



LABOR MOVEMENTS AND THE FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

Middle School Social Studies

CONTENTS

LESSON 1: Introduction to the Concept of Assembly

LESSON 2: Defining Labor

LESSON 3: Strikes and Labor Laws

LESSON 4: Labor and Peaceful Assembly Today

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LESSON 1:

Introduction to the Concept of Assembly

OBJECTIVES

- » Students will access their own prior understanding and knowledge of the freedom of assembly.
- » Students will begin exploring the key essential questions surrounding the freedom of assembly.

CORE CONTENT STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.4

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Chart paper, white board, and/or smart board
- Access to projection for video about freedom of assembly:
<http://www.youthforhumanrights.org/what-are-human-rights/videos/right-to-public-assembly.html>
- Chart paper with questions pre-written:
 - 1) Why do people hold assembly?
 - 2) What makes an assembly effective?
 - 3) Is there a difference between a protest and an assembly?
 - 4) Is the freedom of assembly important? Why?
- Index cards (optional)

INTRODUCTION/ANTICIPATORY SET

- 1) Play the following video for students to give them a visual of freedom of assembly: <http://www.youthforhumanrights.org/what-are-human-rights/videos/right-to-public-assembly.html>
- 2) Ask the class: *Based on the video, what do you think the freedom of assembly is?*
- 3) Using chart paper or whiteboard, create a class definition of assembly. You may also provide students with the following definition and information: Assembly is “the *intentional* and *temporary presence* of a number of *individuals* in a *public place* for a *common expressive purpose*.”
- 4) During class discussion, encourage students to consider various modes of assembly: rallies, marches, sit-ins, walk-outs, strikes, vigils, occupations.

ACTIVITIES

- 1) Silent Conversation: Students are broken into groups of 4. Each group is assigned a question from the list below and given a piece of chart paper and markers (one marker/pen per student). Students respond by writing/drawing their reactions silently.
 - a) Why do people hold assembly?
 - b) What makes an assembly effective?
 - c) Is there a difference between a protest and an assembly?
 - d) Is the freedom of assembly important? Why?
- 2) After 3–5 minutes (exact time limit determined based on size of group, length of period, and level of engagement), each group moves on to a new question. Students may continue to engage in the conversation by writing/drawing, but without talking. They can use arrows and other imagery to show connections and respond to other students’ ideas.
- 3) This process is repeated until students have had a chance to respond to all of the questions.
- 4) Students walk around independently with a journal or sheet of loose-leaf paper to write down any ideas that particularly strike them. This process can take 5–7 minutes.
- 5) Open up the discussion. Each student can share one idea they wrote down before allowing further commentary, responses, and discussion. Address all four questions during class discussion.

CLOSURE/ASSESSMENT

Have each student write an important or interesting fact about freedom of assembly on a half sheet of paper or index card and submit these “exit tickets” as they exit the classroom. Review these “exit tickets” for understanding of general concepts. You can use for grading if desirable.

OPTIONAL EXTENSION

Have students write down and submit one powerful idea they took away from the discussion. The idea can be either something they wrote down from class discussion, or one of the ideas they wrote down while they were looking at the chart papers from the Silent Conversation. These comments can be put together into a “list poem” about the freedom of assembly to be shared during a future class period.

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LESSON 2

Defining Labor

OBJECTIVES

- » Students will access their own prior knowledge about labor laws and the labor movement.
- » Students will read and write about modern labor laws.

CORE CONTENT STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.4
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.1
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Chart paper and/or white board or smartboard
- Access to projection for overview of labor laws in the U.S.:
<https://www.dol.gov/general/aboutdol/majorlaws>
- Access to projection for video about labor:
<https://youtu.be/xPhLKARVe4>
- Handout (included)

INTRODUCTION/ANTICIPATORY SET

Establish a definition of labor

- 1) Ask students what they know about why we celebrate Labor Day.
- 2) Create a class definition of the word “labor.” (Merriam Webster gives this definition: “human activity that provides the goods or services in an economy”; elicit some version of this from students, or give them this information. Post on chart paper for reference throughout the unit.)

ACTIVITIES

- 1) Explain that part of the U.S. Government (Executive Branch) is the Department of Labor, and that that department is in charge of creating and enforcing more than 180 laws about labor or workers. Brainstorm a quick list of different types of workplaces (either on chart paper or whiteboard/chalkboard).
- 2) Ask why the country would need laws about labor and workers. Take a few responses; you can chart these as well, along with the definition of labor, to post throughout the unit.
- 3) Show this video to give students a sense of labor conditions in the 1800s, to fuel their small group work: <https://youtu.be/xPhLKARAv4>
- 4) Assign students to small groups in whatever manner you find most effective (random names on notecards, existing groups, or you may plan ahead for this activity).
- 5) Choose a volunteer to read the handout aloud.
- 6) Allow students time to work.
- 7) Reporters share. You can keep track of each group’s ideas on chart paper or a board.
- 8) Project the following website for students and go over the general categories. In discussion, draw connections between the ideas generated by the class and the current categories of labor laws. <https://www.dol.gov/general/aboutdol/majorlaws>

CLOSURE/ASSESSMENT

In the final moments of class, students fill out the final question on the worksheet as an exit ticket. If time allows, share some of these ideas with the class.

HANDOUT

NAME _____ DATE _____

LABOR LAWS

- 1) Choose a group recorder to take careful notes and a group reporter to share out to the group.
- 2) Your job as a group is to create a list of laws you find necessary to protect workers in the United States today.

LABOR LAW IDEA	REASON FOR LABOR LAW

Why are labor laws necessary in the United States? In your answer, give specific evidence from today's class discussion or documents.

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LESSON 3

Strikes and Labor Laws

OBJECTIVES

- » Students will understand the use of peaceful assembly to strike
- » Students will identify the specific challenges of strikes as a form of peaceful assembly
- » Students will learn the specific history of the Homestead Strike
- » Students will analyze secondary sources to find patterns.

CORE CONTENT STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.4
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Access to projection for video:
<http://www.history.com/topics/homestead-strike/videos>
- Enough computers to spread out across small groups OR a class set of materials from the following website:
<http://247wallst.com/investing/2010/09/03/the-ten-biggest-labor-strikes-in-american-history/2/>
- Handout (included)

INTRODUCTION/ANTICIPATORY SET

- 1) Pose these essential questions to students: How can peaceful assembly help be used in relation to labor laws? Who knows the specific word for the type of peaceful assembly that workers use when they want to make changes and get results? Introduce or review the idea of strike:
- 2) Distribute Handout A and go over the questions and information the students will be looking for as they view the video.
- 3) Show the following video:
<http://www.history.com/topics/homestead-strike/videos>
- 4) Give students 5–7 minutes to respond to the questions, then take a few responses to each in class discussion.

ACTIVITIES

- 1) Assign students to pairs or small groups to review information about important strikes from American history. If you have enough computers, direct students to the website; or you can photocopy and distribute the information. <http://247wallst.com/investing/2010/09/03/the-ten-biggest-labor-strikes-in-american-history/2/>
- 2) You may want to ensure each of these ten strikes are represented by at least one group or pair; or you may want to choose a smaller number of strikes and assign multiple groups/pairs to each event.
- 3) Each group/pair should complete Handout B answering analysis questions about their assigned strike.
- 4) Each group can present their findings at the end of class. If time allows, discuss common themes across the various strikes.

CLOSURE/ASSESSMENT

Ask students to consider if there are labor demands that have not been completely met, or if there are changes that need to be made due to current conditions such as technological changes. Ask what role peaceful assembly could take in bringing about change.

DIFFERENTIATION IDEAS

Students who may not be comfortable completing the entire chart can be instructed to focus on specific strikes, rather than all ten.

Students who finish early and/or need an extra challenge can seek out historical informational about additional strikes that might fit the chart as well (being sure to cite sources).

HANDOUT A

HOMESTEAD STRIKE

PEOPLE TO KNOW:

Andrew Carnegie: owner of the Carnegie Steel Company with steel mills across the country, considered one of the richest Americans in history

Henry Frick: Manager of the Carnegie Steel Company

Pinkerton detectives: a private police force

Respond to the following questions after you watch the video:

- 1) How did the workers at the steel mill use peaceful assembly?
- 2) What were the results of their attempt at peaceful assembly?
- 3) What is your opinion of Frick's response to the use of peaceful assembly? How do you think Frick's role in this incident is remembered in history?

HANDOUT B

NAME _____ DATE _____

IMPORTANT STRIKES IN U.S. HISTORY

1) What was your strike called, and what year did it take place? What company was involved?	
2) How did workers use peaceful assembly?	
3) What did the workers want to accomplish/what were their demands?	
4) How did the management of the company and/or the U.S. government respond to the use of peaceful assembly?	
5) What was the end result of the strike?	



LESSON 4

Labor & Peaceful Assembly Today

OBJECTIVES

- » Students will understand the role of peaceful assembly in the modern labor movement.
- » Students will learn the specific history of the Fight for 15 movement.
- » Students will analyze secondary sources to find patterns.
- » Students will compare secondary sources from history and today.

CORE CONTENT STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Ability to project, or photocopied class set of the page from this website: <http://fightfor15.org/about-us/>
- Ability to project video: <http://money.cnn.com/2015/04/15/news/low-wage-workers-protest/index.html>
- Enough computers for small groups to use for research, or photocopies of articles cited below as needed.
- Handouts for small groups (included)

INTRODUCTION/ANTICIPATORY SET

- 1) Remind students of yesterday's discussion of modern labor needs.
- 2) Project this website, or hand out photocopies of the page:
<http://fightfor15.org/about-us/>
- 3) Students can take turns reading aloud or the teacher can read the information out loud.
- 4) Show the following video as an overview: <http://money.cnn.com/2015/04/15/news/low-wage-workers-protest/index.html>. Discuss briefly how this does or doesn't look like footage they viewed of the Homestead Strike.

ACTIVITIES

- 1) Jigsaw activity: split students into small groups in whichever method you feel is best. News articles are provided for five major event dates along the Fight for 15's timeline. Provide each group with one of the articles below.
- 2) Each group will fill out Handout A, provided below, based on their readings.

News articles (Note: multiple articles are provided for each event at varying reading levels).

General Timeline of the Fight for 15 Movement (useful for all groups to use, both to look up their date, and for context: <http://www.takepart.com/article/2014/04/04/fast-food-wages-timeline>)

November 29, 2012:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/30/nyregion/fast-food-workers-in-new-york-city-rally-for-higher-wages.html>

<http://money.cnn.com/2012/11/29/smallbusiness/fast-food-strike-mcdonalds/index.html>

April 4, 2013:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/04/nyregion/fast-food-workers-plan-second-strike-for-more-pay.html>

<http://www.nbcnews.com/feature/in-plain-sight/fast-food-workers-strike-citing-low-wages-its-not-enough-v17587032>

September 4, 2014:

<https://foodfirst.org/from-strike-to-movement-the-fight-for-a-15-minimum-wage/>

<http://www.msnbc.com/msnbc/home-care-workers-join-the-fight-15>

https://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/05/business/economy/fast-food-workers-seeking-higher-wages-are-arrested-during-sit-ins.html?_r=0

April 15, 2015:

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/apr/15/fight-for-15-minimum-wage-protests-new-york-los-angeles-atlanta-boston>

<https://www.cnbc.com/2015/04/15/fight-for-15-mcdonalds-workers-protest-to-raise-minimum-wage.html>

<http://money.cnn.com/2015/04/15/news/low-wage-workers-protest/index.html>

November 29, 2016:

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/nov/29/fight-for-15-protest-minimum-wage-fast-food-airport-workers>

<http://money.cnn.com/2016/11/29/news/minimum-wage-protest-arrests/index.html>

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/fight-for-15-minimum-wage-protests-chicago-ohare-nyc-la-boston/>

- 3) Students groups share their findings with each other in date order to give the whole class a sense of the progress of the movement.
- 4) Back in their groups, students plan an upcoming peaceful assembly for this movement. Explain the goals as well as any other details you think necessary, including location(s), dates and significance of dates, suggested participants. (Handout B, provided below.)

CLOSURE/ASSESSMENT

Student groups share their peaceful assembly ideas with each other, explaining their choices using examples from history.

DIFFERENTIATION IDEAS

Articles at different reading levels provided for main activity.

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HANDOUT A

THE MODERN LABOR MOVEMENT: FIGHT FOR 15

1) Date of your Fight for 15 Action:	
2) How was peaceful assembly used for this action?	
3) Which groups of people were involved in this action?	
4) How did the management of companies and/or the U.S. government respond to the use of peaceful assembly on this particular date? What happened as a result of this peaceful assembly?	
5) What gains do you see being made by the Fight for 15 movement?	

HANDOUT B

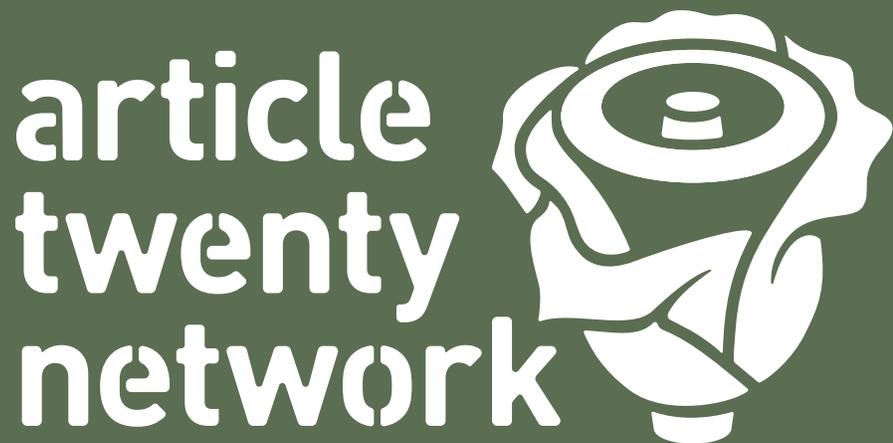
FIGHT FOR 15: WHAT'S NEXT?

<p>1) What type of peaceful assembly should the Fight for 15 movement plan next?</p>	
<p>2) Where should it be located? (Name of city as well as specific location within the city; you may have multiple locations) Explain your reasoning, with references to the history of the Fight for 15 movement as well as past labor movements.</p>	
<p>3) Which groups of people should be involved in this action? Explain your reasoning, with references to the history of the Fight for 15 as well as past labor movements.</p>	
<p>4) When should this action take place? Explain your reasoning, with references to the history of the Fight for 15 as well as past labor movements.</p>	

NOTES

NOTES





The Article 20 Network defends and advances the human right to freedom of peaceful assembly worldwide.

Through education, advocacy, research and legal services, the Article 20 Network encourages the proliferation of public demonstrations and fights back against obstacles and threats to our human right to peacefully assemble.

Learn more about peaceful assembly and our work at:

a20n.org