

Standards-Based Lesson Template

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Teacher:	Abigail Carter
Class:	8th Grade Government Class
Lesson/Unit Title:	Writing the Congressman a Letter
Abstract/summary of lesson:	The students will be writing a letter to the Congressman where they state their opinion on a subject, convince the Congressman to be on their side with it, and explain to the Congressman what he should do about this subject.
Students will know...	stances on an issue that they will research and solutions to this issue on both sides. Terms and general knowledge about their chosen issue.
Students will be able...	write a persuasive letter to the Congressman explaining their position on an subject, why he should also be on their side, and what are the right steps to solve this issue.
Standards/Skills addressed	<p>CC W.8.1 "Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence."</p> <p>CC W.8.5 "With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience has been addressed."</p> <p>CC W.8.6 "Use technology, including the internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well to interact and collaborate with others."</p>
Performance tasks/projects:	Students will produce a letter to the Congressman that will state their opinion, why the Congressman should have the same stance on the issue, and what he could do to help fix this issue.
Test and quiz questions or essay prompts:	"What is the most important issue that you think the Congressman should know? What do you think he should do to help solve this issue?"
Other evidence to be used (e.g., observations, evaluation of work samples, discussion):	There will be a discussion in the beginning of different issues that could be written on and stances on them that children have that the teacher can formatively assess on how well informed students are on current news.
Student self-assessments:	Students will read their work, proofread it, edit it, and go through the writing process to make sure their work is quality level before they turn it in for editing by the teacher.
Objectives	<p>Students will know: stances on an issue that they will research and solutions to this issue on both sides. Terms and general knowledge about their chosen issue.</p> <p>Students will be able to: write a persuasive letter to the Congressman explaining their position on an subject, why he should also be on their side, and what are the right steps to solve this issue.</p>

Motivation:

To encourage the students, the teacher will activate background knowledge by asking students about who their congressman is, what he does, what the House does, current issues that are going on in the nation, and how as citizens, what can we do to be as active as possible in our government since it is essential to how our government is ran.

Presentation:

To present the information, the teacher needs to have a discussion as stated above about the Congressman, what he does, and different issues, stances, and solutions that are being discussed in current news. There will then be a conversation about being an active, involved citizen who does their role in government and how part of that role is informing the government of how their citizens feel. The topic will then be given to them, along with their laptops for them to do research.

Application/Activities:

- 1.) Teacher will set up discussion and activate background knowledge for students so they can start brainstorming different issues that they could write about.
- 2.) Teacher models the letter on the document camera showing what he or she expects and how a letter is formatted with an opinion stated. The letter can be left up during the writing portion for students to reference
- 3.) Students are given time to write their letter. They can use their laptops to research topics and get facts and opinions.
- 4.) When the letter has been written, they will self-edit and then peer edit. Once they feel that they have a quality letter written, they turn it in for the teacher to assess and edit also.
- 5.) Once the letter has been edited and the teacher and students feel it is the best work possible, the student will type it up on their laptop and print it
- 6.) The students will then address the letters and send them to the Congressman.

Materials needed:

Paper
Pencil
Laptop
Stamps
Envelope
Laptop
Printer
Document Camera

Assessment/Evaluation:

Students will write a paper for the Congressman describing an issue, why he should care about this issue, and what should be done about it. Teachers may use a rubric to help them determine the grades, but the assessment should be on mechanics, grammar, and how well they present their opinion and argue about why the Congressman should agree and what should be done about it.

Closure/Reflection:

Students will write a paper for the Congressman describing an issue, why he should care about this issue, and what should be done about it. Teachers may use a rubric to help them determine the grades, but the assessment should be on mechanics, grammar, and how well they present their opinion and argue about why the Congressman should agree and what should be done about it.