

Wednesday, September 15

4th & 5th Periods: 10:45 - 11:25 & 11:30 - 12:10

Topic: Democracy & Community

Materials & Preparation Needed

- Class Presentation
- Notes Packet
- Exit Ticket

Focused Free Write (5 minutes)

- Think back on the selection you read from Suzanne Goldsmith for homework.
- Is community possible without democracy?
- Is community possible without community?

Share-Out (10 minutes)

- Ask students to share out their thoughts on the Focused Free Write Questions
- Ask: What does community and democracy have to do with the Constitution?

Current Events Share-Out Demonstration (15 minutes)

- Remind students that they are always welcome to bring current events/constitutional law/supreme court news to class and ask for more information or to discuss with the class.
- There will be dedicated time on Wednesdays for these discussions
- Introduce an article to the class that is a good example of something relevant
- Introduce lateral reading to determine a good source
- Model how to present an article:
 - Topic: What is the article about?
 - Headline: What is the headline? Can you determine bias?
 - Author: Who wrote the piece? Do they have a bias that you are aware of?
 - Source: Where was this piece published? What can you tell us about the angle of that source?
 - Key Information: What is most important from the article? Why are you sharing with us?
 - Questions & Takeaways: What questions do you have for me or your classmates? What should we walk away with?

Amanda Gorman Union (10 minutes)

- Say: This class will not just be about the text of the constitution and the law. This class is a call to action for each of us and those in our community/communities. Participating in democratic actions and caring for our communities is so important. Political scientists, legal scholars, historians, and others can help us to understand and engage with our government

and society. However, if you are like me, writers and artists often help me to connect and process these ideas.

- One huge source of inspiration and thought is Amanda Gorman.
 - Youngest inaugural poet in the United States History
 - Award Winning Writer
 - Graduated cum laude from Harvard University - studied sociology
 - Born and raised in Los Angeles

Show: 0:00 - 1:35 of [The Hill We Climb](#)

- Project the following excerpt:
And yes we are far from polished
Far from pristine
But that doesn't mean we are
Stirring to form a union that is perfect.
We are strong to forge a union with purpose
- Read aloud the above section 2x
- In pairs or small groups, ask students to discuss:
 1. What does it mean to be unified?
 2. What does it mean to 'forge a union with purpose'?
- Ask students for responses

Class Break (5 minutes)

Topic: The Law & Responsibility

Materials and Preparation Needed

Focused Free Write (5 minutes)

- What is the difference between a country that is perfect and a country with purpose?
- What three words would you use to describe an America with purpose?

Share-Out (10 minutes)

- Ask students to share their thoughts on the Focused Free Write Questions

Rights, Responsibilities, and the Law Discussion (20 minutes)

- What is a right?
- What is a privilege?
- What is a responsibility?
- Given an example of a right v. a privilege
- Why are these distinctions important - especially in regards to our conversation about democracy and community?
- Ask: What is the law?

- The rules and regulations made and enforced by the government that regulate the conduct of people in society
- Can be based on moral, economic, political or social values; as society changes, so can laws
- Ask: What is the rule of law?
- Requires that the rules by which we are governed be known in advance and created through democratic processes
- When rule of law exists, no one is above the law
- Ask: What goals do we expect our legal system to achieve?
- Protecting basic human rights; promoting fairness; helping resolve conflicts; promoting order and stability; promoting desirable social and economic behavior; representing the will of the majority; protecting the rights of minorities
- Many of society's conflicts arise when there are conflicts between these roles
- Ask: What conflicts can we imagine arising? What conflicts have we seen?

Rights & Responsibilities Jamboard

- Say: What responsibilities go along with our rights?
- Most of us agree we all should have certain basic rights. For example, we all want the right to speak freely. We want the right to believe as we wish. We also want to be able to own property and to travel wherever we want to go. Is it fair to say that if we want these rights, we must also take on some responsibilities? Let's examine this question
- Divide students into five groups. Tell students that they will be working in these groups to think through the responsibilities that come with some fundamental rights in the United States. They will each have one slide of the jamboard to use to put their thoughts, ideas, and questions.
- Group 1 • Freedom of Expression
 - Your government cannot unfairly limit your right to speak freely. What responsibilities might go along with this right? Suppose you attend a meeting of students in your school. The group is supposed to suggest rules for the playground. You have the right to speak and give your suggestions. What responsibilities should you have in the way you speak and in what you say? List and explain these responsibilities. What responsibilities should other students at the meeting have toward your right to speak? List and explain these responsibilities. What responsibilities should you have toward the other students' right to speak? List and explain these responsibilities. What might happen to the right to free speech if no one fulfilled the responsibilities you have discussed?
- Group 2 • Freedom of Religion
 - Your government cannot interfere with your right to believe as you wish. It cannot unfairly limit your right to practice your religious beliefs. What responsibilities might go along with these rights? Suppose you believe in a particular religion. You attend a church or temple in your community. List and explain what responsibilities you

should have in the way you practice your religious beliefs. Suppose there are people in your community who believe in different religions or in no religion at all. List and explain what responsibilities they should have to protect your right to practice your religious beliefs. List and explain what responsibilities you should have to protect other people's right to practice their religious beliefs or not to have any religious beliefs. What might happen to the right of freedom of religion if no one fulfilled the responsibilities you have discussed?

- Group 3 • The Right to be Treated Equally
 - Your government may not favor some people over others because of such things as their age, sex, race, or religion. What responsibilities might go along with this right? Suppose people in your community are planning a picnic for the public. List and explain what responsibilities they might have to be fair to you no matter what your age, sex, race, or religion may be. Suppose you were helping to plan the picnic. List and explain what responsibilities you think you should have to other people no matter what their age, sex, race, or religion might be. What might happen to the right to be treated equally if no one fulfilled the responsibilities you have discussed?
- Group 4 • The Right to be Treated Fairly by Your Government
 - Your government must be fair to you when it is gathering information and making decisions. What responsibilities might go along with this right? Suppose someone has accused you of doing something wrong in your school or community. What responsibilities should that person have toward you? List and explain those responsibilities. Suppose you have accused others of doing something wrong in your school or community. What responsibilities should you have toward them? List and explain those responsibilities. What might happen to the right to be treated fairly if no one fulfilled the responsibilities you have discussed?
- Group 5 • The Right to Vote and Run For Public Office
 - When you are eighteen, you will have the right to vote. You will also have the right to run for public office if you want to. What responsibilities might go along with this right? Suppose you are about to vote in an election. You can vote for or against five proposed laws. You must choose between two people running for Congress. What responsibilities should you have? List and explain those responsibilities. Suppose some friends, neighbors, and others in your community do not agree with the way you are going to vote. List and explain what responsibilities they have toward your right to vote. Suppose you do not agree with the way some of your friends, neighbors, and others in your community are going to vote. List and explain what responsibilities you should have toward their right to vote. What might happen to the right to vote if no one fulfilled the responsibilities you have discussed?
- Ask each group to share out their main takeaways

National Constitution Day Class Notes & Preparation (5 minutes)

- Friday is National Constitution Day

- Traditionally National Constitution Day is celebrated through K-12 focused events/lessons; events in Washington D.C., etc.
- The purpose of National Constitution Day is to acknowledge the document that guides the democratic governance of our country and to better educate American citizens about the document itself
- In the coming weeks, we will look in depth at the documents and historical events that influenced the Constitution and the process through which it became the law of the land
- Friday, however, we are going to start by thinking about our own understandings of the Constitution and public perceptions of the Constitution.