

Gr. 8 Current Events
Length of Course: 1 Marking Period Cycle
Revised: 2017- 2018

Course Description:

The course will provide students with opportunities identify and explore the roots of contemporary social issues/current events by researching the various components that exist within single topic.

Due to the constraints of curriculum and timing, students are frequently not afforded opportunities to explore current events and other contemporary social issues on a regular basis. This cycle will attempt to both expose students to issues that affect their lives as well as instill within them an understanding of the complexity of these issues. In doing so, students will discover how science, history, technology, and language interact in the real world. Further, students will explore the existence of bias in the media as they research and discuss news from a variety of sources.

The course will use a variety of student-centered approaches to explore a particular issue. The process of examining each issue will remain consistent; however, time spent on individual topics will vary depending on the issue's complexity and student interest

Big Ideas: *Course Objectives / Content Statement(s)*

- News is presented to us in many forms, many of which are biased. It is important that we are able to discern the differences among biased news and form our own opinions based on, and supported by, credible sources.

<p>Essential Questions <i>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How and why is life in America getting better or worse? - Why are some news reports mentioned and analyzed by news sources more than others? - How is technology affecting our daily lives? How will it affect us in the future? - What is the background information behind a major headline news story and what happens when it is replaced by a new headline story? 	<p>Enduring Understandings <i>What will students understand about the big ideas?</i> Students will understand that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individuals have different values that change their perspective on the quality of their lives. - News sources report on an ongoing and ever-changing basis. - Technology can have both positive and negative impacts on the quality of life. - Current event headlines have both a history that led up to it and a future that will result from it.
<p>Areas of Focus: Proficiencies (Cumulative Progress Indicators) Students will: <i>(Enter NJCCCS or Common Core CPI's here)</i></p> <p>NJLSA.R7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words. RI.6.7. Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.</p> <p>6.2 World History/Global Studies: All students will acquire the knowledge and skills to think analytically and systematically about how past interactions of people, cultures, and the environment affect issues across time and cultures. Such knowledge and skills enable students to make informed decisions as socially and ethically responsible world citizens in the 21st century.</p>	<p>- Examples, Outcomes, Assessments <i>(see note below about the content of this section)</i></p> <p>Instructional Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students will stay up to date on current event news and research articles that relate to a guiding question of the week. Students will then use these articles to prepare and participate in a bi-weekly socratic discussion. Students will also apply their research and analysis skills to form their own opinions and present them in various forms. <p>Sample Assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FanSchool Draft- Four Rounds taking place for a period of two weeks at a time - Ken Burns style broadcast about a under-reported topic of the week - - Political Cartoon Analysis- Twice weekly - Socratic Discussion- Bi-weekly

Science: MS-LS2-4, MS-LS2-5, MS-ETS1-1, and MS-ETS1-3. Unit 3: Interdependent Relationships in Ecosystems

8.1 Educational Technology: All students will use digital tools to access, manage, evaluate, and synthesize information in order to solve problems individually and collaborate and to create and communicate knowledge.

- Original Documentary with outreach to an expert in the field of the topic being researched

Instructional Strategies:

Game-based
Whole Class Discussion
Small Group Discussion
Small Group Project
Individual Project
Guided Inquiry
Guided Reflections

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- **English:** Students read closely to determine a central idea of a text and proceed to analyze and cite evidence from that text.
- **Social Studies:** Students research the impact of global issues both nationally and internationally.
- **Science:** Students research impact of technology on society concerning climate change, pollution, scientific advances in medicine, etc.

Technology Integration

Fanschool
New York Times
The Week- Political Cartoons in Review
Google Suite
Youtube
Allsides.com
Wevideo.com
NPR

Global Perspectives

- Research international current events on a weekly basis.

The following skills and themes should be reflected in the design of units and lessons for this course or content area.

21st Century Skills:

Creativity and Innovation: Students re-envision the way a news story is portrayed to the public.

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving: Students must learn how analyze an article and determine its level of bias.

Communication and Collaboration: Students work collaboratively on a variety of projects throughout the marking period. They communicate both in person and online to achieve completion of their academic goals.

Information Literacy: Students conduct online research throughout the marking period. They also learn how to identify bias in news articles and media.

Media Literacy: Students become aware of marketing tools used by media companies to promote their content.

Life and Career Skills: Exposes students to elements of outside influence that could cloud decision making in the future. Further, children learn how to manage time during long-term projects.

21st Century Themes (as applies to content area):

Financial, Economic, Business, and Entrepreneurial Literacy: Students discuss world economic conflicts and their impact upon future governments and economies.

Civic Literacy: Identifying bias in the media.

Health Literacy: Identifying and discussing the negative impact of climate change and pollution on ecosystems across the globe.

Unit 1- Life in America

Day 1	Become familiar with classroom rules and procedures.	class intro intro activity- nyt new quiz
Day 2		intro m.p. project, choose social issue
Day 3		project work day
Day 4	Analyze current events to determine draft needs.	fanschool- national
Day 5	Analyze current events to determine draft needs.	fanschool- national

Day 6	Construct a nationwide draft using previous research/annotations based on weekly current events.	draft
Day 7		Project work day
Day 8	Research and annotate a current, supplementary article for the guiding question of the week.	Socratic research
Day 9	Research and annotate a current, supplementary article for the guiding question of the week.	Socratic research
Day 10	Discuss the guiding question of the week using current event articles, prepared annotations, and prepared questions.	socratic

Unit 2- Current Events Update

Day 11		News Reading Day
Day 12		Kahoot research
Day 13		Kahoot research
Day 14		Kahoot research
Day 15		Project work day
Day 16		Kahoot creation
Day 17		Kahoot day

Unit 3- Technology

Day 18	Create an original political cartoon satirizing a current political or pop culture event.	Political cartoon day
Day 19	Analyze current events to determine draft needs.	Draft research day
Day 20	Construct a nationwide draft using previous research/annotations based on weekly current events.	Draft
Day 21	Research and annotate a current, supplementary article for the guiding question of the week.	Socratic research

Day 22	Research and annotate a current, supplementary article for the guiding question of the week.	Socratic research
Day 23		Project work day
Day 24	Analyze and annotate current event articles in preparation for a Socratic discussion.	Technology Mini-Documentary
Day 25	Research and annotate a current, supplementary article for the guiding question of the week.	Socratic Research
Day 26	Discuss the guiding question of the week using current event articles, prepared annotations, and prepared questions.	Socratic
Day 27	Create an original political cartoon satirizing a current political or pop culture event.	Political Cartoon

Unit 4- Exceptionalism

Day 28		Project work day
Day 29		Project work day
Day 30	Analyze current events to determine draft needs.	Draft Research
Day 31	Construct a nationwide draft using previous research/annotations based on weekly current events.	Draft Day

Day 32	Research and annotate a current, supplementary article for the guiding question of the week.	Socratic Research
Day 33	Research and annotate a current, supplementary article for the guiding question of the week.	Socratic Research
Day 34	Discuss the guiding question of the week using current event articles, prepared annotations, and prepared questions.	Socratic
Day 35	Create an original political cartoon satirizing a current political or pop culture event.	Political Cartoon
Day 36		Project work day

Unit 5- Cumulative Project Final

Day 37		Final Edits
Day 38		Final Edits
Day 39		Present
Day 40		Present
Day 41		Present

*** The last few days are used as emergency days in case of snow days, assemblies, or extra time needed on assignments throughout the cycle.