grabber	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supporting evidence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rhetorical devices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
States an issue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Presents a vision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Closer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Explanation of the issue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Call to action	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

Was the speaker passionate about the issue? How could you tell?

What did the speaker do well?

What could be improved?

LESSON 10: Listening to Learn

Overview:

The magic of Project Soapbox is as much in the listening to each other as it is in the speaking one's truth. This lesson helps students focus on how to be an engaged and supportive listener.

Objectives:

- Give a short impromptu speech
- Practice engaged listening
- Set goals for ways they can be a better listener

Materials:

- Scrap paper
- *How to be an Engaged Listener* handout

Assessment:

- Written reflection

Common Core State Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.D

Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

C3 Standards:

D2.CIV.7.9-12.

Apply civic virtues and democratic principles when working with others.

D4.6.9-12.

Use disciplinary and interdisciplinary lenses to understand the characteristics and causes of local, regional, and global problems; instances of such problems in multiple contexts; and challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address these problems over time and place.



BELL-RINGER: Instant speech topics (5 minutes)

Hand each student a piece of scrap paper and have them write ONE topic for an instant speech.



BEFORE: Qualities of a good listener (5 minutes)

Lead a whole class discussion, using the following prompts:

- How do you look when you are listening to someone?
- What are you doing with your hands, your face, your eyes and your ears?
- What are you thinking? And why?

LESSON 10: Listening to Learn



DURING: How to be an engaged listener (15 minutes)

Distribute the *How to be an Engaged Listener* handout and have students read aloud. Then have students practice **Snaps for Support** and **Wild Applause** (see page 46 for instructions).

If you did the **Story Share** activity on page 31 you can reference it here for students.



AFTER: Practice listening (20 minutes)

Explain to students that they are going to now practice being engaged listeners. Have students take their Instant Speech topic from the **Bell-Ringer**, form partners, and situate themselves around the room. Partners should exchange Instant Speech topics with each other.

Have one student in each pair give an Instant Speech (30 seconds). When they are done, ask the speakers if they felt like their partner was listening to them. Ask them what did their partners do that made them feel listened to. (Possible answers might include “they leaned in” or “they responded in some way”). If students did not feel listened to, ask them why not. (Answers might include “they were not looking at me” or “they seemed distracted.”)

Next have the outer circle students give their Instant Speeches and ask them the same questions. Ask students: *Which is harder, speaking or listening? Why?*



HOMEWORK

Have students write a written reflection responding to the following prompts:

- Sometimes it can be hard for me to pay attention because...
- Some things I can do to help me stay focused and listening are...
- Something I think I can gain by listening to my peers give their speeches is...

How to be an Engaged Listener



BE PRESENT

Have you ever been speaking to someone and found that they are distracted by something and not really listening to you? You probably thought this was annoying, frustrating, and rude. When someone is speaking it is important to be fully present with them. Try to let go of distractions and focus on the speaker.



IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU

Becoming a better listener involves understanding that this person wants to be heard. Do not interrupt them. Hold on to any comments or questions until the end.



WATCH YOUR BODY LANGUAGE

Body language can speak volumes. Are you looking directly at the speaker? Are you fidgeting? You can nod in agreement as you listen.



ASK CLARIFYING QUESTIONS

Asking questions in response to what someone has been telling you can help you get more information and clarify anything that was unclear. It also shows you were really paying attention.

Examples of clarifying questions:

Can you tell me more about _____?

How did you feel when _____ happened?

I didn't quite understand _____. Can you explain it again?

LESSON 11: Soapbox Day! (May take multiple days)

Overview:

Provided here is a suggested structure for student presentations of their speeches.

Objectives:

- Deliver speech in front of an audience
- Provide feedback

Materials:

- *TAG Peer Feedback Sentence Starters* handout
- *Project Soapbox Peer Feedback Form* handout
- *Project Soapbox Speech Rubric* handout
- *Student Choice Form* handout
- *Project Soapbox Trauma Informed Practices* handout

Assessment:

- Student speeches
- *Project Soapbox Peer Feedback*

Common Core State Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.4

Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

C3 Standards:

D4.3.9-12.

Present adaptations of arguments and explanations that feature evocative ideas and perspectives on issues

and topics to reach a range of audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary).

D4.6.9-12.

Use disciplinary and interdisciplinary lenses to understand the characteristics and causes of local, regional, and global problems; instances of such problems in multiple contexts; and challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address these problems over time and place.

PRIOR TO CLASS

A goal of Project Soapbox is to provide students with an authentic audience for their speeches so if possible, invite staff, parents, local leaders and community members to hear student speeches. Consider engaging visitors as “judges” if you choose to make the Soapbox a competition.

If you choose to implement Soapbox as a speech competition, you can use the rubric to determine a winner. You may also use the *Student Choice Form* here if you choose to have a student choice winner.

Review the *Project Soapbox Trauma Informed Practices* handout.

LESSON 11: Soapbox Day! (May take multiple days)



BELL-RINGER: Preparation (2 minutes)

Students should take out all necessary materials and be ready to present. They can silently practice their speeches.



BEFORE: Speech procedure (5 minutes)

If you have judges, welcome and introduce them. Set up the expectations for the day by explaining that all speeches should receive Wild Applause when they are completed. (Have them practice giving Wild Applause, which is when everyone cheers loudly and enthusiastically.) Emphasize that no one should be interrupted.

If you are using *Peer Feedback Forms*, distribute them and explain how you want students to use them (however you do it, make sure each student receives some feedback from their peers). If you are using the *Student Choice* forms, distribute them and explain to students that they will be assessing each speech.



DURING: Speeches (time varies)

Be mindful of time and try to keep the speeches moving along but also acknowledge each speaker and their speech. Students should provide feedback when not presenting and you and the judges should complete rubrics.



AFTER: Celebrate! (5 minutes)

Have students stand up and give themselves the loudest Wild Applause of the day!

Additionally, or alternatively, you could offer students time to give shout outs and thank you's to anyone in the room (e.g., they could give shout outs to peers, thank the class for being a good audience, or thank the judges.)

ENRICHMENT AND EXTENSION

You may wish to include listening as part of their grade by adding it to the other side of the rubric.

Project Soapbox Trauma Informed Practices

When presenting Project Soapbox speeches about the issues they find most important, students may include narratives of personal trauma that demand further attention. It is a testament to the trust and safety of your classroom that a student would feel comfortable to share such painful personal experiences.

Trauma-Informed Preparation Prior to Classroom Project Soapbox

1. As students prepare speeches, highlight and encourage the vision and call to action part of the speech. Stress that speeches should be solution-focused.
2. To promote trust and safety, revisit agreements already created and re-establish what it is for your classroom to be a “safe” and “brave” space. Discuss with students what it is to “bear witness” and “hold space” for one another’s stories. It is an honor and privilege to both share and to actively listen. Remind students that personal stories will not be judged, but validated with acknowledgment and empathy.
3. Establish a “Chill Out Space” in the classroom for students to sit if they are triggered or feeling overwhelmed by the content speeches. (stress balls and a box of tissues are helpful).
4. Inform school counselors, administrators and social workers that students will be giving speeches. Invite them in to listen and/or let them know that you will refer students if needed.
5. Establish a way to transition after each speech to help students reset and emotionally/mentally move on to the next speech. (e.g., A deep inhale and exhale, or thunderclap)
6. Establish ahead of time how you will end each class period to “wrap students up” to transition to their next class.

If a student does share a personal trauma in their speech, we recommend responding by:

- Acknowledging and thanking the student for sharing on such a deeply important issue, recognizing that others may have had similar experiences and they are giving voice to this important issue.
- Thank the class for being a respectful and supportive group in which students feel comfortable sharing. Remind students of counseling and/or services available, when appropriate.
- Follow up with the student sharing the trauma (and any other student who might have been triggered by the story) outside of class and refer them to any appropriate resources available in school and in the community.
- As a mandated reporter, be sure to report cases of child abuse or neglect.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Project Soapbox Rubric

	EXCEEDS STANDARD (4)	MEETS STANDARD (3)	NEARS STANDARD (2)	NEEDS REVISION (1)
CONTENT	Explains the issue clearly and coherently, providing abundant evidence to support the significance of the issue	Explains the issue clearly, providing ample evidence to support the significance of the issue	Somewhat explains the issue, providing some evidence to support the significance of the issue	Issue is not explained clearly; little to no evidence provided to support the significance of the issue
	Describes a clear and detailed vision of what community would look like if issue was successfully addressed	Describes a clear vision of what community would look like if issue was successfully addressed	Attempts to describe a clear vision of what community would look like if issue was successfully addressed	Does not provide a description of what community would look like if issue were successfully addressed
	Contains a specific and actionable call to action that is linked to their vision	Contains a specific call to action	Contains a vague call to action	Does not contain a call to action
STRUCTURE AND STYLE	Includes both a compelling opener and closer that captures audience's attention	Includes both an effective opener and closer that captures audience's attention	Includes either an effective opener OR closer that captures audience's attention	Lacks opener or closer
	Incorporates multiple rhetorical devices effectively	Incorporates one rhetorical device effectively	Attempts to incorporate a rhetorical device	Does not incorporate any rhetorical devices
	Speech is exceptionally well organized, the speaker makes it very easy for audience to follow their progression.	Speech is well organized, easy to follow.	Speech is mostly well organized.	Speech loses focus at times, meanders, rambles or jumps around
DELIVERY	Presents speech clearly, using body language (eye contact, gestures, confident stance) to enhance the message	Presents speech clearly; maintains eye contact and has confident stance	Presents speech mostly clearly, partially reads speech	Does not present speech clearly; body language is distracting and/or simply reads the speech
	Masterfully uses tone, speed, pausing and volume as tools	Effectively uses tone, speed, pausing and volume as tools	Uses one of the following: tone, speed, pausing and volume as tools	Does not use speed, tone, volume and pausing as tools
	Student is expressive and demonstrates care and passion for the issue	Student is expressive and demonstrates interest in the issue	Student demonstrates some interest in the issue	Student does not demonstrate interest in the topic

TOTAL:**COMMENTS:**

TAG Peer Feedback Sentence Starters

Peer Feedback is where you give another student honest, objective, and constructive ideas about their work.

T Telling your peer about something you like allows you to be encouraging and supportive while specifically telling your peer how they did a good job.

A Asking questions allows you to ask a question about anything you are curious about after listening to or reading another student's work.

G Giving the speaker/writer a positive suggestion allows you to tell your peer how they can make it better.

PEER FEEDBACK SENTENCE STARTERS

POSITIVES: Tell the speaker/writer something you liked	QUESTIONS I HAVE: Ask the speaker/writer a question	NEEDS TO IMPROVE: Give the speaker/writer a positive suggestion
<p>Excellent ... throughout your speech.</p> <p>I enjoyed your speech because...</p> <p>I could relate to what you said when...</p> <p>You did a phenomenal job on...</p> <p>I could really see/hear/feel what you were describing when...</p> <p>What really impressed me was...</p> <p>Your speech reminded me of ...</p> <p>Your speech displays...</p> <p>The most outstanding aspect of your work is...</p> <p>The strongest aspect of your work is...</p> <p>It had a really big impact on me when..</p> <p>The best part about your work is...</p> <p>I really liked the way you ...</p> <p>I was really interested in what you were saying about/when...</p> <p>My favorite word/phrase you used was...</p> <p>This piece made me feel...</p> <p>Your most convincing reason/ evidence was...</p> <p>My favorite part of your speech was... because...</p>	<p>What are...?</p> <p>What do...?</p> <p>What is...?</p> <p>Why is...?</p> <p>Why do...?</p> <p>Why will...</p> <p>Where is...</p> <p>When do...</p> <p>When does...</p> <p>When is...</p> <p>When will...</p> <p>How do...</p> <p>How will...</p> <p>How does...</p> <p>Have you thought about...?</p> <p>Did you consider...?</p> <p>Tell more about...</p> <p>Why did you include...?</p>	<p>One suggestion would be...</p> <p>I think you should add...</p> <p>Remember to...</p> <p>Next time you should...</p> <p>I am confused by...</p> <p>Consider changing...</p> <p>Consider deleting...</p> <p>Maybe you should add...</p> <p>I wasn't persuaded by ...</p> <p>I was wondering if...</p> <p>Think about...</p> <p>I think a better choice may be...</p> <p>I strongly suggest</p> <p>One problem I see...</p> <p>You need to...</p> <p>One mistake is...</p> <p>I was confused when you said...</p> <p>I needed to hear more about...</p>

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Project Soapbox Peer Feedback

SPEAKER:		SPEECH TOPIC:	
_____		_____	
T	Tell the speaker something they did well		
A	Ask a question		
G	Give the speaker a suggestion for how they might improve their speech		

SPEAKER:		SPEECH TOPIC:	
_____		_____	
T	Tell the speaker something they did well		
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Student Choice Form

[illegible]

My student choice winner is: _____

LESSON 12: Who Else Should Hear Our Speeches?

Overview:

We want students to see Soapbox as a beginning, not an ending. They should consider who else should hear their speech and what they could do to improve it.

Objectives:

- Reflect on their Project Soapbox experience
- Identify other key stakeholders who would benefit from hearing speeches
- Identify ways to get speeches to them
- Develop a plan to make that happen

Assessment:

- Plan to give their speech

Common Core State Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.6

Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

C3 Standards:

D2.CIV.1.9-12.

Distinguish the powers and responsibilities of local, state, tribal, national, and international civic and political institutions.

D2.CIV.9.9-12.

Use appropriate deliberative processes in multiple settings.



BELL-RINGER: Written reflection (10 minutes)

Have students write a reflection of their Project Soapbox experience using the following prompts:

- How did it feel to give your speech?
- How did it feel to hear other people's speeches?
- If you were to give your speech again, what would you do differently?



BEFORE: Pair and share (5 minutes)

Have students partner up and share their responses to the **Bell-Ringer**.



DURING: Who else should hear your speech? (20 minutes)

Ask students: “Who else should hear your speech and why?” Have them write a list of at least three people or institutions (e.g., the Board of Education) who they think would benefit from hearing their speech. If students aren't sure of who the person or institution might be, they can say something like “the person who is responsible for deciding who gets to take AP classes at our school” or “the

LESSON 12: Who Else Should Hear Our Speeches?

institutions that decide how much money every school gets.”

Have students share their responses, and create a master list of people and institutions. If students aren't sure who the people or institutions are, don't answer that for them. Explain to them that that is a question to research.

Once students have identified who should hear their speeches, ask them: *“How can we get these people to hear your speeches?”* Challenge students to think of public meeting spaces (e.g., Board of Education meetings, City Council meetings) as well as using virtual tools such as social media.



AFTER: Create a plan (10 minutes)

Have each student choose one person or institution on their list that they will share their speech with. Have them identify a strategy for presenting that speech (e.g., live, virtual) and complete the following statements:

- Who I will present my speech to: _____
- How I will present my speech to them: _____
- When I will present my speech to them: _____

You may require they take this action or encourage it through extra credit. If students intend to give their speech live, see if you can get other students to attend as support (and best if you can attend as well).