



D E N S H Ō

The Japanese American Legacy Project

Lesson Plan

You Decide:

Were Japanese Americans a Threat?

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Acknowledgements and Notes

The website *Causes of the Incarceration* (www.densho.org/causes) and the lesson *Were Japanese Americans a Threat?* are made possible by a grant from the Washington State Civil Liberties Public Education Program.

This lesson is designed to closely align with Washington State's Essential Academic Learning Requirements as measured by a Social Studies Classroom Based Assessment (CBA) model. The model used for this lesson is:

Category: Civics
Level: Elementary
Topic: You Decide

For more information about this Classroom Based Assessment model, go to:
<http://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/WASL/socialstudies/CBAs/Elementary-YouDecideDocumentsCBA.pdf>

Densho: the Japanese American Legacy Project developed this lesson. Densho is a Japanese term meaning "to pass on to the next generation," or to leave a legacy. Our mission is to preserve the testimonies of Japanese Americans who were unjustly incarcerated during World War II. We collect and offer their stories in a manner that reflects our deep regard for who they are and what they endured.

Using digital technology, Densho provides access to personal accounts, historical documents and photographs, and teacher resources to explore principles of democracy and promote equal justice. We seek to educate young people and inspire them to act in defense of liberty and the highest values of our country. Densho presents a thorough accounting of what happened to Japanese Americans during a time of war and in doing so contributes to the current debate about civil liberties during times of national emergency. It is our conviction and hope that an informed citizenry, aware of the human costs and consequences of the violation of the rights of the few, will be better equipped to protect the civil rights of all.

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Connection to Washington State Social Studies Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs) *Bridging Document*

Step-by-Step Alignment of the Elementary School Classroom Based Assessment model “You Decide” and the lesson *A Question of Loyalty*.

CBA requirements for students:	The <i>Were Japanese Americans a Threat?</i> lesson aligns itself with the essential academic learning requirements of the “You Decide” CBA model in the following manner:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select a public issue that is controversial (has multiple perspectives). 	<p>The lesson <i>Were Japanese Americans a Threat?</i> examines through a Hearings Role-Play Exercise, President Roosevelt’s controversial decision to allow the mass removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify related rights and responsibilities of citizenship. 	<p>Students do a Values Exercise where they think about democratic ideals and constitutional principles. Students also examine the Bill of Rights while considering the issue of the Japanese American incarceration.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather background information that will help students understand the issue. 	<p>Students do research and gather materials while preparing for their roles during the hearings.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using a graphic organizer, students will identify different stakeholders (individuals or groups) and their positions. 	<p>During the hearings, students will listen to various perspectives and use a graphic organizer to list the positions of the different stakeholders.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in a public discussion or forum of the issue. 	<p>Students participate in a Hearings Role-Play Exercise that examines the decision to incarcerate Japanese Americans during World War II.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write a persuasive position paper that states the students’ informed decision and supports it with convincing reasons. 	<p>Students write a position paper after the role-play using the evidence presented during the hearings exercise.</p>

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Introduction for Teachers

You Decide: Were Japanese Americans a Threat? explores the complex decisions that individuals, local governments, and national governments must face in a democracy. This lesson presents various perspectives on an important historical event, and shows how decision-making often becomes an exercise in choosing among conflicting values. The point of the lesson is not the vote that takes place, but the critical thinking and communication that happen along the way.

This lesson is based on a role-play scenario where a group of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's advisors are holding hearings to determine what should happen to Japanese Americans during World War II. Political and business leaders, along with the media, have called for the removal and incarceration of all Japanese Americans from the West Coast of the United States.

Notes about this Lesson

Suggested Two-Day Lesson Plan

On the **first day**, students start with the Values Exercise, which requires them to prioritize various democratic ideals according to their personal values. Next, the students are introduced to the Hearings Role-Play Exercise and the proposal to remove all Japanese Americans from the West Coast of the United States and place them in incarceration camps. The first day ends with students forming small groups and preparing for the hearings. On the **second day**, students participate in the hearings.

Time Management

Time management will be important during the Hearings Role-Play Exercise. About an hour is needed for the testimonies, discussion, vote, and post-hearings discussion on day two. Student groups should be ready when class begins and there should be quick transitions from group to group. Time limits should be established and enforced.

Assessing Student Achievement

Group Assignment

A goal of this unit is to encourage group cooperation and learning. It is suggested that group members receive the same grade for the group assignment and that they are told in advance of this policy. Group members should be encouraged to work together to achieve better results.

Individual Student Assignment

After the role-play and discussion, students are asked to write a paper expressing their personal view on the issue of whether or not Japanese Americans should be removed and incarcerated during World War II. The "Persuasive Paper Rubric" is provided as a guideline for you and the student on how the paper will be graded.

Student Self-Evaluation

It is recommended that students complete self-evaluations at the end of the lesson. This gives students an opportunity to be part of the assessment process and it also gives the teacher a perspective on what the student learned and the small group dynamics. The teacher should develop questions for the students to answer in the self-evaluation. Students should be as specific and concrete as possible with their answers. Below are some sample questions.

Sample Student Self Evaluation Questions:

- What did you learn?
- What do you want to learn next about the topics discussed in this lesson?
- What did you like the best about working in a group?
- What was most challenging about working in a group?
- How did you contribute to your group during this project?

Day One – Values Exercise and Hearings Role-Play Preparation

Objectives

- Students will examine concepts of democratic ideals and constitutional principles.
- Students will consider the issue of removing and incarcerating Japanese Americans during WWII.
- Students will work cooperatively in a group to create an effective presentation.

Handouts:

- Handout #1 - Values Exercise
- Handout #2 - Group Role Playing Instructions
- Handout #3 - Additional Resources

In the Classroom:

1. Values Exercise

Give each student **Handout #1 - Values Exercise**. Ask each student to list democratic ideals in the order they consider most important. Have them repeat this process for constitutional principles. After everyone finishes, discuss what it was like to prioritize these concepts. You may ask a few students to share their lists or the one or two most important core values. The point of the exercise is to explore the difficulty of prioritizing these concepts and how different people will have different priorities. You may find that these words mean different things to different students making the discussion of the exercise even more challenging. This is also an opportunity to review vocabulary and discuss the meanings of democratic ideals and constitutional principles.

Day One - continued

2. Forming Role Playing Groups

Introduce students to the proposal and background described in the “Group Role Playing Instructions” regarding the purpose of the hearings. Form eight groups of three students. This lesson is designed for twenty-four students. For larger classes, add more students to the advisors group. For smaller classes, either fewer groups can be formed or have fewer students per group. If there is a point of view that you and your students think should be represented, add it or substitute it for an existing one that seems less relevant or crucial.

Distribute a different **Handout #2 - Group Role Playing Instructions** to each of the groups. Tell students that the groups should follow the instructions in the handout and work together to prepare the presentation. Also give each group **Handout #3 - Additional Resources** to help them research additional information for their presentation.

Day Two – Hearing Role-Play and Discussion

Objectives:

- Students will present, explore, debate, and evaluate multiple perspectives
- Students will link democratic ideals to different perspectives
- Students will cooperate with classmates in simulating a hearing
- Students will examine their own views on the issues presented

Handouts:

- Handout #4 - Graphic Organizer for Hearings Role-Play
- Handout #5 - Persuasive Paper Assignment and Checklist
- Handout #6 - Persuasive Paper Rubric

Teacher Role During the Hearing Role-Play:

You play the moderator. By way of introduction, you identify yourself as a staff member for President Roosevelt. You are holding these hearings to help the President decide what to do with Japanese Americans.

Arrange the room so that the group of advisors will face the other groups as they testify. This will make it easier for the advisors to ask questions. The testifying groups will come up one at a time to sit across from the advisors. Remind testifying groups that they will represent the point of view they have been assigned, even though it might not be their own point of view. Tell them that their ability to faithfully represent their assigned roles will allow the advisors and class to understand the many sides to the issue.

Day Two – continued**In the Classroom:**

1. Group Testimonies [20-25 minutes]
Distribute to each student **Handout #4 - Graphic Organizer for Hearings Role-Play** for students to use during each testimony. Each group presents their two-minute testimony. The group of advisors then asks questions.
2. Discussion Representing their Assigned Point of View [10-15 minutes]
After all of the testimonies are made, anyone at the hearing can speak. Remind the speaker to identify the role he or she is playing (“I represent General DeWitt, the Western Defense Commander..”), and limit their speaking to about one minute in order to hear from as many people as possible. Statements or questions may be addressed to particular individuals in the class in response to either their testimony or comments made during discussion. It is absolutely acceptable to disagree with ideas expressed. It is absolutely not acceptable to attack the person who makes the statement or expresses the idea.
3. Have the Advisors Vote and Tabulate the Results [2 minutes]
At the end of the ten- to fifteen-minute discussion, ask for overlooked points and final thoughts, and then give about thirty seconds for the advisors to consider how they will vote.
4. Discussion Representing their Own Point of View [10 minutes]
Discuss the hearing you just held (students are again themselves, no longer playing their roles). Have them focus on the following questions:
 - What were the strongest arguments they heard during the hearing? What were the most compelling or effective reasons they heard?
 - Which arguments made them reconsider their own positions (not the one they were representing, but their own positions)? What did they hear that made them question it?
 - How would they represent their assigned position differently if they were to approach the exercise again?
 - What is their current understanding of the issue now that you have gone through this exercise? What questions do they still have? What do they want to know more about, and how might they go about finding that information?
5. Wrap-up and Paper [5 minutes]
Wrap up the discussion and assign the persuasive paper. Distribute to each student **Handout #5 - Persuasive Paper Assignment and Checklist** and **Handout #6 - Persuasive Paper Rubric.**

Homework:

- Have the students write a persuasive position paper that argues **their own** position on this topic. This paper should use evidence and information from the student’s own research and from the Hearing Role-Play.

Handout #1 - Values Exercise

Below are lists of democratic ideals and constitutional principles. Your assignment is to list these concepts in the order you think is most important for both peacetime and wartime. Be prepared to explain the choices you made. Why did you rank some higher than others? What difference did it make whether it was peacetime or wartime?

Democratic Ideals		
Our democratic ideals are:	List in order of importance	
	<u>Peacetime</u>	<u>Wartime</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justice • Equality • Life • Pursuit of Happiness • Liberty • Common Good • Diversity • Truth • Popular Sovereignty • Patriotism 	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Constitutional Principles		
Constitutional principles are:	List in order of importance	
	<u>Peacetime</u>	<u>Wartime</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule of Law • Separation of Powers • Representative Government • Checks and Balances • Civil Rights • Human Rights • Federalism 	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Advisors to President Roosevelt

Group Role Playing Instructions

Group 1 of 8

Your role:

You represent advisors to President Roosevelt. There are a lot of rumors and fears going around the country. You have been asked to call together expert witnesses, hear their testimonies, and come up with a recommendation on the proposal being discussed. During the testimonies you should listen carefully and be objective. If you do not understand something during the testimonies, please ask clarifying questions. After the testimonies and discussion, you will be asked to vote on the proposal.

Proposal being discussed: Should all Japanese Americans be removed from their homes and placed in incarceration camps?

Background:

On December 7, 1941 Japan attacked U.S. military bases in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. More than 3,500 servicemen were killed or wounded. The next day, the United States declared war on Japan and entered World War II. The attack on Pearl Harbor shocked and angered many Americans. It also caused widespread fear that the West Coast of the United States could be attacked again.

Some of this fear and anger was directed towards the 120,000 Japanese Americans on the West Coast and the 160,000 Japanese Americans in Hawaii. Newspapers published false stories about spying and sabotage by Japanese Americans promoting an atmosphere of hatred and fear.

Many military heads, political leaders, and the press insisted that all people of Japanese ancestry -- from infants to elders -- were untrustworthy and potentially disloyal and dangerous. Although offering no evidence of real or potential subversive activity, the War Department urged that the entire population of Japanese Americans on the West Coast be removed by reason of military necessity.

Your instructions:

Within your group, review who will be testifying. Think about what questions you might want to ask each group.

General DeWitt Perspective

Group Role Playing Instructions

Group 2 of 8

Your role:

You represent General DeWitt, the Western Defense Commander. It is your responsibility to defend the West Coast against enemy attack. You think that the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor was aided by spying and sabotage. You think there may be potential spies in the Japanese American community but you can't tell which ones are dangerous. You want Japanese Americans removed from the West Coast so you won't have to worry about them.

Proposal being discussed: Should all Japanese Americans be removed from their homes and placed in incarceration camps?

Background:

On December 7, 1941 Japan attacked U.S. military bases in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. More than 3,500 servicemen were killed or wounded. The next day, the United States declared war on Japan and entered World War II. The attack on Pearl Harbor shocked and angered many Americans. It also caused widespread fear that the West Coast of the United States could be attacked again.

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Your instructions:

Within your group, prepare a two-minute testimony. Your testimony should do the following:

1. introduce who you represent
2. clearly indicate your opinion of the proposal and why
3. identify the democratic ideals or constitutional principles that represent your viewpoint
4. introduce other information or evidence that strengthen your viewpoint

Mike Masaoka Perspective

Group Role Playing Instructions

Group 3 of 8

Your role:

You represent Mike Masaoka, a leader of the Japanese American Citizens League. You believe that the best plan for the Japanese American community is to fully cooperate with the government, even if it means having Japanese Americans placed in camps. You believe going against government orders would not be effective and make life worse for Japanese Americans. You hope that, by being cooperative, the government will treat Japanese Americans better.

Proposal being discussed: Should all Japanese Americans be removed from their homes and placed in incarceration camps?

Background:

On December 7, 1941 Japan attacked U.S. military bases in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. More than 3,500 servicemen were killed or wounded. The next day, the United States declared war on Japan and entered World War II. The attack on Pearl Harbor shocked and angered many Americans. It also caused widespread fear that the West Coast of the United States could be attacked again.

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Henry McLemore Perspective

Group Role Playing Instructions

Group 4 of 8

Your role:

You represent Henry McLemore, a California journalist who thinks Japanese Americans should be put into camps immediately. You think that, although most of the Japanese Americans are loyal, it is better to have them make sacrifices by going into incarceration camps, than it is to run the risk of sabotage. You believe California could be attacked because of its important airplane industry.

Proposal being discussed: Should all Japanese Americans be removed from their homes and placed in incarceration camps?

Background:

On December 7, 1941 Japan attacked U.S. military bases in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. More than 3,500 servicemen were killed or wounded. The next day, the United States declared war on Japan and entered World War II. The attack on Pearl Harbor shocked and angered many Americans. It also caused widespread fear that the West Coast of the United States could be attacked again.

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Your instructions:

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1. introduce who you represent
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4. introduce other information or evidence that strengthen your viewpoint

General Delos Emmons Perspective

Group Role Playing Instructions

Group 5 of 8

Your role:

You represent General Emmons, the military commander in Hawaii. It is your responsibility to defend Hawaii against enemy attack. You know that there have been no cases of spying or sabotage by Japanese Americans. You think it would be a big waste of time and resources to put Japanese Americans from Hawaii into camps on the mainland. Furthermore, you think Japanese Americans are loyal Americans who are critical to the defense of Hawaii in case of further attack.

Proposal being discussed: Should all Japanese Americans be removed from their homes and placed in incarceration camps?

Background:

On December 7, 1941 Japan attacked U.S. military bases in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. More than 3,500 servicemen were killed or wounded. The next day, the United States declared war on Japan and entered World War II. The attack on Pearl Harbor shocked and angered many Americans. It also caused widespread fear that the West Coast of the United States could be attacked again.

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1. introduce who you represent
2. clearly indicate your opinion of the proposal and why
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4. introduce other information or evidence that strengthen your viewpoint

Lt. Commander Ringle Perspective

Group Role Playing Instructions

Group 6 of 8

Your role:

You represent Lt. Commander Ringle from the Office of Naval Intelligence. You have been studying the Japanese American community for years and believe that the FBI has already arrested individuals who might be dangerous and that the remaining Japanese Americans are as loyal as any other Americans. Earlier you raided the Japanese Consulate office and found documents that indicated the Japanese government did not trust Japanese Americans, and were hiring European Americans as spies.

Proposal being discussed: Should all Japanese Americans be removed from their homes and placed in incarceration camps?

Background:

On December 7, 1941 Japan attacked U.S. military bases in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. More than 3,500 servicemen were killed or wounded. The next day, the United States declared war on Japan and entered World War II. The attack on Pearl Harbor shocked and angered many Americans. It also caused widespread fear that the West Coast of the United States could be attacked again.

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4. introduce other information or evidence that strengthen your viewpoint

J. Edgar Hoover Perspective

Group Role Playing Instructions

Group 7 of 8

Your role:

You represent J. Edgar Hoover, director of the FBI. In the days after the attack on Pearl Harbor your agency arrested thousands of Japanese men who were listed as potentially dangerous. Your agency has been watching the Japanese American community for years and was ready with lists of names to pick up in case of war. You also know that there are no cases of spying or sabotage by Japanese Americans. Your agency has investigated hundreds of rumors and they have all been false. You think that removing Japanese Americans from their homes and placing them into camps is unnecessary.

Proposal being discussed: Should all Japanese Americans be removed from their homes and placed in incarceration camps?

Background:

On December 7, 1941 Japan attacked U.S. military bases in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. More than 3,500 servicemen were killed or wounded. The next day, the United States declared war on Japan and entered World War II. The attack on Pearl Harbor shocked and angered many Americans. It also caused widespread fear that the West Coast of the United States could be attacked again.

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4. introduce other information or evidence that strengthen your viewpoint

Walt Woodward Perspective

Group Role Playing Instructions

Group 8 of 8

Your role:

You represent Walt Woodward, publisher of the Bainbridge Island Review newspaper. You believe Japanese Americans are loyal to the United States. You are concerned that Japanese Americans are being perceived as dangerous and have started writing editorials in your newspaper reminding readers that Japanese Americans on Bainbridge Island have been good friends and neighbors.

Proposal being discussed: Should all Japanese Americans be removed from their homes and placed in incarceration camps?

Background:

On December 7, 1941 Japan attacked U.S. military bases in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. More than 3,500 servicemen were killed or wounded. The next day, the United States declared war on Japan and entered World War II. The attack on Pearl Harbor shocked and angered many Americans. It also caused widespread fear that the West Coast of the United States could be attacked again.

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Handout #3 - Additional Resources

The text of the Bill of Rights

<http://usinfo.state.gov/usa/infousa/facts/funddocs/billeng.htm>

Link detailing the executive powers of the President, which includes his authority as Commander in Chief of the military

<http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/data/constitution/article02/>

Newspaper editorial by Henry McLemore calling for the removal of Japanese Americans from the West Coast

<http://www.densho.org/causes/primarysource/C2-d-04.htm>

Detailed information about the underlying causes of the Japanese American incarceration

<http://www.densho.org/causes/default.asp>

Memo from Lt. Commander Ringle, Office of Naval Intelligence, opposing a mass removal of Japanese Americans

<http://www.densho.org/causes/primarysource/C3-d-02.htm>

Memo from J. Edgar Hoover, director of the FBI, stating his inability to find any instances of espionage by Japanese Americans

<http://www.densho.org/causes/primarysource/C3-d-03.htm>

Memo from General Delos Emmons refuting sabotage rumors in Hawaii

<http://www.densho.org/causes/primarysource/C3-d-06.htm>

Timeline of Japanese American events

<http://www.densho.org/assets/sharedpages/timeline.asp?section=resources>

List of weblinks and other reference materials about Japanese Americans

<http://www.densho.org/resources/jaexperience.asp>

Background on Mike Masaoka

http://www.pbs.org/itvs/conscience/the_story/characters/masaoka_mike.html

Testimony about cooperating with government orders

http://www.pbs.org/itvs/conscience/compliance/better_americans/03_masaoka03_i.html

Handout #4 - Graphic Organizer for the Town Meeting

Group:	Position:
Democratic Ideals or Constitutional Principles important to this group:	
Key Points or Evidence:	

Group:	Position:
Democratic Ideals or Constitutional Principles important to this group:	
Key Points or Evidence:	

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Democratic Ideals or Constitutional Principles important to this group:	
Key Points or Evidence:	

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Group:	Position:
Democratic Ideals or Constitutional Principles important to this group:	
Key Points or Evidence:	

Group:	Position:
Democratic Ideals or Constitutional Principles important to this group:	
Key Points or Evidence:	

Assignment

At the end of this lesson you will write a persuasive paper where you will:

- 1) Summarize background information on the issue of whether or not to remove and incarcerate Japanese Americans
- 2) Explain how the issue is related to the rights and responsibilities of citizenship
- 3) Develop a position on the issue and support your position with convincing reasons

Student Checklist for Paper

Researching the Issue:

- I identified key democratic ideals in the Declaration of Independence.
- I identified constitutional rights and responsibilities.
- I helped make sure the issue we chose was related to rights and responsibilities of citizens in the U.S. Constitution.
- I learned about the controversial public issue in class.
- I researched at least two different stakeholder positions on this issue and wrote down reasons for their perspectives.
- I documented the sources of information I used.
- I participated in a discussion or public forum where the different perspectives were shared.

Getting Ready to Write:

- I used the graphic organizer to compare and contrast the different stakeholder perspectives on the issue.
- I studied other perspectives on the issue.
- I organized the convincing reasons that supported my decision in class.

Writing:

- I wrote a draft of my persuasive position paper.
- I stated my position in the introduction of my paper.
- I included at least two accurate reasons supporting my decision.
- In my conclusion I reflected about the constitutional rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
- I revised and edited my work to make it easier for others to read.
- I wrote a final draft of my persuasive position paper.

Handout #6 - Persuasive Paper Rubric

	4 Excellent	3 Proficient	2 Partial	1 Minimal
Participate in civic discussion pertaining to public issues at school and in the local community	Constructs an informed decision supported convincingly and explicitly by three (or more) clear, accurate reasons and/or specific examples.	Constructs an informed decision supported convincingly and explicitly by two clear, accurate reasons and/or specific examples.	Constructs an informed decision. Decision is supported by only one clear, accurate reason.	Makes decision but it is not supported. OR Provides reasons for positions but does not make a clear decision.
Create a product that demonstrates understanding of information and responds to central questions; present product to a meaningful audience	Provides detailed background on the issue. Explicitly states and explains the history and/or current relevance of the issue.	Briefly summarizes the background of the issue.	Introduces the issue with little or no background OR background is not explicitly stated.	Introduces the issue with only partial accuracy or clarity.
Identify examples of rights and responsibilities of citizenship	Accurately and explicitly explains how issue is related to three (or more) rights and responsibilities of citizenship (including one of each) OR Accurately explains how the issue is related to one right and one responsibility and provides 2 or more well-supported reasons in the explanation.	Accurately and explicitly explains how issue is related to one right and one responsibility of citizenship OR two rights OR responsibilities. OR Accurately explains how the issue is related to one right or responsibility and provides 2 or more well-supported reasons in the explanation.	Accurately explains how issue is related to at least one right OR one responsibility of citizenship. The explanation of the relationship may be implicit.	Accurately describes or mentions rights or responsibilities with little or no connection to the issue. Discussion of rights or responsibilities may only be implicit.
Locate data into graphic organizers	Effectively uses graphic organizer to analyze two (or more) perspectives and their own with three accurate, relevant, and distinct reasons for each. (completes 6–9 boxes plus three for their own perspective)	Effectively uses graphic organizer to analyze two (or more) perspectives and their own with two accurate, relevant, and distinct reasons for each. (completes 4–5 boxes plus two for their own perspective)	Effectively uses graphic organizer to analyze two perspectives with two accurate, relevant, and distinct reasons for each. (completes 4–5 boxes total)	Ineffectively uses graphic organizer. (e.g., reasons are inaccurate) (completes 1–3 boxes total)