

Megan Mentrek
MAT 303: SAM
Lesson 2

Lesson Title

Reading the Geneva Conventions

Grade Level

11th American History/Civics AP

Estimated Time Required

Number of Days: 1

Number of Half-Hour Segments per Day: 3

Author Information

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Brief Description of the Lesson

Students will read and summarize select articles of the Geneva Conventions in preparation for discussions of the problems with Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay.

Lesson Plan Objectives

Content Objectives

Students will be able to:

1. Read assigned articles of the Conventions
2. Identify and summarize the rights afforded to the different groups of detainees
3. Interpret the rights into pictorial representations
4. Show awareness of international legal jargon
5. Organize knowledge into an assigned chart.
6. Summarize assigned Convention to home group.

Skill Objectives:

Students will be able to:

1. Summarize articles of the Geneva Conventions
2. Represent the articles pictorially
3. Public speaking – present summarization/explanation to the home groups
4. Social skills – work cooperatively in a group setting and explain information to others

North Carolina Social Studies Curriculum Alignment

12.01 Summarize significant events in foreign policy since the Vietnam War.

12.02 Evaluate the impact of recent constitutional amendments, court rulings, and federal legislation on United States' citizens.

12.04 Identify and assess the impact of social, political, and cultural changes in the United States.

12.05 Assess the impact of growing racial and ethnic diversity in American society.

12.06 Assess the impact of twenty-first century terrorist activity on American society.

Print and Non-print Materials

Print Materials (textbook segments or readings)

Articles of the Geneva Conventions

Supplies (paper, notecards, scissors, etc.)

Posterboard, markers, overhead copies of the articles

Technology Needs

Overhead projector

Pre-Lesson Expectations

This lesson will follow a lecture on the history of the Geneva Conventions. This lesson is meant to present the students with the exact wording of the Geneva Conventions so that they can understand if/how the U.S. is breaking those conventions in Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay. Lessons on those crises will follow this lesson.

Activities

1. Anticipatory Set (10 min):

Students will find the following analogy on an overhead projector. They must think of as many analogies as they can in 5 minutes. I will cue them to think of documents from American history that they have already studied.

“The Geneva Conventions are to the rights of soldiers during war as _____ is to _____.”

Ideally they will think of things like the Bill of Rights to the Civil Rights Movement, Bill of Rights to the rights of American citizens, etc.”

I will then proceed from this to explain that today we’ll be examining the actual articles of the Geneva Conventions to give us primary knowledge of what’s being discussed when we’re accused of breaking them. [See Part II.A.4 of Content Outline]

2. Modeling (10-15 min): I will explain that I will shortly be handing out certain relevant articles on the conventions that they will summarize. On an overhead, I will show them the language of Article 41 of the third Convention stating in broader terms that the Conventions must be posted.

I will have them read it as a class focusing on the bold section. They should be able to summarize that the conventions must be posted for all the detainees to read in their own language. I will write this on the overhead. I will explain that because the conventions must be posted, they will be making an imaginary poster of the conventions for themselves (based on an anticipatory set earlier in the week where they were “taken hostage”.) I will pose the question, “If you were detainees

would you want all this legal jargon, or would you want it simplified.” The answer will hopefully be “simplified.” I will then explain that I will be passing out the articles to their assigned “home groups” and they must work together to summarize them, write them in a poster format for the detainees, and accompany each article with a pictorial representation of the article for our illiterate detainees.

[See Part V of Content Outline]

3. Guided Practice (5 min): I would then model one more with the class doing the summarization and drawing. I'd check once more for understanding and draw their attention to the stated directions above that would be written on the board. I would explain the rubric for grading the posters before they split into their groups.

4. (30 minutes) I would then have the students move into their assigned expert groups, pass out the articles, and have them work on summarizing their articles and designing their posters.

5. I would explain that each group would get up and present their posters. While each group presented their posters, the other groups would need to take notes on each treaty in the chart I would hand out.

6. I would post the posters and remind them to refer to these quick and easy guides throughout the following debates and discussions.

7. (5 min) I would then review the main points of the conventions.

8. Homework: To look over their notes in the chart and think of loopholes for the following situation:

I would write the following on the board. “Do not chew gum in class.” I'd state that this is a rule. How could they get around it without technically “breaking” the rule. (ex: chewing gum in the hall; sucking on, rather than chewing, gum, etc). I would then explain that I wanted them to do the same with the Geneva Conventions. Suppose they were presidents of a nation detaining a group of possible terrorists. If they felt they had to detain them for national security interests or to get information, what loopholes or “gray” areas do they see in the Geneva Conventions (column 3 of their charts). Their homework is to jot down ideas in the 3rd column for possible loopholes.

[See Part VI.A of Content Outline]

Assessment

1. I will be continually circulating while the students work together on summarizing their articles. I will be monitoring that the summarizations are correct.

2. The students will complete a chart on the Conventions with their home groups. I will review this chart. See the rubric below.

3. A home assignment on possible loopholes will demonstrate how well they understood the original texts.

Rubric for assessing posters:

Content: A correct and simple summarization of all assigned articles.

Presentation: The poster clearly and neatly presents the assigned articles with an element of creativity. The students have thought critically and creatively about the pictorial representations of the articles.

Explanation: The students in the home groups could understand the expert student's explanation of the articles and accurately completed their charts with the information presented.

Related Internet Resources

www.icrc.org

<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/teachers>

Attachments:

Geneva Conventions chart.

Questions:

Knowledge:

What are the four Conventions?

What groups of people do they protect?

What are the most important articles of each Convention?

What do the Conventions say about torture and humane treatment?

How do the Conventions define POWs and civilians?

Who monitors adherence to the Conventions and supports detainees?

Comprehension:

How do the detainees compare to POWs as defined by the Conventions?

What are the mechanisms of the Conventions?

Can you distinguish the detainees from POWs? If so, how?

What do the Articles mean in simple English.

How can you translate the Articles into pictorial form?

What loopholes can you predict?

Application:

How would you demonstrate your understanding in a poster?

Analysis:

What gray areas in the Conventions can you detect?

Synthesis:

What can you generalize about the Geneva Conventions?

Generalizations:

1. The Geneva Conventions cover the rights of civilians in international and civil conflict, soldiers wounded in the field, shipwrecked crew members, and prisoners of war.
2. The ICRC governs the Geneva Conventions and monitors adherence to the Conventions.
3. Almost every nation in the world has ratified the Conventions.
4. Regarding the rights of POWs, detainees must be specified as such in order to receive the rights afforded POWs by the Conventions.
5. Many of the articles of the Convention are loose and lead to loopholes and gray areas.
6. The new “face” of war (terrorism, torture) are not defined clearly enough to ensure complete adherence to the Conventions.
7. International law is constantly being amended and improved.
8. International legal jargon is difficult to understand, but readable in the end.

Geneva Conventions Worksheet:

Treaty Group	Basic Rights (Expert Groups Present)	Possible Loopholes (Home Groups Discuss)	Questions (Home Groups Discuss)
Treaty I			
Treaty II			
Treaty III			
Treaty IV			