



Teacher/ Lesson Author/School: Martha Madsen/ Canterbury Elementary
Editor: Rachel M. Stanton, M.Ed. '18
Content Area: Social Studies: Citizenship in Local Government
Grade: 5th

Standards:

C3: College, Career, & Civic Life

D2.Civ.6.3-5. Describe ways in which people benefit from and are challenged by working together, including through government, workplaces, voluntary organizations, and families.

D2.Civ.2.3-5. Explain how a democracy relies on people's responsible participation, and draw implications for how individuals should participate

D2.Civ.7.3-5. Apply civic virtues and democratic principles in school settings.

D2.Civ.8.3-5. Identify core civic virtues and democratic principles that guide government, society, and communities.

D2.Civ.9.3-5. Use deliberative processes when making decisions or reaching judgments as a group.

D2.Civ.10.3-5. Identify the beliefs, experiences, perspectives, and values that underlie their own and others' points of view about civic issues.

D2.Civ.12.3-5. Explain how rules and laws change society and how people change rules and laws.

D2.Civ.13.3-5. Explain how policies are developed to address public problems

C3 STANDARDS	Check
(Please indicate where standards are being utilized in this learning experience.)	
Civic & Political Institutions	X
Participation & Deliberation	X
Process, Rules, and Laws	X



6 Essential Civic Learning Practices:

(Please indicate which of these are being utilized in this learning experience.)

Provide instruction in government, history, law, and democracy.	X	Offer extracurricular activities that provide opportunities for young people to get involved in their schools or communities.	X
Incorporate discussion of current local, national, and international issues and events in the classroom, particularly those that young people view as important to their lives.	X	Encourage student participation in school governance.	X
Design and implement programs that provide students with opportunities to apply what they learn through performing community service that is linked to the formal curriculum and classroom instruction.	X	Encourage students' participation in simulations of democratic processes and procedures.	X

Goals: (what will students be able to do or understand after the lesson)

- **Acquisition Goals**

- Students will know about the different structures of government and governmental roles within their locality. (School district, school board, town officials, town meeting, moderator for examples.)
- Students will know Robert's Rules of Parliamentary Procedure, the meaning of: *citizen, direct democracy, representative democracy, constitution, warrant article, annual report, election, moderator, chair, and other relevant vocabulary.*

- **Meaning Goals**

- Student will understand that he/she has a voice in the local community and how to utilize the local government structures (and other avenues, such as letters to the editor) to have that voice heard.
- If a student sees something that he/she believes should be changed, there are ways to make this happen within the local governmental structure and process.
- Students should understand that some will disagree with their position and know that they will need to support their opinion with evidence and planning.



- **Transfer Goals**

- Students will be able to independently use their learning (citizenship skills, knowledge, and attitudes) to meaningfully participate in their local form of government (in this case, school board meeting, town meeting, and/or school district meetings.)
- Long-term independent accomplishments desired are: written and spoken persuasive arguments, understanding of rules and structures of local government., active participation in local government.

Lesson Objectives:

- Students will be skilled at utilizing and applying Robert's Rules to facilitate debate and democratic decision making.
- Students will understand how to research, gather evidence, create a strong persuasive statement (written, oral) of their position.
- Students will anticipate the argument that those disagreeing will put forth and demonstrate listening skills.

Essential Questions:

- What does it mean to be a “good citizen?”
- How do people in Canterbury come together to make decisions? What does it mean to have a voice in your local community?
- How can we best encourage more people to participate in their democracy?

Assessments: (Please include diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments to assess student understanding before, during, and after lesson):

Performance Tasks:

- Presentation at School District Meeting or Town Meeting (written and oral communication) and/or Performance at Mock Town Meeting (written and oral communication)

Other Evaluative Criteria

- Students will demonstrate their understanding (meaning-making and transfer) through the complex performance required to participate in their town government.
- They will need to demonstrate teamwork, cooperation, listening, speaking, clear writing,



researching, persuasive communication, understanding of the qualities necessary to be a 'good citizen,' other important vocabulary such as democracy (direct, representative),

moderator, civility etc. and Robert's Rules. The tasks that will be evaluated are the above performance tasks, cooperative work within a committee, quizzes on vocabulary and other concepts.

- Effective communication (writing, listening, speaking,) quality research (diversity and validity of sources,) cooperation, compromise, anticipation of/ responding to other side's argument, effective use of Robert's Rules of Parliamentary procedure.
- Citizenship skills, knowledge, and attitudes.
- Teacher observations of planning and research process, written products, oral presentations, self-evaluations, teacher evaluation of performance tasks.

Note: Product criteria might vary. Content criteria would not. The moderator would be graded more heavily on “process” and he could express his knowledge of content by writing a letter to the editor, for example. Some would work on visual aids, some would focus on research, some on writing, some on spoken presentation.

Some content (various activities engaged in by “the good citizen,” reasons that some individuals do not engage in the political process, the importance of engaging in order to maintain democracy, important concepts, vocabulary) would be assessed earlier via more traditional means (essays, test.)

Materials:

(Please also include rubrics and other essential materials.)

- Town website: <http://www.canterbury-nh.org/>
- School District website: <https://sites.google.com/a/sau80.org/shaker-regional-school-district/>
- Town Annual Report
- [Robert's Rules of Order](#)
- Robert's Rules for Kids: A Guide to Teaching Children from Kindergarten to the 5th Grade the Basics of Parliamentary Procedure by Ted Weisgal.
- “Town Meeting Means Me,” 1951 by Mina Turner, illustrated by Lloyd Coe.



- <http://www.npr.org/2015/06/04/412046886/new-hampshire-4th-graders-to-name-white-house-hawk>

Differentiation: (Describe how you plan to adjust the curriculum, instruction, or learning environment to meet the diverse needs of your student population, including gifted and talented.)

- Students with special needs will be assigned to certain roles and groups carefully throughout this process. They should be assigned whatever supports would come with their 504 or IEP plan (a scribe for taking minutes? A support and research role instead of a public speaking role if they are highly anxious? etc.)
- Pre-teaching may be necessary for some students. If a student for some reason can't participate in the night-time meetings, he/ she could watch them on a videotape and/or respond in a different way (e.g. writing a letter to a representative or to the newspaper.)
- Students should (within reason) be given choices as to how they express their knowledge, meaning-making, and transfer.

INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN

Introduction/Hook:

Pre-Assessment:

Hook might be a discussion of a “hot topic” in town like the petition to do away with the local police department. Or a movement at last year’s school district meeting to conduct a climate survey of our school district.

To assess Where the students are coming from (knowledge, interest:)

1. Class discussion on what they know, what they think they know, and what they want to know about their local government, citizenship, and democracy.
2. Pre-quiz on Robert's Rules, town government structures, roles within the town government.

Learning Event 1:

1. Students will research (on their own or in groups) the town government structures, the roles within the town government, definitions of democracy, minutes, and Robert's Rules. (Use past meeting minutes, town report, other sources.) They will present their findings to the class. They



can present what they learned in a modality that is most appropriate given their talents, abilities, and interests: e.g. They may present using powerpoint, a poem, a song, and skit, a diagram, etc. They might choose to make a book for younger children explaining what happens at a town meeting (updating the 1951 Town Meeting Means Me, by Mina Turner and illustrated by Lloyd Coe.) Acquisition. Equip. Express.

Learning Event 2:

2. Class discussion on the essential question: “What does it mean to be a “good citizen?” Teacher will write down all of students' ideas on the board (e.g. a good citizen takes care of his/her children, supports his/her family, takes care of neighbors when they need help, votes, runs for office, supports candidates, tries to change laws that are unfair...etc.) Ask students to use Taba's process to sort these citizenship activities into groups and to label these groups. See what the students come up with. One possible set of labels would be: a. Taking Care of Self, Family, and Friends b. Participating in elections and government decisions, and c. Acting to change the government or to change laws and rules you believe are unfair. This is an exercise in meaning-making regarding “citizenship.” Rethink and Revise.

Learning Event 3:

3. Town officials (members of the school board, select persons, moderator, superintendent) will visit the classroom to answer students questions about their roles in town government and government structures. Use Rothstein’s ideas to teach students how to create their own questions ahead of time. Acquisition, meaning-making. Equip and Experience. Engage.

A citizen/s who has/have not participated in town meeting and/or school district meeting will visit the classroom and students will also have prepared questions for people with this differing perspective. Or discuss the story about the 4th grade’s experience with the state legislature last year when they presented a bill to make the Red-Tailed Hawk our NH state raptor.

<http://www.npr.org/2015/06/04/412046886/new-hampshire-4th-graders-to-name-white-house-hawk>

Learning Event 4:

4. Students will attend a School Board Meeting (or at least 1 hour of a town meeting of some sort.) The student will take minutes and make annotations when they see something that either fits in with something they have learned about the governmental process (e.g. Robert's Rules, warrant articles) or if something does not seem to fit and they have a question about what happened. The student will bring back observations, questions, and minutes to share with the class and teacher. Discussion of questions about procedure and “hot topics” should be



encouraged. Acquisition and meaning-making. Equip and Experience. Rethink and Revise.

Learning Event 5:

5. Students will identify/brainstorm topics or positions worthy of presentation at School District Meeting or at the Town Meeting. Students will form committees, each assigned a different topic: two presentations to each meeting (or 4 committees per 5th grade, in order not to overburden the agendas of the meetings.) Presentation might share the value of what they are already doing in school/in town and make an argument for keeping it, or it might argue for a change or improvement in a town or school policy. Research their position, understand the opposition to position, and put together a strong written/spoken/demonstration presentation to share with the community. Teachers provide written feedback about the groups' processes. Students complete at least two written self-assessments during process. Role assignment, conflict resolution, and decision-making will be taught and focused on as the process progresses.

Transfer. Explore, Rethink, Revise, Evaluate. Express, Engage.

Learning Event: Performance Task

After the presentation, students will shift their groupings, plan for, and act out their own mock town meeting. There should be a group pro and con for each issue brought up before their “moderator” and “select people.” For examples: Should the school year be extended throughout the summer? Should high school begin later in the morning? Should food in the cafeteria be locally sourced? The class will elect moderator, who then needs to become the class expert on Robert's Rules. Student committees will write warrant articles. As in the earlier activity, the teacher will provide feedback on the process and progress of each group, and the students will complete a self-assessment or reflection at least 2 times. Votes will happen, and that will provide its own kind of assessment/feedback regarding the effectiveness of arguments. A panel (3 or 4?) of teachers and/or older students will observe and give students written feedback on skills, knowledge, and attitudes of citizenship. Transfer.

Organized: Each learning event adds greater complexity of skills and knowledge application. Express, Engage.

Potential Rough Spots:

Town officials would need to be supportive (and involved in the planning) in order for this effort to work. Teachers would need to be respectful of the officials' needs. Some students would need to be evaluated in a different way if their roles (like moderator) or assignments were significantly different.

Controversial issues might raise some questions about this unit. Teachers need to make sure that



all sides of issues are represented fairly and well during the own mock town meeting and especially in public forums when students are presenting to officials and community members.

Educator Reflections:

(Please reflect on and answer the following)

How did this lesson go?	
What were some of the challenges?	
What issues came up that you were not anticipating?	
How did your lesson meet your original learning goals?	
If you could change one thing about your lesson, what would it be?	