INDIANA UNIVERSITY CENTER ON Representative Government

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BRINGING THE DECLARATION of INDEPENDENCE TO LIFE

Using **Engaging Congress** from the **IU Center on Representative Government**

Purpose: Participants will collaborate to connect founding principles to current curriculum standards and use CORG's Engaging Congress digital tool to design engaging, classroom ready lesson activities.

Lesson Title

The End of Reconstruction and the Declaration of Independence

Target Grade Level 11	**Time of Lesson** 45-60 minutes

Indiana Academic Standards for Target Grade Level

U.S.H.2.5: Analyze the development of "separate but equal" policies culminating in the Plessy v. Ferguson (1896) case. Explain the historical significance of the denial of African American rights in the South and the effects of these policies in future years. (E)
U.S.H.10.2: Locate and analyze primary sources and secondary sources related to an event or issue of the past; discover possible limitations in various kinds of historical evidence and differing secondary opinions.
U.S.H.10.3: Analyze multiple, unexpected, and complex causes and effects of events in the past.

Declaration of Independence Principle

Equality: "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights"and "that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it"
-equality in voting rights, especially as the right to alter the government by voting for new representation

Engaging Congress Source

Unit: Voting Rights
Primary Source: Death at the Polls political cartoon

Explain Engaging Congress Unit Connection

The founding fathers wrote that all men are created equal and that we have the right to alter our government by voting for new representation and new leaders, and so how do those apply to voting rights, especially after the Civil War and Reconstruction?

Activity Description

1. Reread the second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence and discuss in particular the two parts about equality and altering and abolishing government.
2. Review through the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments and how they tie to those two ideas in the Declaration but make them law.
3. Review how Jim Crows were used to get around the amendments to deny voting rights to black Americans..
4. Pass out the printed picture of the Engaging Congress' primary source, "Death at the Polls" by Thomas Nast cartoon. Have the students work in groups and use colored pencils or markers to circle 5 images that are being used as part of the message of the cartoon. Students should choose one color for each image and analysis.
5. Have the students analyze and write what each of the 5 images means to the side of the cartoon, which is Engaging Congress' source, "Death at the Polls" by Thomas Nast.
6. Pass out the other Thomas Nast cartoon titled , "The colored rule in a reconstructed state" and complete the same process.
7. Come back together as a class and discuss together what the students circled and found as the meaning of the different images.
8. Discuss: Same cartoonist depicting black Americans and their rights in two different ways. How can this be? How do you think Thomas Nast and many Northerns could hold two opposing views? How is this like Thomas Jefferson as he wrote the Declaration?
9. Discuss: How far do you think we as the United States have come in regards to equality in voting rights and altering our government through voting?

Primary Source Link(s)

https://www.loc.gov/resource/cph.3c27750/ Death at the Polls political cartoon

Additional Source(s)

https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/ds.13145/ Thomas Nast-"The colored rule in a reconstructed state"

Expected Learning Outcomes

*Students will know that the Declaration of Independence was not the law but rather the goal of America and justification for rebellion.
*Students will review Reconstruction and the events after Reconstruction ended.
*Students will be able to see that while many Northerners supported black voting rights, many still held racist views similar to Thomas Jefferson, the Declaration, and slavery.
*Students will gain more skill in analyzing political cartoons.

Modifications / Differentiation
1. Differentiation Strategy (Target: Grade Level / ELL / IEP)

Students can write only one sentence to analyze the images in the cartoon.
Students can explain what they believe the image means rather than writing it.

2. Differentiation Strategy (Target: Grade Level / ELL / IEP)

Students can work together on one cartoon in a group rather than each working on their own cartoon in a group.

List any required materials and/or attach worksheets / graphic organizer / classroom materials

Printed copies of the Declaration of Independence
Printed copies of the two political cartoons for each student (one from Engaging Congress and the other from the Library of Congress)
Colored pencils

List all sources / links used (content and instructional)

Declaration of Independence final draft
-13, 14, and 15 Amendments of the Constitution
Vocabulary: Poll tax, grandfather clause, and literacy test
https://www.loc.gov/resource/cph.3c27750/ Death at the Polls political cartoon
https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/ds.13145/ Thomas Nast-"The colored rule in a reconstructed state"- shows Black American legislators behaving badly.