Comparing the Founding Documents: Grade 7 Lesson Plan

Joy Bishop

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Lesson Plans
Comparing the Founding Documents

Author: Joy Bishop
Grade(s): 7
Suggested Time: 2, 40 minute classes

Materials
Magna Carta
Declaration of Independence
Bill of Rights
1802 Ohio Constitution

Core Instruction
Prior to beginning the lesson discuss the concept of feudalism, King John and the signing of the Magna Carta
Divide students in groups of 2-3 and distribute copies of the Bill of Rights
Students will list what they believe are the three most important rights
Distribute copies of the Magna Carta (in its entirety or portions) and ask students if the rights they chose appear in the Magna Carta. Create a T-chart together with the class
Complete the same activity with the Ohio constitution
Distribute copies of the Declaration of Independence and ask students to highlight the list of grievances
Distribute the list of grievances from the Magna Carta and compare
Lead the entire class in the creation of a matrix that includes: social classes in feudal England and how they were affected by the Magna Carta; social classes in early America and how each was affected by the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights; social classes in early Ohio and how they were affected by the passage of the Ohio Constitution. *This activity will require a great deal of input from the teacher

Assessment
Students will write a one-page paper answering the question: Would it have been wise to include more rights in the Magna Carta for lower classes? Why or why not?

Standards
Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities 6-8, Benchmark B: Identify historical origins that influenced the rights United States citizens have today.
- Indicator: Grade 7, GLI 2. Describe the rights found in the Magna Carta and show connections to rights Americans have today
- Indicator: Grade X, GLI X. Content goes here
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