



CIVIC AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

SS.8.CG.2.4 Explain how forms of civic and political participation changed from the Colonial period through Reconstruction.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Essential Teacher Content Background Information	2
Lesson Summary	3
Suggested Student Activity Sequence & Pace	5
Civics Content Vocabulary	8
Additional Resources, Answer Keys, and Sources	9

2023 BENCHMARK UPDATES

- Updated from SS.8.C.1.4
 - Changed from “~~Identify the evolving~~ forms of civic and political participation from the colonial period through Reconstruction” to “Explain how forms of civic and political participation changed from the Colonial period through Reconstruction”.
- Depth of Knowledge Changes within Benchmark
 - Changed from “identify” to “explain”
- Benchmark Clarification Changes
 - Benchmark clarifications are an addition to the 2023-2024 middle school civics and government benchmarks. Benchmark clarifications are listed in the lesson summary below.
- Vocabulary Changes
 - No changes

Essential Teacher Content Background Information

[Teacher Content Notes Not Appropriate For Student Use]

This section addresses the following topics:

1. The Varied Forms of Civic and Political Participation
2. Increase in the Electorate in American History

1. The Varied Forms of Civic and Political Participation

There are many ways to participate in the political process besides voting. Political participation can include anything one uses to make one's voice heard, including both solitary and collective actions. Some are specifically cited for protection as free speech under the First Amendment, such as speaking, writing, peaceably assembling, and/or petitioning the government for a redress of grievances. Others involve more direct action, such as boycotts. Still others, such as civil disobedience, by their very definition involve breaking laws and, even if one's conscience tells them that the law is immoral, as such can lead to punishment.

2. Increase in the Electorate in American History

The numbers of those enfranchised with the vote has increased greatly in American history. Most frequently cited as responsible for this are the 15th (1870), 19th (1920), and 26th (1971) amendments, which extended voting rights to African American men, women, and eighteen year olds, respectively. But another important change happened more gradually in the early decades of the 1800s: the elimination of property requirements to vote. In the early years of American independence, most states had some threshold of property ownership or tax paying status that were required to grant citizens the right to vote. Owing to this, only about 3.4% of Americans actually voted as late as the 1824 election. Events were changing rapidly however, and during this era states were steadily eliminating this requirement. By the 1840 election, voter turnout was at over 80% of adult white males, and in 1856 North Carolina became the final state to eliminate a property requirement.

Lesson Summary

ESSENTIAL QUESTION		
How did forms of civic and political participation change from the Colonial period through Reconstruction?		
BENCHMARK		
SS.8.CG.2.4 Explain how forms of civic and political participation changed from the Colonial period through Reconstruction.		
CIVICS EOC REPORTING CATEGORY		
N/A		
OVERVIEW		
In this lesson, students will explore forms of civic and political participation, and explain how they changed from the Colonial period through Reconstruction.		
BENCHMARK CLARIFICATIONS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will describe significant acts of civic and political participation from the Colonial period through Reconstruction. 		
BENCHMARK CONTENT LIMITS		
N/A		
CIVICS CONTENT VOCABULARY		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> boycott, civil disobedience, debate, pamphlet, petition, speech, suffrage, voting 		
INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES		
Collaborative learning	Learning centers	Student-led instruction
MATERIALS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timer Clipboards (optional) Civic and Political Participation Case Studies Placards Civic and Political Participation Chart Civic and Political Participation in Early American History reading 		
B.E.S.T. STANDARDS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ELA.8.R.2.1- Analyze how individual text sections and/or features convey a purpose and/or meaning in texts. ELA.8.R.3.2- Paraphrase content from grade-level texts. 		

- ELA.8.V.1.3- Apply knowledge of context clues, figurative language, word relationships, reference materials, and/or background knowledge to determine the connotative and denotative meaning of words and phrases, appropriate to grade level.
- ELA.K12.EE.1.1- Cite evidence to explain and justify reasoning.

Suggested Student Activity Sequence & Pace

DAY	ACTIVITY SEQUENCE
DAY 1	<p>Planning Note: Prior to the lesson, set up the “Civic and Political Participation Case Studies Placards” around the room. This lesson is best taught at the end of the year when students have background knowledge on historical events from the colonial period through Reconstruction.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin the class by having students, in notebooks or on loose leaf paper, activate their prior knowledge from SS.8.CG.2.2 by responding to the following question: What are the obligations and responsibilities of citizenship? 2. Have students share out responses. 3. As students share out responses, lead them to the understanding/remind them that one of the most important responsibilities of citizens is to stay informed and participate in the political process by voting. 4. Ask students to respond to the following question/statement: Who can be involved in the political process has changed throughout American history. How? 5. Again, have students share out responses. 6. Lead students to the understanding that in early American history most states only allowed property owning white males to vote, but over time that has changed to specifically include African Americans, women, as well as virtually all citizens over the age of 18. 7. Ask students to respond to the following question: What ways can a citizen participate in the political process other than voting? (answers will vary) 8. Again, have students share out responses. 9. Lead students to the understanding that there are various ways for citizens to engage in civic and political participation and make their voice heard beyond voting. Explain to students that throughout this lesson, they are going to learn about several more acts of civic and political participation. These types of engagement have been used throughout history. 10. Hand out copies of the "Civic and Political Participation Chart" and the "Civic and Political Participation in Early American History" reading. 11. As a class, complete the reading together using text marking strategies to assist with comprehension. 12. After reading, have students complete column #1 on their chart: Explain the form of participation in a sentence, using the text as a guide. 13. While students complete the chart, circulate the room to monitor for engagement and understanding. 14. Once students have finished the first column, review their responses and have students share how they explained each term. 15. Explain to students that now they are going to look at case studies of civic and political participation in American history by completing a gallery walk to examine specific examples. 16. Divide the class into seven groups by numbering them off. 17. Explain to students that in their groups they will circulate to each center/placard. When at each center, they will read the information on the placard silently, and then work together to complete the remaining boxes on their chart for each form of participation (columns #2-5) <p>Teacher Note: Students will need to carry their charts and potentially a surface like a book or clipboard to write on to each station.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 18. Each group will start at the placard that corresponds to their groups’ number. 19. Provide students 5 minutes at this placard to read and record information. <p>Teacher Note: The timing can change depending on factors such as class ability level and class length as you deem appropriate. It is recommended you use a timer.</p>

	<p>20. Once the first 5 minute time period is up, groups should fully circulate to the next station.</p> <p>21. Repeat steps #19 & 20 just until students have had the opportunity to complete the work for 3 placards.</p> <p>22. After each group has completed their third center/rotation, have students return to their seats.</p> <p>23. End the class by asking students to share out something surprising they learned that day.</p>
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DAY 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin class by having students get into the same groups as the day before and take out their "Civic and Political Participation Chart". 2. Ask students to respond to the following question: Of the forms of civic and political participation you learned about yesterday, which one do you find the most interesting? Most effective? One you would most likely engage in? 3. Have students share their responses. 4. Explain to students that today they will complete the rest of the placards from the day before. 5. Have students assemble in front of the placard they last finished yesterday. Then rotate one placard. 6. Remind students that when at each center, they will read the information on the placard silently, and then work together to fill in the corresponding boxes on their chart. 7. Continue to set a 5 minute timer for each rotation again today. 8. Students will continue reading/filling in their charts and rotating at your instruction until all rows and columns have been filled in and all placards viewed. 9. Once all rotations are completed by each group, have students return to their seats. 10. Have each student stand up. 11. Instruct students to pair up with someone who wasn't in their placard rotation group. 12. Using just the first row of the chart (civil disobedience), each pair should take turns sharing what they learned at that placard. Teacher Note: You may also want to set a timer for this activity as well-suggestion would be 3 minutes. 13. While each person shares, the other person should add to/revise their responses. 14. While students share their charts, circulate the room to monitor for engagement and understanding. 15. After sharing information for row 1, have students find a new partner who was not in their rotation group and repeat the steps 12-14, now for the topic in row 2 (<i>pamphlet writing</i>). 16. Continue repeating this sequence with a new partner each time for the topics in rows 3-7. 17. Once all rotations are done, end class by having students return to their seats and finish any last writing for their charts.
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DAY 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin class by having students take out their "Civic and Political Participation Chart". 2. Review each form of civic and political participation, having students share out responses. Teacher Note: Use the provided answer key to guide discussion. 3. Ask students to answer the following questions: Which of these forms of participation do you think are still commonly used today? Which ones are less used? Why do you think this is? 4. As you discuss, lead students to the understanding these forms of civic and political participation were used throughout the Colonial era and largely continue today. While some have changed to include more people (voting), and some may have changed with the advent
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of mass communications (pamphlet writing) in large, the forms themselves have not changed much.

5. Checking for Understanding (Formative Assessment):

Instruct students to write a well-crafted informative response using one of the following prompts:

Prompt 1

In what ways did these forms of civic and political participation change between the Colonial era and Reconstruction? Cite specific evidence for your response.

Prompt 2

Which examples of these forms of participation have you witnessed or participated in, whether in school or in your personal life? Cite specific examples. How did this participation succeed or fail?

Civics Content Vocabulary

Word/Term	Definition
boycott	to withdraw from commercial or social relations with a country, organization, or person as a punishment or protest
civil disobedience	the refusal to obey the demands or commands of a government or occupying power, without resorting to violence or active measures of opposition
debate	a formal discussion on a particular topic in a public meeting or legislative assembly, in which opposing arguments are put forward
pamphlet	a small booklet or leaflet containing information or arguments about a single subject
petition	a formal written request, typically one signed by many people, appealing to authority with respect to a particular cause
speech	a formal address or discourse delivered to an audience
suffrage	the right to vote in political elections
voting	the method by which a group, such as a meeting or an electorate, can convene together for the purpose of making a collective decision

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Civics 360 Resources](#)

Florida Department of Education's Civic Literacy Reading List

- *The Democratic Process* by Mark Friedman
- *The Rights of the Colonists* by Samuel Adams

ANSWER KEYS

Sample Answers: Civic and Political Participation Chart

Written Response: Sample Scoring Rubric

SOURCES

Pamphlet information from University of Illinois library: <https://www.library.illinois.edu/rbx/2015/03/30/the-pamphlet-americas-first-social-media/>

Petitioning information from National Museum of American History:

<https://americanhistory.si.edu/democracy-exhibition/beyond-ballot/petitioning>

Seneca Falls Convention information from League of Women Voters:

<https://my.lwv.org/california/sacramento-county/event/seneca-falls-convention-1848-anniversary>

Henry David Thoreau and "Civil Disobedience" from Constitutional Rights Foundation: <https://www.crf-usa.org/black-history-month/thoreau-and-civil-disobedience>

U.S. Population 1776 to Present: <https://archive.vn/sf2Gk>

Placard images sourced on slides in notes section

Reading images sourced on last page of the reading