

EU Lesson Plan

Title of Lesson Plan: A United Europe for the Common Good

Grades: 6th or 7th

This introductory lesson about the European Union assists students in understanding the purposes of this international organization. In using the Core Democratic Value of the common good to study various aspects of this institution, students gain an understanding of the functions and intended outcomes of the European Union.

Time: Three 45-minute class periods

Objectives:

The students will develop an understanding of the components of the “European Union” through research and completion of a group project on this topic.

Materials Needed:

Computers with Internet connection for research of the following sites:
(Alternately, a printout of the following sites, one for each group)

Council of Europe. 28 July 2008. <http://www.coe.int/T/e/Com/about_coe/>.

European Central Bank. 28 July 2008. <<http://www.ecb.int/home/html/index.en.html>>.

European Commission. 28 July 2008
<http://europa.eu/institutions/inst/comm/index_en.htm>.

European Parliament. 28 July 2008.
<<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/parliament/public.do?language=en>>.

Markers or colored pencils

Poster board, one for each group of three students

Directions:

1. The teacher introduces, in a guided discussion, the idea of a shared vision of the common good that has developed within Europe through the European Union. During the discussion the following components are identified as parts of the EU that led to this shared vision of a "Union of Countries of Europe":

- Council of Europe
- European Central Bank
- European Commission
- European Parliament

2. The teacher discusses with the students how these four aspects of the EU are important in bringing different countries with different languages, cultures, and

geographies together as one economic and political unit. References should be made to information found in the websites listed above for details about the organizations and how they work at unifying political and economic policies in the EU.

3. The students form groups of three to further research one of the four components. Each group is assigned one of the EU organizations listed in Step 1. The students receive the criteria for creating a poster and they discuss what a good presentation or report would look like. As a class, they develop a rubric for assessing their work. The teacher makes a copy of this rubric for each group.

4. The group researches their assigned organization and identifies three things that it does for the common good of the people living in the EU. Once the groups have completed their research, they construct a poster with symbols, pictures, and descriptions to explain what they have learned. Each group makes a two or three minute presentation, defining the EU organization and explaining its importance for the common good of the people living there, using the poster for reference. The posters are then displayed around the room for use during future lessons. Each group completes a rubric and gives it to the teacher.

Assessment:

The students use the rubric developed in Step 1. of the **Directions** section to assess their presentation. The teacher adds comments to the students' rubrics before returning them.

Extension:

In a teacher-led discussion, the students explore the idea of a "North American Union", uniting the countries of this continent. They speculate on the advantages and disadvantages of such an alliance, comparing the various ideas to ones found in the European Union.

Educational Content Standards:

State of Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations for Social Studies

6 – C4.3.3 Give examples of how countries work together for mutual benefits through international organizations.

7 – C4.3.3 Explain why governments belong to different types of international and regional organizations.

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