Citizen U®
Preparing tomorrow's citizens today

CIVIC COMMUNITY LESSON PLAN

Interdisciplinary Subject: Social Studies   **Level:** Elementary

This lesson plan provides resource links from the **Library of Congress** and **inquiry-based teaching strategies,** using elementary Social Studies content and primary source analysis to engage students in creating understanding and a sense of belonging to the community of our democratic nation.

Title: Equality Under the Law: Problems and Solutions

ESSENTIAL QUESTION: What is real equality?

Lesson Overview:	Lesson Objectives
Students examine how equality under the law has evolved in the United States. Students will then use both primary and secondary sources to summarize and report on a problem of equality and its solution under the law and reflect on how these lessons from history can help them as they consider issues of inequality in contemporary society.	Students will: • Analyze primary sources to understand historical problems related to equality and solutions under the law. • Note problems and solutions related to equal treatment in students' own lives. • Review the basic structure of our government to recognize the three branches and their basic, primary functions and to understand that the U.S. Constitution is a living document that can be amended. • Consider how the study of the past can help inform understanding of contemporary issues.

Inquiry Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.3

Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

Supporting Question 1 ENGAGING	Supporting Question 2 EVALUATING	Supporting Question 3 TAKING ACTION
Do laws protect us equally?	What would you do to stand up for equal rights?	What can you do to work for equality?

Title: Equality Under the Law: Problems and Solutions

PERFORMANCE TASK 1	PERFORMANCE TASK 2	CULMINATING TASK
• Use the Library of Congress resources on the equality act to launch a discussion of equality and the law. • Display a t-chart. Ask: Have you ever been in a situation in which you felt that you were treated unequally? What are some examples? (Students or you might suggest situations involving age, gender, or race.) • Note examples of unequal treatment in the problems column of the t-chart. • Ask: How does it feel when you are treated unequally? • Make sure that students know that laws are made to make sure our government and country function properly and that they can also help solve problems.	• Divide students into groups. • Present each student group with one set of "problem sources" and the associated "solution sources." • Instruct student groups to work together to summarize their analyses of the problem related to equality and the solution of that problem under the law and share it with the class. • You may wish to have student groups review the background information for their topic. • Direct student groups to brainstorm a solution under the law for one of the problems on the chart. Share group ideas and discuss their merits and potential pitfalls as a class.	• Ask students to brainstorm current issues of equality they see in our country. • Students may use the additional materials from the LOC to consider other problems/solutions. • Have students create potential solutions to these issues. • What new insights or ideas did their investigations spark?

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS RESOURCES
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Library of Congress Equality Act https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/1858/text	Student Materials Pack	Background Information

TEACHING STRATEGIES

• Academic discussions • Group interview process	• Primary source analysis • Discussion • Pair share	• Small group presentations