Lesson Plan: Examining Prejudice

Grade Level: Grades 9-12
Subjects: United States History and Government/Language Arts

Estimated Time of Completion:
Background Activity - One class period (this may vary depending on how many computers are available)
Activity One – One class period
Activity Two – Two class periods, plus homework preparation
Activity Three – One class period, plus homework assignment

OVERVIEW:
Viewing "Brother Outsider" will provide students with a starting point to research and discuss diversity in our culture and the impact intolerance has on a variety of groups in our society. In this lesson students will take a hidden bias test to uncover the existence of hidden biases, research the struggles faced by certain people living in the United States, and reflect on how they arrived at their own convictions and how firmly they are committed to their beliefs.

OBJECTIVES:
Students will be able to
- evaluate personal hidden biases.
- synthesize information from a variety of sources.
- analyze convictions and commitment to social issues.

MATERIALS NEEDED:
- Internet access
- VCR access
- Videotape of the P.O.V. program "Brother Outsider"
- Copies of “Where I Stand on the Issues” chart

PROCEDURE:
Building Background
The purpose of this activity is for students to build background knowledge on hidden biases.

2. Tell students to select and complete one of the tests.
3. After the students have completed the test, discuss the results. The following is a list of suggested discussion questions:
   - Did the results show that you have some hidden bias?
Were you surprised by the results? Explain.
What do you think might be some of the reasons behind your test results?

Focus for Viewing:
This activity may be used during the viewing of the film.

1. Tell the students to divide a piece of paper into six equal sections and write one of the following headings in each section. As students watch the films, they will record information from the film under the appropriate headings.
   - I learned that…
   - I noticed that…
   - I was surprised when…
   - I was upset when…
   - I was happy when…
   - I discovered that…

2. After viewing the films, use the information to discuss the film and summarize the point of view of the filmmaker.

ACTIVITY ONE:
In this activity, students will watch clips from "Brother Outsider" and engage in discussions and role-playing activities based on quotations from the programs.

1. Watch the clip where Bayard Rustin discusses his decision not to move on the bus because the child will not know that an injustice is being committed.
2. Break the students into small groups and ask them to answer these questions:
   3. What are some examples of injustices in the world that you have seen?
      - How can adults teach children about injustice?
      - What can young people do to fight injustice?
      - What kinds of things can people in government, industry, the film and music business etc. do to call attention to injustice?
4. Provide time for groups to share their answers with the class.
5. Watch the clip where Rustin is walking next to a Black man who is carrying a sign referring to Rustin's sexual orientation.
6. Lead the class in a discussion about the difficulties Rustin faced as a black, gay man.
7. Watch the clip where Rustin talks about the barometer of human rights shifting from Blacks to gays, homosexuals and lesbians.
8. Break the students into small groups and ask them to answer these questions:
    - Has this barometer changed since September 11th? Explain.
    - Has 9/11 changed the way some people respond to each other? Explain.
    - What kinds of things can people in government, industry, the film and music business etc. do to call attention to injustice? What can you do to encourage tolerance?
9. Provide time for groups to share their results with the class.

**Clips From "Brother Outsider"**

Clip 1- Somewhere around 14:04
The scene where Bayard Rustin is talking about not giving up his seat on the bus because the child won't know that an injustice is being committed if he does

Clip 2- Somewhere around 1:15:44
The scene where the open letter to Bayard Rustin is read and Rustin is marching next to a person holding an anti-gay sign.

Clip 3- At the end of the program
The scene where Rustin talks about the barometer of human rights switching from blacks to gays and lesbians

**ACTIVITY TWO:**
The purpose of this activity is for students to participate in a discussion on prejudice and its effect on society and people’s civil rights.

1. Do a "Think-Pair-Share" activity, in which students pair up, discuss questions and then participate in a large-group discussion. Pairs begin by discussing the following questions:
   - What happens when people are judged by the way they look?
   - What is prejudice? (List examples of how prejudice causes some people to stereotype others.)
   - What are some examples of prejudice resulting in unfair treatment of people?
   - Why do you think some people are prejudiced?
   - What is tolerance? (List examples of ways people practice tolerance or respect toward others.)
   - What do people gain or lose from respecting or not respecting other people's diversity?
   - What do you think the United States and the world in general gain or lose from not respecting diversity?
   - What are some things that can happen when people practice intolerance over a long period of time?
   - What can people do to help create an environment that encourages respect for all persons?

2. Have the pairs share their insights with the entire class.

3. Discuss how prejudice and intolerance have affected people’s civil rights.

**ACTIVITY THREE:**
In this activity students will research the struggles faced by different groups of people.

1. Divide the class into groups and assign each group one of the following topics:
   - African-Americans
   - Gays and Lesbians
   - Native Americans
   - Women
   - Arab Muslims
   - Asian Americans
   - Body Image bias
   - Age bias

2. Ask each group to collect information on the particular stereotypes, struggles and violation of civil rights its group faces.
3. Provide time for each group to report its findings to the class.

ACTIVITY FOUR:
The purpose of this activity is for students to consider how they have arrived at their convictions and how firmly they are committed to their beliefs.

1. Ask students to spend a few minutes answering these questions. Teacher Note: Tell the students that their responses are for their own use and will not be collected or graded.
   Where do I stand on the following issues:
   - African-American rights
   - Gay and Lesbian rights
   - Native American rights
   - Women’s rights
   - Arab Muslim rights
   - Asian American rights
   - Body Image bias
   - Age bias

2. After students have spent time reflecting on where they stand on the issues, ask them to fill out the “Where I Stand on the Issues” Chart.
3. After students have completed the chart, break the class into groups of three or four.
4. Ask each student to select one issue to discuss with the group members. Teacher Note: Tell students that the point here is not to defend their position, but rather to discuss how they arrived at their beliefs.
5. Homework Assignment: Have students write a “Stop And Consider Letter” to an elected official, friend, relative, etc.

ASSESSMENT SUGGESTIONS:
Teacher Evaluation

- Create individual student portfolios of students’ work.
- Observe students in the following areas:
  - Growth in cognitive skills
  - Interactions that occur during group work
  - Growth in social skills
  - Growth in attitudes toward learning
- Conference with each student on these topics:
  - His or her goals
  - Strategies for learning
  - Solutions to problems

Student Self Evaluation

- What did I learn from this activity?
- What do I still want to learn about this topic?
- What part of my work on this activity gives me a sense of achievement?
- What would I do differently next time?
- In what ways was I able to work with others on this activity?
- What did I like most about this activity?

EXTENSIONS:
Work as a class to create a school or community initiative for tolerance. The following sites provide many ideas on the topic.

http://www.unesco.org/tolerance/teneng.htm#idea1
Ten Ideas for Observing the International Day for Tolerance

http://www.apa.org/pi/oema/racism/q17.html
Ten Things You Can Do To Fight Prejudice and Racism

http://www.tolerance.org/101_tools/index.html
101 Tools For Tolerance

http://www.tolerance.org/10_ways/index.html
10 Ways To Fight Hate

STANDARDS:

Civics:
Standard 10
Understands the roles of voluntarism and organized groups in American social and political life
6. Knows the historical and contemporary role of various organized groups in local, state, and national politics (e.g., unions; professional organizations; religious, charitable, service, and civic groups)

Standard 11
Understands the role of diversity in American life and the importance of shared values, political beliefs, and civic beliefs in an increasingly diverse American society
2. Knows different viewpoints regarding the role and value of diversity in American life
3. Knows examples of conflicts stemming from diversity, and understands how some conflicts have been managed and why some of them have not yet been successfully resolved

Applies decision-making techniques:
Level IV Grade: 9-12
Standard 6
5. Evaluates major factors that influence personal decisions

Working with others:
Level IV Grade: K-12
Standard 1
Contributes to the overall effort of a group

United States History:
Level IV Grade: 9-12
Standard 31
Understands economic, social, and cultural developments in the contemporary United States
5. Understands major contemporary social issues and the groups involved

Language Arts:
Writing
Standard 1
Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where I Stand On the Issues</th>
<th>Rights &amp; Biases</th>
<th>Are you content with your position?</th>
<th>Was your opinion formed with careful consideration?</th>
<th>Have you chosen this position on your own accord?</th>
<th>Have you publicly stated your position?</th>
<th>Have you acted on your beliefs?</th>
<th>Do you have a strong commitment to your position?</th>
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<td>African-American Rights</td>
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