

IMPLEMENTING STUDENT CENTERED LEARNING STRATEGIES FOR  
MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS THROUGH A SOCIAL JUSTICE LENS

by

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## Project Description

This project was created to implement a curriculum for a 7th grade social studies unit of study of the Foundations of Systems of Power in the United States from 1787 - 1800. The intent is to incorporate project and problem-based lessons through the lens of social justice issues, while using scaffolds for English language learners to support all students. I do this by exploring the question, *How can we create an equitable student-centered environment through project and problem based learning?* This project is to help students in a diverse setting become motivated to learn through a student centered approach.

Inspiration for this project comes from my experiences in different classrooms, from EL classes to summer school social studies classes and teaching in an alternative learning program. Seeing the need for students to be able to connect better with the material is evident in many aspects of mainstream education. Students all learn in different ways, giving them an alternative way of learning and understanding can help all students, not just students who do well on tests. Personal experiences in education have also inspired me to work on this project, as a student I excelled when I was given the opportunity to create projects or solve problems as opposed to taking a test.

I explore how to implement these types of instruction through research of my question, *How can we create an equitable student-centered environment through project and problem based learning?* There is support in implementing student centered lessons for students, while creating an equitable environment for students that better connects their personal experiences with what they are learning. The purpose of the project is also to help students understand the importance of history and how it relates to the world today. The curriculum will be created for

Farnsworth Aerospace Upper Campus 7th grade American Studies teachers. The student population at Farnsworth has a high rate of English Language Learners, coming from different cultural backgrounds. The unit has five different lessons that explore the foundation of the systems of power in our government. Each of the first four lessons will have formative assessments that gauge the students' understanding of the topics of the Constitution, Bill of Rights, Amendments to the Constitution and how they relate to citizens rights, voters rights and connection to social justice issues then and now. The assessments are exit tickets that have the students reflect on the lesson and what they have learned. The final lesson includes a summative assessment where the students can show their understanding of the relationship of the foundation of systems of powers in the government and our lives today.

The unit lesson plans cover the following Minnesota State Standards:

- 7.1.1.1.1 Exhibit civic skills including participating in civic discussion on issues in the contemporary United States, demonstrating respect for the opinions of people or groups who have different perspectives, and reaching consensus.
- 7.1.2.3.1 Identify examples of how principles expressed in the Declaration of Independence and Preamble to the Constitution have been applied throughout United States history, including how they have evolved (if applicable) over time.
- 7.1.3.5.1 Describe the components of responsible citizenship including informed voting and decision making, developing and defending positions on public policy issues, and monitoring and influencing public decision making.
- 7.1.3.5.2 Compare and contrast the rights and responsibilities of citizens, non-citizens and dual citizens.

- 7.1.4.6.1 Describe historical applications of the principle of checks and balances within the United States government.

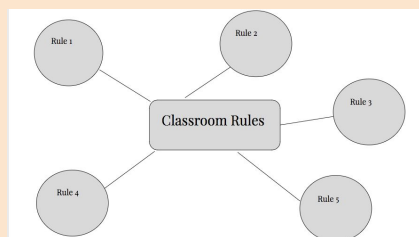
The project uses a lesson template that is implemented in St. Paul Public Schools to promote a culturally relevant pedagogy. The template is a space to include multilingual instruction along with a culturally relevant lens. It allows me to implement activities and scaffolds that support students and create an equitable learning environment

## Lesson 1

### Quarter 1 : Unit 1 (Foundations of Systems of Power: United States 1787 - 1800 ): Conceptual Lesson

**Standards: 3. The United States is based on democratic values and principles that include liberty, individual rights, justice, equality, the rule of law, limited government, common good, popular sovereignty, majority rule and minority rights.**

**Benchmarks: 7.1.2.3.1 Identify examples of how principles expressed in the Declaration of Independence and Preamble to the Constitution have been applied throughout United States history, including how they have evolved (if applicable) over time.**



**Learning Goal:** I can identify different rules that create a fair classroom for all students.

**Academic Language Objective:** I can justify the rules my group created for the class constitution using persuasive language

**Materials/Tools:**

*What tools/materials will you use to support students to engage with the task?*

[Unit 1 Lesson 1](#)

**How this lesson supports MLL Learners (*modify as needed based on your students MLL levels*)**

- Lesson uses images, group activities, graphic organizers, sentence starters

An important value to me is.....

One rule I would create is.....

The rule we are proposing is....

The reason we believe this should be a rule is.....

One thing I like was.....

I found it difficult to.....

**How this lesson supports Culturally Responsive Instruction (*modify as needed*)**

- Lesson uses a group activity where students create a classroom constitution that promotes justice for all students

**Opening Task/Prompt: (*if applicable*)**

Students will do a quick write activity and respond to the prompt: Rules are an important part of society so that we can keep order. Write about what rules you would make and why.

<b>Task Facilitation</b> Conceptual/Linking → Layers of Facilitation Procedural → Gradual Release	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
<p><b>You Do</b> (<i>individually, what are students doing during the first few minutes for the task</i>):</p> <p><b>Or</b> <b>I do</b></p> <p>Students write about values important to them</p> <p>Students create rules for society</p>	<p><b>Questions:</b></p> <p>What values are important to you?</p> <p>Are rules meant to be fair for everyone?</p> <p>Why do you think the rules you make are good for people?</p>	<p>What <b>evidence</b> of student learning are we gathering to inform instructional decisions?</p> <p>Students give thoughtful answers</p> <p>Students write in complete sentences</p> <p>Students understand the importance of rules in society</p>
<p><b>Universal Support/Differentiation:</b> sentence starters, questions</p>		
<p><b>We Do:</b> (<i>In small groups or as a whole, What are students doing?</i>):</p> <p>Students work in groups to propose classroom constitution rules</p>	<p><b>Questions:</b></p> <p>What rules do you think we need to have in class?</p> <p>Will students follow the rules?</p> <p>Are these rules fair for everyone?</p>	<p>What <b>evidence</b> of student learning are we gathering during core learning to inform instructional decisions?</p> <p>Students can create thoughtful rules</p> <p>Students understand how democracy works.</p>
<p><b>Universal Support/Differentiation:</b> working in groups, graphic organizer</p>		
<p><b>I Do:</b> (<i>Teacher brings it back to the whole group to discuss student ideas or have students model thinking</i>)</p> <p><b>Or</b> <b>You do</b></p> <p>As a class we will vote on rules for our class constitution</p> <p>Students will share their ideas</p>	<p><b>Questions:</b></p> <p>What do you think about other groups' ideas?</p> <p>Does this make you think of more rules on your own?</p>	<p>What <b>evidence</b> of student learning are we gathering during closure to inform the next steps?</p> <p>Students agree on classroom rules.</p> <p>Rules that are agreed upon make sense for the classroom</p>

with the class		Rules are fair for all students
<b>Universal Support/Differentiation:</b> sentence starters, graphic organizer		
<b>Closure:</b> <i>(if different from the I Do/You Do section)</i> Exit Ticket What is one thing you liked about creating the class constitution?  What is one thing that you found difficult about creating the class constitution?		

## Lesson 2

### Quarter 1: Unit 1 (Foundations of Systems of Power: United States 1787 - 1800): Linking Lesson

**Standards:**1. Democratic government depends on informed and engaged citizens who exhibit civic skills and values, practice civic discourse, vote and participate in elections, apply inquiry and analysis skills and take action to solve problems and shape public policy.

**Benchmarks:** 7.1.1.1 Exhibit civic skills including participating in civic discussion on issues in the contemporary United States, demonstrating respect for the opinions of people or groups who have different perspectives, and reaching consensus.



**Learning Goal:** I can identify the Constitution as a source of political power

**Academic Language Objective:** I can explain how those in power use the Constitution using verbs with the support of a tree chart

**Materials/Tools:**

*What tools/materials will you use to support students to engage with the task?*

[Unit 1 Lesson 2](#)

[Crash Course: The Constitution](#)

[What are the branches of the government](#)

**How this lesson supports MLL Learners (*modify as needed based on your students MLL levels*)**

- Lesson uses videos, images, graphic organizer and group work

One thing I notice is.....

One thing I wonder is.....

This is because.....

One thing I learned is.....

One thing I am still confused about is.....

**How this lesson supports Culturally Responsive Instruction (*modify as needed*)**

- Lesson uses a notice and wonder to show how there was not cultural diversity in the founding documents of the United States

**Opening Task/Prompt: (*if applicable*)**

Notice and Wonder

Task Facilitation

Questions

Evidence



<p>Conceptual/Linking → Layers of Facilitation Procedural → Gradual Release</p>		
<p><b>You Do</b> (<i>individually, what are students doing during the first few minutes for the task</i>): <b>Or</b> <b>I Do</b></p> <p>Students analyze an image</p> <p>Students talk about what they notice and wonder about the image</p>	<p><b>Questions:</b></p> <p>What do you notice about the image?</p> <p>What are some important things you see?</p> <p>What might this tell us about what is happening?</p> <p>When do you think this was made?</p> <p>Why do you think this is an important image to be talking about?</p>	<p>What <b>evidence</b> of student learning are we gathering to inform instructional decisions?</p> <p>Students understand what the image represents</p> <p>Students understand who was and was not involved in the image</p>
<p><b>Universal Support/Differentiation: (<i>modify as needed</i>)</b> sentence starters, questions, turn and talk</p>		
<p><b>We Do:</b> (<i>In small groups or as a whole, What are students doing?</i>):</p> <p>Students watch video about the Constitution</p> <p>Students answer questions from the video</p>	<p><b>Questions:</b></p> <p>Who were the people in power that created the Constitution?</p> <p>Who was the Constitution not good for?</p> <p>What is Shays Rebellion?</p> <p>What is the 3/5ths rule?</p> <p>What are the 3 branches of government?</p>	<p>What <b>evidence</b> of student learning are we gathering during core learning to inform instructional decisions?</p> <p>Students understand how the Constitution was written</p> <p>Students understand who wrote the Constitution</p> <p>Students understand who did and did not have rights</p>
<p><b>Universal Support/Differentiation: (<i>modify as needed</i>)</b> sentence starters, video, closed captioning</p>		
<p><b>I Do:</b> (<i>Teacher brings it back to the whole group to discuss student ideas or have students model thinking</i>) <b>Or</b> <b>You do</b></p>	<p><b>Questions:</b></p> <p>What are the three branches?</p> <p>What powers does each branch of government have?</p>	<p>What <b>evidence</b> of student learning are we gathering during closure to inform the next steps?</p> <p>Students can explain the three branches of government and</p>

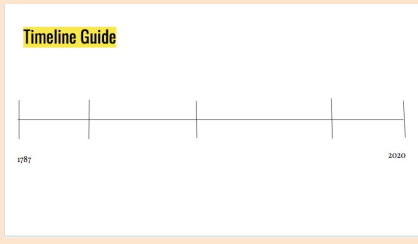
<p>Students look at an article about the different branches of government</p> <p>Students create a tree chart to show the different powers of the government</p>	<p>Why did they create different branches instead of having just one?</p>	<p>how their power is used</p>
<p><b>Universal Support/Differentiation:</b> <i>(modify as needed)</i> sentence starters, group work, graphic organizer</p>		
<p><b>Closure:</b> <i>(if different from the I Do/You Do section)</i>  Exit Ticket  What is one thing that you learned today?   What is one thing you still have a question about?</p>		

### Lesson 3

#### Quarter 1: Unit 1 (Foundations of Systems of Power: United States 1787 - 1800): (Conceptual) Lesson

**Standards:** 5. Citizenship and its rights and duties are established by law

**Benchmarks:** 7.1.3.5.1 Describe the components of responsible citizenship including informed voting and decision making, developing and defending positions on public policy issues, and monitoring and influencing public decision making.

 <p>Timeline Guide</p>	<p><b>Learning Goal:</b> I can describe who does and does not have the right to vote</p> <p><b>Academic Language Objective:</b> I can analyze voting rights using connectives such as then, results in, etc. with the support of a timeline</p>	<p><b>Materials/Tools:</b> <i>What tools/materials will you use to support students to engage with the task?</i></p> <p><a href="#">Unit 1 Lesson 3</a></p> <p><a href="#">Voting in the United States</a></p>
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**How this lesson supports MLL Learners (*modify as needed based on your students MLL levels*)**

- Lesson uses sentence starters, group work, graphic organizers

The first rule in order to vote is.....

People can vote if.....

The people who have struggled to vote are.....

Now ..... Can vote.....

**How this lesson supports Culturally Responsive Instruction (*modify as needed*)**

- Lesson uses research to examine who does and does not have the right to vote based on race, gender and socioeconomic status

**Opening Task/Prompt:** (*if applicable*)

Class voting activity

<p><b>Task Facilitation</b> Conceptual/Linking → Layers of Facilitation Procedural → Gradual Release</p>	<p><b>Questions</b></p>	<p><b>Evidence</b></p>
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<p><b>You Do</b> (<i>individually, what are students doing during the first few minutes for the task</i>):</p> <p><b>Or</b> <b>I Do</b></p> <p>Students vote on class constitution</p> <p>Students wearing a certain color shirt are not allowed to vote</p>	<p><b>Questions:</b></p> <p>Who makes voting rules?</p> <p>How does it feel to not be able to vote?</p> <p>Is this a fair way for people to make decisions?</p>	<p>What <b>evidence</b> of student learning are we gathering to inform instructional decisions?</p> <p>Students understand how voting rights are not always fair</p>
<p><b>Universal Support/Differentiation: (<i>modify as needed</i>) group work, sentence starters, visuals</b></p>		
<p><b>We Do:</b> (<i>In small groups or as a whole, What are students doing?</i>):</p> <p>Students think critically about the rules they know about who can vote</p> <p>Students work in groups to brainstorm ideas about who they think should be able to vote</p>	<p><b>Questions:</b></p> <p>Who has the right to vote?</p> <p>Should everyone have the right to vote? Why or why not?</p> <p>Do all rules need to be fair to all people?</p>	<p>What <b>evidence</b> of student learning are we gathering during core learning to inform instructional decisions?</p> <p>Students understand who does and does not have the right to vote</p> <p>Students understand how the rules are made fairly or unfairly</p>
<p><b>Universal Support/Differentiation: (<i>modify as needed</i>) group work, graphic organizer</b></p>		
<p><b>I Do:</b> (<i>Teacher brings it back to the whole group to discuss student ideas or have students model thinking</i>)</p> <p><b>Or</b> <b>You do</b></p> <p>Students create a timeline</p>	<p><b>Questions:</b></p> <p>When did voting start?</p> <p>What makes the events important?</p> <p>How has voting changed over time?</p>	<p>What <b>evidence</b> of student learning are we gathering during closure to inform the next steps?</p> <p>Students choose relevant events in the history of voting</p> <p>Students use at least 5 different events on timeline</p>
<p><b>Universal Support/Differentiation: (<i>modify as needed</i>) sentence starters, visuals, t-chart</b></p>		

**Closure:** *(if different from the I Do/You Do section)*

Exit Ticket

Write in 4 - 5 sentences a summary of voting rights in the United States and how they have changed.

Who has the right to vote?

Who has struggled to get the right to vote?


Who has always had the right to vote?

## Lesson 4

### Quarter 1: Unit 1 (Foundations of Systems of Power: United States 1787 - 1800): (Conceptual/Linking/Procedural) Lesson

**Standards:** 5. Citizenship and its rights and duties are established by law.

**Benchmarks:** 7.1.3.5.2 Compare and contrast the rights and responsibilities of citizens, non-citizens and dual citizens.

	<p><b>Learning Goal:</b> I can describe how Native Americans and slaves were treated</p> <p><b>Academic Language Objective:</b> I can compare and contrast the rights of people using the language of comparison, such as, similar to, different from, etc. with the support of a double bubble map and a t-chart.</p>	<p><b>Materials/Tools:</b> <i>What tools/materials will you use to support students to engage with the task?</i></p> <p><a href="#">Unit 1 Lesson 4</a></p> <p><a href="#">Takaki Chapter 2 &amp; 3 Excerpts</a></p>
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**How this lesson supports MLL Learners (*modify as needed based on your students MLL levels*)**

- Lesson uses visuals, sentence starters, group work

The pictures are the same.....

The pictures are different.....

The picture I drew is.....

The reason I drew this is....

The.....were treated.....

They were treated similarly.....

They were treated differently.....

**How this lesson supports Culturally Responsive Instruction (*modify as needed*)**

- Lesson uses visuals to understand different bias and how people who were oppressed were treated

**Opening Task/Prompt:** (*if applicable*)

What is similar? What is Different?

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Task Facilitation</b> Conceptual/Linking → Layers</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Questions</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Evidence</b></p>
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<p>of Facilitation Procedural → Gradual Release</p>		
<p><b>You Do</b> (<i>individually, what are students doing during the first few minutes for the task</i>): <b>Or</b> <b>I Do</b></p> <p>Students look at picture for similarities and differences</p> <p>Students discuss in partners what they see</p>	<p><b>Questions:</b></p> <p>What do you see in the picture?</p> <p>What is similar?</p> <p>What is different?</p> <p>Why do you think that?</p>	<p>What <b>evidence</b> of student learning are we gathering to inform instructional decisions?</p> <p>Students distinguish the differences and similarities</p> <p>Students understand different people see different things in pictures</p>
<p><b>Universal Support/Differentiation: (<i>modify as needed</i>) visuals, partner work, sentence starters</b></p>		
<p><b>We Do:</b> (<i>In small groups or as a whole, What are students doing?</i>):</p> <p>Students will read as as class</p> <p>Students will listen when they are not reading</p> <p>Students will draw a picture of what is happening in the excerpt</p>	<p><b>Questions:</b></p> <p>What kind of picture do the chapters paint?</p> <p>What do you think it means?</p> <p>What do you find interesting about them?</p>	<p>What <b>evidence</b> of student learning are we gathering during core learning to inform instructional decisions?</p> <p>Students will be able to draw pictures of the events that happened in the excerpt we read</p>
<p><b>Universal Support/Differentiation: (<i>modify as needed</i>) group reading</b></p>		
<p><b>I Do:</b> (<i>Teacher brings it back to the whole group to discuss student ideas or have students model thinking</i>) <b>Or</b> <b>You do</b></p> <p>Students will share with their group what they drew and why</p>	<p><b>Questions:</b></p> <p>How are slaves and indentured servants treated?</p> <p>How are those native to the lands treated?</p>	<p>What <b>evidence</b> of student learning are we gathering during closure to inform the next steps?</p> <p>Students accurately explain what they drew and why they drew it.</p>
<p><b>Universal Support/Differentiation: (<i>modify as needed</i>) visuals, group discussion</b></p>		

**Closure:** *(if different from the I Do/You Do section)*

Exit Ticket

In 3 or 4 sentences compare and contrast how people were treated by the new settlers.

The.....were treated.....

They were treated similarly.....

They were treated differently.....



## Lesson 5

**Quarter 1: Unit 1 (Foundations of Systems of Power: United States 1787 - 1800): Linking Lesson Standards:**

Democratic government depends on informed and engaged citizens who exhibit civic skills and values, practice civic discourse, vote and participate in elections, apply inquiry and analysis skills and take action to solve problems and shape public policy.

The United States is based on democratic values and principles that include liberty, individual rights, justice, equality, the rule of law, limited government, common good, popular sovereignty, majority rule and minority rights.

### Benchmarks

**7.1.1.1 Exhibit civic skills including participating in civic discussion on issues in the contemporary United States, demonstrating respect for the opinions of people or groups who have different perspectives, and reaching consensus.**

**7.1.2.3.1 Identify examples of how principles expressed in the Declaration of Independence and Preamble to the Constitution have been applied throughout United States history, including how they have evolved (if applicable) over time.**

### TQE Lesson Task:

[Potential of the Task](#) rating:



**Learning Goal:** I can explain how the Constitution and Bill of Rights impact my life.

**Academic Language Objective:** I can justify that the 1st Amendment to the Constitution gives people rights using prepositions such as, for example, most important, etc., with the support of a cause and effect chain.

### Materials/Tools:

*What tools/materials will you use to support students to engage with the task?*

[Unit 1 Lesson 5](#)

[Protest Clip](#)

**How this lesson supports MLL Learners (*modify as needed based on your students MLL levels*)**

- Lesson uses images, videos, group discussion, sentence starters

*In the picture.....*

*I think this because.....*

*People have the right to protest because.....*

*The reason people protest is .....*

**How this lesson supports Culturally Responsive Instruction (*modify as needed*)**

- Lesson uses examples of civil rights movements and makes connections to society today.

**Opening Task/Prompt:** (*if applicable*)

What's happening?!

<b>Task Facilitation</b> Conceptual/Linking → Layers of Facilitation Procedural → Gradual Release	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
<p><b>You Do</b> (<i>individually, what are students doing during the first few minutes for the task</i>):  <b>Or</b>  <b>I Do</b></p> <p>Students will hypothesize what is happening in the picture</p>	<p><b>Questions:</b>            What is happening in the picture?             What makes you think that?</p>	<p>What <b>evidence</b> of student learning are we gathering to inform instructional decisions?</p> <p>Students can explain what is happening in the picture</p>
<p><b>Universal Support/Differentiation:</b> (<i>modify as needed</i>) pair and share, visuals</p>		
<p><b>We Do:</b> (<i>In small groups or as a whole, What are students doing?</i>):</p> <p>Students watch a video clip</p>	<p><b>Questions:</b>            What is a protest?             Why do people protest?</p>	<p>What <b>evidence</b> of student learning are we gathering during core learning to inform instructional decisions?</p> <p>Students understand how the governmental powers are related to people protesting</p>
<p><b>Universal Support/Differentiation:</b> (<i>modify as needed</i>) video, group work</p>		
<p><b>I Do:</b> (<i>Teacher brings it back to the whole group to discuss student ideas or have students model thinking</i>)  <b>Or</b>  <b>You do</b></p>	<p><b>Questions:</b>            What gives people the right to protest?             What are some of the reasons people protest?</p>	<p>What <b>evidence</b> of student learning are we gathering during closure to inform the next steps?</p> <p>Students verbally explain and understand what gives people</p>

Students discuss what issues are important to them	Are there any issues that you feel you would need to protest for?	the right to protest  Students verbally explain different reasons why people protest
<b>Universal Support/Differentiation:</b> <i>(modify as needed)</i> images, group discussion, sentence starters		
<p><b>Closure:</b> <i>(if different from the I Do/You Do section)</i>  <i>Summative Assessment Link Below</i>  <a href="#"><b>Project Description and Grading</b></a></p>		

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