

Brunswick School Department
Social Studies
Grade 8 Current Events

Unit Overview

This unit will help students distinguish between factual information presented in media and personal connections to that information. They will learn the distinction between fact, opinion and reasoned judgement. Also covered in the unit will be the rights, duties and responsibilities of citizens in a constitutional democracy. They will also learn how people can influence government and work for the common good by voting, writing to legislators, performing community service, and engaging in civil disobedience.

Essential Understandings

- As students learn to function as members of the global community, it becomes increasingly important for them to be aware of events occurring around the world.
- Citizens have responsibilities including staying informed on important issues.

Priority Standards and Performance Indicators

(s based on the Maine Learning Results)

P.S. SS -1 Conduct and present original research that utilizes primary and secondary sources in order to analyze, interpret and explain historical (and/or) contemporary social studies topics.

- a. Locate relevant information that includes multiple perspectives from varied sources.

PS.SS- 2 Draw on concepts from civics and government to understand political systems, power, authority, governance, civic ideals and practices, and the role of citizens.

- b. Explain the rights, duties, and responsibilities of citizens in a constitutional democracy.
- c. Demonstrate how people influence government and work for the common good including voting, writing to legislators, performing community service, and engaging in civil disobedience (being an active citizen).

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P.S. SS-4 Utilize concepts and processes from geography to understand issues involving people, places, and environments in the United States and the world.

d. Describe the dynamic relationship between geographic features and various cultures, including the cultures of Maine Native Americans, various historical groups in the United States, and other cultures in the world.

Examples of Formative / Summative Assessments

- Assessment on Fact, Opinion, Reasoned Judgement
- Written presentations summarizing a news program factually and also personally.
- Short written or oral descriptions of examples of the roles of citizens in a constitutional democracy.
- Create a political cartoon that depicts an issue central to Brunswick Junior High School
- Deliver a speech for a mock election.

Sample Texts and Materials/Resources

CNN Student News
Mock Elections using YLI
Student Governmental Affairs Program
Political Cartoons