



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2005 Volume III: War and Civil Liberties

Thomas Hobbes and John Locke: Using Enlightenment Philosophy to Teach Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

Curriculum Unit 05.03.03, published September 2005
by Justin Boucher

Introduction

This unit seeks to compare the work of Thomas Hobbes (*Leviathan*) to that of John Locke (*Two Treatises on Government*) with regards to their views on civil liberties, the role of government, and the extent to which their background in the English Civil War affected their respective philosophies. In doing so the students will explore the history of the English Civil War, define the concepts of civil rights and civil liberties, debate/defend the positions of these men, and evaluate the works of these men with regards to civil liberties, and the role of government.

This unit necessarily covers a great deal of material in a relatively short period of time. In the interest of achieving the unit's goals within that short space of time, and in consideration of the reading levels and the abilities of my students, I have chosen to make use of outlines and quotes, rather than full excerpts of the works of Hobbes and Locke. I believe this choice to be necessary, and given the procedures used in the lessons, this choice serves to enhance certain aspects of this unit.

I have outlined here not only the procedures that I will use in teaching the unit to my students, but also a series of modifications, and a small number of alternative assignments which might be useful in circumstances other than my own.

Justification

Civil rights and civil liberties often meet with lukewarm responses in the classroom. Most students are interested on some level in what rights they have, and what authority figures such as teachers and police officers can get away with, but that can be where their interest wanes. It is sometimes possible as a result of this fact for teachers to fall into the pitfall of confining a discussion of civil rights and liberties to a study of what rights students have in comparison to what rights they think they have. While this in and of itself is valid as a topic, it can leave out many levels of the topic that can enhance student understanding.

One such level is the question "What is the distinction between civil rights and civil liberties?" It is important to understand that, though in common usage these two concepts may be similar, in truth they represent very different things. A civil liberty is, in practice, a right guaranteed to an individual, while a right is a specifically outlined behavior to which a group may be entitled. These terms are often used interchangeably, but in common usage the distinction becomes quite important, and it functions well as a distinction in an educational context. Without an understanding of this distinction this topic and this discussion can become difficult to grasp. Therefore the first objective of the unit will be definition of the terms civil rights and civil liberties.

Another such question is "Where do our rights come from?" This question can have many answers, i.e. the Constitution, religion, god, philosophy, the founding fathers, authority, etc. In most cases, however, the answer to that question is a matter of authority, opening the door to a discussion of authority, which is a basic concept in any well-rounded education. Any unit or lesson on civil rights and civil liberties can easily be expanded to include a discussion of the nature of authority. I would argue that such a discussion is necessary to any full understanding of one's rights and one's liberties and how they are protected. Therefore the second objective of this unit will be to explain through inquiry the origins of basic rights.

In addition to providing a framework for understanding civil rights and liberties, a discussion of authority offers glimpses into the role of government in people's lives, which may be a useful discussion when approaching this topic. The question of the proper role of government is at the center of many debates within government, and can be a very salient question for discussion within the class. Is government's purpose simply to enforce rules? Is it to protect me? My property? My rights? These questions must be addressed if one is to approach the breadth of this kind of subject matter.

The Enlightenment philosophers Thomas Hobbes and John Locke eloquently outline this debate. In the case of Hobbes and Locke the answer to that question comes directly from their shared experience in the English Civil War. Since studying these men requires an understanding of their common backgrounds, it becomes necessary to explore in some depth the English Civil War. Therefore the third objective of this unit will be for the students to describe briefly the English Civil War, its causes, its events and its outcome.

The English Civil War marks the beginning, by many accounts, of an age of revolutions, which unseated the old feudal systems in many countries and replaced them with various new forms of government. The case of England is somewhat confused by the fact that in some cases, such as that of the United States, this change brought about a new and substantially different country than what had stood before. In the case of England it led to roughly 20 years of war and sloppy rule that ultimately ended with the reinstatement of the monarchy, subject to new constitutional restraints and increased parliamentary power. In any event the English Civil War was the first of many revolutions and civil wars that would plague the old monarchies of Europe for 300 years, ultimately resulting in the destruction of most of the absolute monarchies which existed in Europe at the time of the English Civil War.

The importance of the English Civil War does not end with the beginning of an age of revolution in Europe. The English Civil War profoundly impacted the American Revolution as well. As parts of the English empire, the American colonists must have viewed the English Civil War as a shared experience. They would have been familiar with the course of the war, and its events. Furthermore, many intellectual Americans went on to become well versed in the intellectual works produced in part as a result of this war. American colonists and especially American scholars would have known works of men like Hobbes and Locke. A direct link can be seen between these philosophical works and the works of our founding fathers.

The works of Hobbes and Locke lay the groundwork for our current system through their impact on early

American revolutionary sentiment. The American government displays the influence of these men in style and form. Thomas Jefferson went so far as to quote Locke almost directly in the writing of the Declaration of Independence. The intellectual foundations of our country can be traced more or less directly to the common experience of the English Civil War, and therefore, it is a quite important aspect of a student's historical education. The fourth objective of my unit is to read and discuss the Hobbes *Leviathan* and Locke's *Two Treatises on Government*, with attention to the position of both men on civil rights and the role of government and to the background of each man.

The study of Hobbes and Locke also allows for the comparison of individuals who endured similar circumstances, and made the similar decision to write a philosophy of government, perhaps in hope of avoiding these circumstances in the future. Both men lived through the English Civil War, though they were in very different stages in their lives. Both were heavily influenced by their own personal circumstances during a time of revolution, though Locke was more heavily influenced by the revolution of 1688. Both went into exile briefly and went on to produce treatises on government and civil liberties in which they outline the role of government, the role of the people, the responsibilities of each and the rights of each. In doing so they created a pair of works which lend themselves quite nicely to comparison. Therefore the fifth objective of this unit will be to compare the two men in terms of their background and their work.

Such a comparison exists on many different levels, each of which could be used with great effect within the classroom. While an entire class could be taught on the basis of what each man advocated, there is another layer beneath that worthy of discussion. This kind of comparison of two philosophers, produced by similar circumstances at a similar time, exists in many other situations e.g. Confucius vs. Lao Tzu, or Aristotle vs. Plato. It opens the possibility of discussing the effects that events or circumstances can have on individuals.

The beauty of this comparison lies in the fact that these men took drastically different stances on the role of government and the rights of the people. Hobbes and Locke saw revolution from very different perspectives, and went on to produce philosophies that were almost diametrically opposed to one another. Hobbes suggests a strict government whose only goal is protection of the people from harm. Locke on the other hand suggests that the purpose of government is the protection of liberty. This debate is central in terms of civil rights and civil liberties and seems to be the question that our government deals with on a daily basis.

Through this unit I will also deal with fundamental social studies skills. The ability to make a statement and defend it is one of the fundamental elements of education. This simple act requires content knowledge surrounding the argument to be made, logical reasoning to provide support, and the ability to articulate one's point of view. On the surface, it would appear that these elements are taught every day in schools across the country, and indeed that assumption would be to a certain extent correct. The task of forming a sound argument, however, is slightly more daunting than it may seem. It is by no means a simple task to teach. We will explore the process of creating a sound argument through the sixth objective, which is to debate the two on their merits OR campaign for the importance of one over the importance of the other.

There are many tools in the teacher's repertoire that allow teachers to address this challenge, and teachers approach the task in different ways. These methods range from asking a student to write an essay, to classroom debates, to discussions of a topic in class. These methods are usually exercised by making use of the course material at hand. One might ask students to make an argument for or against the American Revolution, or to defend Huck Finn's actions with regards to Jim's freedom. These kinds of examples ask the students to use logical reasoning and factual examples in making sound arguments to defend their position. It is however rare that these examples lead the students to explore logical reasoning or the craft of argument

itself.

The study of philosophy does just that. Philosophers not only offer ample material that can be debated or discussed within class, but they also do so in a fashion and style that is the height of logical reasoning. The study of philosophy is necessarily a study of logic. Therefore it can be extremely useful in terms of teaching the craft of argument.

Philosophers seek to make their point with a solid thesis and rhetorical proof, exactly the kind of evidence and support we wish to see from our classes. Additionally, philosophers make use of multiple rhetorical devices to make their point. Simple exposure to these rhetorical devices would be educationally valid in and of itself, without in-depth exploration of the tools themselves. Students can strengthen their own rhetorical abilities through reading philosophy.

Deeper exploration of these rhetorical devices reveals for students a larger set of tools for their own writing, which greatly increase their abilities to create a well-reasoned and well-written statement. Such an exploration, though initially daunting, leads to identification, and definition of a greater variety of rhetorical methods. In many cases the students will be familiar with the method, but not with its definition, or the variety of ways in which the method can be used. In some cases the students will be exposed to a completely new means (to them) of crafting an effective argument. In all cases even the most seasoned essayist in the class will have opportunity to add to their understanding of the craft.

The study of works of philosophy adds different tools to the teacher's repertoire as well. Philosophy offers us a chance to assess the student's understanding of logic and rhetoric by dividing the process of argument into its requisite parts. Given that every philosophy begins with a thesis and is often proven through personal or global examples, it is possible to see how a student would go about proving a thesis, even if the thesis itself is not their own. Thus students are given the opportunity to imagine how they would go about proving a thesis and offering various arguments for someone else's point of view.

This approach helps philosophy as a discipline become a means by which teachers can assess student understanding of rhetorical concepts. It gives teachers the chance to break the process of argument or essay writing down into constituent parts, giving students a more uniform and concrete starting point than an essay question can. Furthermore it grants us the opportunity to explore, quite specifically, where the successes and where the failures lie in specific parts of the rhetorical process, thereby allowing us a greater understanding of how to fix these problems. We will therefore assess the students' ability to apply the rhetorical process as well as their ability to evaluate the specific works of philosophy through the seventh unit objective, in which the students will evaluate the work of one of these men with regards to civil rights and the role of government in a formal essay

In addition to the value of philosophy as a discipline, the study of specific influential philosophers can have valuable ramifications in the classroom. The study of Aristotle, Kant, Gandhi or Martin Luther King Jr. can help students to understand the philosophical underpinnings of the world in which we live today. More specifically, the study of political philosophers, such as Locke, Hobbes, or Jefferson, can help the students to understand the specific ramifications a political philosophy can have on their lives.

The study of the work of Lock and Hobbes allows students to investigate the nature of philosophy, the impact of environment on thought, and the process by which philosophy is crafted, all at once. Like many other disciplines, particular (over-using specific and its derivatives) examples of philosophy can demand an in-depth look at the lives and decisions of their creators, which in turn demands a deeper understanding of the nature

of the world around them. Thus if one delves into the background of the individual liberties of Americans today, within a couple of degrees they might wind up studying the English Civil War. Such a link also allows a sound and well-reasoned answer to the question "Why does this matter to me?"

In the case of philosophy this question can often be hard to answer, and it may crop up more often given one simple fact: philosophy can be hard to teach. Philosophy is typically written in very difficult language, and it is therefore very difficult for students to access. In the case of this unit, I intend to present various means around that, which will make the philosophy accessible, while retaining its applicability within the classroom.

Context

I intend for this unit to be taught in my 9th grade Honors World Civilizations course at a magnet high school in New Haven, Connecticut. The class periods are 82 minutes long and meet every other day. The course is designed to serve as an overview of world history, with a specific focus on ancient world cultures. That focus is geared to align with the school's English curriculum for 9th graders.

The course centers on improving social studies skills, especially that of essay writing, in addition to teaching history. Throughout the year my students are expected to write a number of formal essays, usually two to three per quarter, in the interest of preparing them for the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT), which they take in their sophomore year. The CAPT requires a great deal of writing and so I focus on this important skill.

My students are also exposed to a number of philosophers, and two comparisons of philosophers throughout the course. In our unit on China we will compare the works of Lao Tzu to that of Confucius, and in our unit on Greece we will compare the works of Aristotle and Plato. Though my students will have a limited background in philosophy and the comparison of philosophers, I do not think this kind of background is required to make use of this unit.

In the New Haven curriculum this subject matter has particular relevance in that this unit will be taught as the capstone of our course. The schedule of courses in New Haven requires that students take World Civilizations in their freshman year, and U.S History 1 and 2 in their sophomore and junior years respectively. I therefore seek to leave my World Civilizations students with an overview of history through the Renaissance and into the Enlightenment so that they are poised to begin U.S. History 1.

Strategies

Lesson 1: Defining Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

Explanation/Modifications

The first lesson of the unit begins with an anticipatory set that asks students to make a list of 10 rights they have. The teacher will then lead a brainstorming session in which the students state all of the rights that they

have put down while the teacher writes those rights on the board in 3 separate columns. The first column will represent those things that are actually rights, the second will be those rights, which are civil liberties, and the third column would be rights that they think they have, but they do not.

The class will then discuss these columns. The teacher will pose the question "why did I put these in columns like this?" Ideally a discussion will ensue, though it will be important to give the students ample time to answer, as they may have to think about it. The ultimate goal of this discussion is to identify the fact that civil rights and civil liberties are different, and that they are indeed terms in need of definition. It will be up to the students to then use their textbooks, or potentially the Internet, to define these terms.

When the students have working definitions in place of these terms the class will return to the board and make new lists of things that definitely fall under each category. This series of activities will prepare the students for their homework assignment, which asks them to create more distinctions between the two by explaining the differences between the two terms.

Lesson 2: Where do our rights originate?

Explanation/ Modifications

The second lesson will focus around the theme of discovering the origins of our modern rights. This will be accomplished through the inquiry process, in hopes of allowing the students to discover for themselves the origins of their rights. The lesson will begin again with brainstorming. For the purposes of this lesson I have chosen the question "Where do your rights come from?" as the topic for brainstorming. I am hoping that with some degree of prodding I can initiate a discussion that deals with multiple levels of rights, and multiple levels of law social history that afford them to us.

The class will brainstorm the origins of these rights before we progress to the inquiry process. The inquiry process functions through the use of guiding questions, which the students then research using specifically selected materials. The goal is to have the students explore the topic, rather than having the teacher give them the information. This process gives the responsibility of learning to the students while ensuring that they produce similar answers within the guidelines set by the teacher.

In practice it is often a good idea to have the class come up with the guiding question so that the students can then take ownership of the question. The question should be broad enough to cover all of the information that the teacher wishes to convey, though specific enough to provide guidance. The guiding question also needs to help the students find what they need to know about a topic. In many cases it is difficult, if not impossible to have a class come up with such a question organically. Therefore teacher guidance is required in this process, though it is required to varying degrees with different classes.

In this particular case the guiding question should be basically similar to "where do our rights come from?" I plan to create a question which will guide the students to the American Constitution and the founding fathers. Eventually the unit uses these two factors as a springboard for discussion of the English Civil War, and so it will be necessary to have the students delve into the materials through use of the questions to arrive at this point.

The question will be designed through class discussion as the students are asked what they need to know about their rights to research where they came from. Therefore the process of creating the guiding question will also bring up, through discussion, a number of questions that will further help the students to narrow their

research. For example, the process of coming up with a question like "where do our rights come from?" might include the suggestion of questions like "What are my rights?" or "Where are they written down?" Both of these questions would be useful to students in finding the information, and this is the value of having students come up with their own guiding question.

Once the question is solidified the students will have 20-40 minutes (depending on the class and the time left) to answer it fully. In the case of my class the students will have access to both their World History book (*Patterns of Interaction*), and an American History text as well as the Internet.

When this process is complete the teacher will conclude the lesson through discussion of the work done in class today in addition to introduction to John Locke and Thomas Hobbes. I will explain briefly that these men were writers who influenced the founding fathers and allow their homework assignment introduce these men more fully. For homework the students will be asked to write a paragraph about each man explaining why they might be considered important using information from their textbook.

Lesson 3: The English Civil War

Explanation/ Modifications

The third lesson of the unit will focus on conveying the basic facts of the English Civil War to the students. The English Civil War is a vital component to this particular unit, but it is not the focus and the students need only have a basic understanding of the concepts at play here.

The process of this lesson is quite simple. The students will first be asked to create a timeline of events of the English Civil War which includes any battles, actions involving Parliament, actions involving the King, and the resolution of the war. There are many other resources one might choose, encyclopedias or the Internet, for example, but as it is necessary to keep this short and simple, I will limit my class to their textbook *Patterns of Interaction*.

Once the timeline of events is complete the students will be asked to compile a list of causes and effects of the war that must be written in their own words, rather than copied word for word from sources. I do this to help ensure that they comprehend the information that they are reading. This list, in combination with the timeline will be important in the homework, which is to write one page in which the students answer the question "Was the English Civil War worth fighting? Why or why not?"

This lesson is geared toward giving the students a cursory understanding of the English Civil War. The activities could be substituted with any other activities or resources that would serve that same goal.

Lesson 4: The life and work of Thomas Hobbes.

Explanation/ modifications

In the fourth lesson of the unit the class progresses to a discussion of the philosopher Thomas Hobbes. The class will begin with a brief recap of who Hobbes was. At this point the students should have accomplished the assignment to write one paragraph on him, and they will be asked to recall this in the beginning of class by writing 5 lines on the man and his importance.

The students will then be broken into heterogeneous reading groups, in which the weaker readers are paired with the stronger readers in groups of 3 or 4 in the interest of reading a short text. These groups will read the

"Introduction Thomas Hobbes" 1 by Vere Chappell. The teacher will circulate and ensure that the groups are reading. The students will be required to create a brief outline of the work, which includes the answers to the questions "What effect did the Civil War have on Hobbes?" and "At what stage in his life did he write *Leviathan*?" It may be necessary to give a short quiz to assess whether or not this has happened.

With that activity complete the class will reconvene and discuss the answers to these questions before breaking into pairs and beginning the next activity. In the next activity the students will be given four quotes which appear in the Quotes section. These are representative of Hobbes' feelings on civil liberties and the role of government.

Each pair will be tasked with reading the quotes, explaining what they mean in their own words, and coming up with a short outline that treats the quote as a thesis, showing how they would go about proving these theses. Once again it will be necessary for the teacher to circulate around the room and ensure that work is being completed.

Class will wrap up with a discussion of the pro's and con's of the Hobbes method as it is understood by the students. This closure will lead into the homework in which they have to write one paragraph on a pro and one paragraph on a con to Hobbes' view.

While this method does not ensure complete understanding of the depth and breadth of *Leviathan*, it does allow the teacher to assess the student's ability to make an argument based on a given thesis. Such an approach also allows for use of the material without having to approach whole excerpts. If however this approach is lacking in form or function it would be entirely appropriate to provide the students with outlines or summaries of *Leviathan* and ask them to answer questions regarding what Hobbes thought of government and civil liberties.

Lesson 5: The life and works of John Locke

Explanation/ modifications

Lesson 5 will follow much the same principles and procedures as Lesson 4. The lesson will begin with a discussion of the homework from lesson 4 in which the teacher discusses with the students their rationale behind each pro and each con that they chose. When this is complete the lesson will progress to reading Vere Chappell's short biography of John Locke² in heterogeneous reading groups, and create outlines based on that biography. Following lesson 4 the students will be given quotes from Locke, which can be found in the quotes section and asked to create outlines once again based upon these theses. The class will also end in the same way with a discussion of pro's and con's leading to the same homework assignment as lesson 4 with John Locke's work.

Lesson 6: Comparing Locke to Hobbes

Explanation/ modifications

Lesson 6 can be taught in 2 ways, and the character of the class in question will largely determine the choice. Each option has its own merits, and each one is applicable in specific circumstances. The first option is a debate in which the students debate Locke and Hobbes based on their merits and what they think of these philosophies. The second option asks the students to campaign in the school at large for one or the other based upon their contributions to the modern world. In either case students will be working in groups and

preparing arguments in favor of their chosen philosophy and philosopher.

Both approaches begin with an activity called "Take a Stand," in which the class begins by having students stand up and walk to one side of the class if they are in favor of Locke and one side in favor of Hobbes, with room in the center for the undecided. From these sides of the room the students must then state, in turn, at least one reason why they chose the side they did. Students who made no choice will also need to state why they are conflicted about making a choice.

From this point on the two approaches diverge. The first approach is based around having a debate in class for lesson 7. In this case the class will be broken roughly in half, where one half of the room is in favor of Hobbes and one is in favor of Locke. Ideally it will be a simple task to break the class up, in that in an ideal world there will be an equal number of students on either side of the class. It may however be necessary to shake the class up a bit, by choosing members of one group to be on the opposing side, assigning neutral parties to a particular side, or simply taking the evenly divided groups and switching sides (meaning those who chose Locke must defend Hobbes).

From this point the students will be asked to prepare arguments using their books, their experiences and classroom computers to defend and promote the works and the merit of their particular philosopher. The students will also be required to prepare rebuttals for anticipated arguments which the other side might make. This process will require a good deal of organization on the part of the students, and a good deal of supervision on the part of the teacher. It may be necessary to assign roles to individual students, or ask the students to assign themselves roles such as team leader, researcher and person in charge of rebuttal.

Lesson 7: Hobbes and Locke Face Off in a Debate

Explanation/Modifications

This lesson requires the students to debate the merits of one philosopher/philosophy versus that of another. The class will already have been broken into groups and will have only a few minutes to prepare before they are asked to form up. When the class is organized into their teams, the teacher will pass out the rules (see Classroom Activities Section) and the students will go over them with the teacher.

The debate will then progress according to the rules as outlined in the section below. The debate should take a majority of the period, but may be stopped at any time if there appears to be waning interest, or if it becomes a simple back and forth argument between a relatively small percentage of the class. The goal is to have all of the students participating, and if that cannot be achieved, then the class should move on to the final part of the day's activities.

The day will wrap up with a brief discussion of how the debate went between teacher and students, and then will wrap up with the assignment of the formal essay outlined in the Classroom Activities section of this document. The essay asks students to defend one of the two philosophers. Therefore it may be a good idea once again to switch things up and ask the students to defend the philosopher they were debating against.

In my class if I assign a formal essay I try to leave time for peer editing, and therefore the homework for this lesson will be the completion of an introductory paragraph with thesis, and an outline of the essay to come.

Lesson 6 & 7: (Alternative) The Campaign of Hobbes or Locke

Explanation/Modifications

The alternative approach to Hobbes and Locke mentioned in the previous lesson 6 begins with the "Take a Stand" activity. From that point the students will be broken up along similar means, but instead of being asked to prepare for a debate, the students will be asked to prepare a campaign on behalf of their chosen philosopher. The students will need to show how their philosophy would be a better way to run the school. They will need to prepare information, and campaign materials (posters, graphs, signs, web sites etc.) on behalf of their philosopher. The goal will be to convince teachers and students that their philosopher was more important than the competition.

The students will act as advocates for their philosopher. They will be charged with convincing students and staff to vote for one or the other philosopher for the award of most valuable philosopher for the government of our school. They will do this by explaining to the voters the important contributions of their philosopher, in order to show the voter that their man is the more important man. The students, using a petition in which each voter must sign their name and may only sign once, will collect the votes.

In this case Lesson 7 becomes an opportunity to count votes and rehash the experience in advance of assigning the essay, which appears in the first version of lesson 7. If one wanted to extend this assignment beyond 1 day, one could make use of lesson 8 as a means of extending the process.

Lesson 8: What rights are important to you?

Explanation/Modification

Given that I do my best to give my students an opportunity to peer edit formal essays, this lesson is designed to take place over the course of two days. Each day the lesson will begin with peer editing, in which students share their work with a partner who looks over it for errors, omissions, or areas for improvement. On the first day the students will peer edit each other's introductions and outlines, and on the second day the students will peer edit each other's rough draft.

After the peer editing is complete on the first day the teacher will pass out the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which the students will read through together and discuss. This will be followed (if there is time) by reading Kurt Vonnegut's *Harrison Bergeron*. If the reading and discussion of both cannot be completed in one day, it can easily be extended into two.

Following the reading and discussion of both works the teacher will ask the students what these two works had in common with regards to human rights. If the students do not reach this point on their own the teacher will explain to them that they both represent a specific view of how human rights might be realized. In the case of the UDHR a document has been created outlining what rights human beings should ideally possess. In the case of *Harrison Bergeron*, Vonnegut has portrayed a world where everyone is equal by means of various devices that handicap people who are above average.

The students will then be asked to outline what rights they think that individuals should enjoy, and then to outline the role of government in maintaining those rights. In this way the students arrive at a point whereby they have taken the idea of civil rights and liberties, evaluated specific versions of those rights and liberties through Hobbes or Locke, and suggested which rights or liberties they believe they should be entitled to.

Classroom Activities

Objectives

These objectives seek to break this unit into its constituent parts while allowing for the progression up Bloom's taxonomy from the simple definition of the terms in play to the evaluation of a work with regards to those terms.

1. Define the terms civil rights and civil liberties.
2. Explain through inquiry the origins of their rights.
3. Briefly describe the English Civil War, its causes, its events and its outcome.
4. Read and discuss the Hobbes *Leviathan* and Locke's *Two Treatises on Government*, with regards to the position of both men on civil rights, the role of government and the background of each man.
5. Compare the two men in terms of their background and their work.
6. Debate the two on their merits OR campaign for the importance of one over the importance of the other
7. Evaluate the work of one of these men with regards to civil rights and the role of government in a formal essay.
8. List and defend the rights they would like to have if they could rewrite the documents granting them, reading Vonnegut's *Harrison Bergeron*, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for comparison.

Lesson 1: Defining Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

Goal: To establish a class definition of civil rights and civil liberties and help all of the students to understand it.

Objectives:

As a result of this lesson the students will be able to

1. List 10 rights that they have.
2. Define Civil Rights and Civil Liberties
3. Explain the difference between the two terms.

Materials:

Board, marker, notebooks, pens

Anticipatory Set:

The students should write down 10 rights they possess in their notebooks.

Procedure:

1. The teacher will begin the lesson by asking the students to brainstorm what rights they have.

2. The teacher will list the rights the students enumerate on the board, separating them into three columns (one for rights they do not actually have, one for civil rights and one for civil liberties- though the columns will not yet be named).
3. The teacher will then lead the class in a discussion of the question "Why would I choose to organize these columns in this way."
4. This discussion should lead into an understanding of how the three columns are defined.
5. The students will then be assigned to define civil rights and civil liberties using their books, and the internet.
6. When this is complete, which should be about 10 minutes later, the class will discuss the definitions, while the teacher writes the two master definitions on the board. The master definitions should be a combination of the answers given by the class.

Closure:

The teacher will wrap up class by reviewing the definitions and assigning the homework.

Homework:

Write one page explaining the difference between a civil right and a civil liberty.

Lesson 2: Where do our rights originate?

Goal: To help the students understand where their rights originate.

Objectives:

As a result of this lesson the students will be able to

1. Brainstorm the question "Where do your rights originate?"
2. Create guiding questions to answer the question "Where do your rights originate?"
3. Answer the question "Where do your rights originate?" through the inquiry process

Materials

Board, Marker, Notebooks, Pen, World History Text, American History Text, Internet ready computers.

Anticipatory Set:

The students should write 5 lines in their notebooks answering the question "where do your rights originate?"

Procedure:

1. The teacher will begin the class by asking the students to brainstorm answers to the question. The teacher should ask questions to prod the students into answering all levels of the question e.g. The Constitution, The Bill of Rights, Their Parents, Nature ...
2. The teacher will then lead the class in writing an inquiry question (as outlined in the strategies section) or a series of inquiry questions designed to help them answer the Anticipatory Set question.
3. The students will then have 20-40 minutes to answer the question using the resources provided (the American and World history texts, and the Internet)

4. The teacher will circulate throughout the room prodding students along and giving help when needed.
5. With about 10 minutes left to class the teacher will reconvene the students and the class will discuss their findings.

Closure:

The teacher will wrap up class by introducing Hobbes and Locke as philosophers who inspired some of the rights the class had just been discussing.

Homework:

For homework the students will be asked to write a paragraph about each man explaining why they might be considered important using information from their textbook.

Lesson 3: The English Civil War

Goal: To introduce the English Civil War as an important event in the inspiration of civil rights and liberties.

Objectives:

As a result of this lesson the students will be able to

1. Create a Timeline of events in the English Civil War.
2. Compile a list of Causes and Effects of the English Civil War.
3. Judge whether or not the English Civil War was worth fighting.

Materials:

World History Textbook, board, marker, notebook, art supplies

Anticipatory Set:

The students should write 5 lines hypothesizing the ramifications of the English Civil War.

Procedure:

1. The teacher will begin class by reviewing the previous night's homework.
2. The students will then use their books to create a timeline of events in the English Civil War. They will be provided with art supplies to make the process more creative.
3. After about 20-30 minutes the teacher will lead the class in going over the Timeline.
4. When this is complete the students will be asked to create a list of causes and effects of the war, judging whether or not the causes or the effects were worth the war.
5. The students will be given time to work on this while the teacher circulates to ensure work completion, and answer questions the students might have.
6. With about 15 minutes remaining the teacher will reconvene the class and discuss their findings.

Closure:

The teacher will wrap up class by assigning the homework and answering any questions the students might have.

Homework:

Write one page in which the students answer the question "Was the English Civil War worth fighting? Why or why not?"

Lesson 4 & 5: The Life and Work of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke

Goal: To orient the students to the work and life of Hobbes (in lesson 4) and Locke (in lesson 5).

Objectives:

As a result of this lesson the students will be able to

1. Read and create an outline of the short biography of the philosopher.
2. Translate 4 quotes from the philosopher into their own words.
3. Create sample arguments from their own experience to back up the thesis statements offered by their philosopher.

Materials:

Chappell's short biography of Hobbes (LP4) or Locke (LP 5), Quotes from Hobbes and Locke, notebooks, pens, board, marker

Anticipatory Set:

The students will begin class by writing 5 lines on the importance of the philosopher in question.

Procedure:

1. The teacher will begin class by discussing the Anticipatory Set with the students.
2. The teacher will then break the class into heterogeneously grouped reading groups of 3-4 and pass out the biography of the philosopher in question.
3. The students will be given 20 minutes to read and outline the biography answering the following questions.
 1. What effect did the Civil War have on this philosopher?
 2. At what stage in his life did he write his work on government?
1. When this is complete the teacher will go over it with the students.
2. The teacher will then pass out the first of the 4 quotes and the class will go over it together, translating it into colloquial English, and decoding what the philosopher was saying.
3. The students will go back to their groups and decode the remaining quotes so that each has a copy of the work.
4. The teacher should circulate at this point to make sure that each student is working, and understanding the task.
5. With 10-15 minutes remaining the teacher will lead the students in outlining the philosophy on the board.

Closure:

The teacher will review the work of the day and ask the student's to start thinking about the pro's and con's of

that philosophy.

Homework:

Each student must come up with 5 pieces of evidence, from their own experience, that would support one of the quotes we looked at today. The students should also list the pro's and con's of the philosophy discussed in class.

Lesson 6 & 7: Comparing Locke to Hobbes

Goal: To compare the work of Hobbes to the work of Locke

Objectives:

As a result of this lesson the students will be able to

1. List the Pro's and Con's of either man's argument.
2. Take a stand for one or the other philosopher, and explain their perspective.
3. Prepare an argument in favor of one of the philosophies, while anticipating the rebuttals of the other.

Materials:

Board, marker, notebooks, pen, Locke/ Hobbes quotes, Locke/ Hobbes Biographies, Essay Assignment.

Anticipatory Set:

Day 1: The students will be asked to write 5 lines on which of the two philosophies is better.

Procedure:

1. The teacher will begin class by asking the students to "Take a Stand" following the procedure outlined in the strategies section.
2. The students will then line up on either side of the room, one side for Hobbes, and one for Locke and explain verbally why they made that choice.
3. The class will then be assigned sides for a debate next class, the sides should be even, and this may require the teacher to move students around.
4. The students will take the rest of the period to prepare their arguments for the debate.
5. The teacher will circulate and ensure that all students are participating.

Closure:

The teacher will reconvene the class right before the end of class and answer any questions the students might have.

Homework:

For homework the students should write up 3 pro's to their philosopher, and 3 con's and write up 3 arguments explaining why the con's don't really matter.

Anticipatory Set:

Day 2: The students will have 10 minutes to get into their groups and discuss strategy.

Procedure:

1. The students will then have the opportunity to defend their philosopher in a debate. The teacher should set any rules that will facilitate the debate.
2. The students will have about half of the period for debate, with the teacher moderating.
3. When the debate is complete the students will have 10 minutes of discussion with the teacher in which they debrief on the process.
4. When the discussion is complete the teacher will pass out the Essay Assignment, asking the students to read through it with the class.

Closure:

The teacher will wrap up class by answering any questions on the Essay, or the Debate.

Homework:

Write an introductory Paragraph and outline for your essay.

Essay Assignment.

Introduction

"As a culminating project for our unit on Hobbes and Locke, I am asking you to critically assess and defend the work of one of these men as a philosophy to guide a school. You have used facts and evidence from the readings, from class and from school in general to defend your position."

Question:

Which of the 2 philosophers we have discussed, Thomas Hobbes or John Locke, presents a more appropriate philosophy for governing our school? Please explain your choice fully using evidence.

Specifications:

Your essay should be written in the five-paragraph format, with an introduction, conclusion, and 3 supporting paragraphs. It should be between 500 and 600 words, and may be typed or hand written. In either case it must be double-spaced and must include a word count at the end. You will be graded on each of these elements, and therefore should pay close attention to them.

Rubric:

Argument: (25 points)- You will receive a 25 in this area only if you have eloquently crafted your argument.

Defense: (25 points)- You will receive a 25 in this area only if you have soundly proven your hypothesis using facts and sound argument.

5 Paragraph Format: (10 points) You will receive a 10 in this area if your work includes an introduction,

conclusion and 3 supporting paragraphs.

Length: (10 points) You will receive a 10 in this area if your work is of sufficient length and includes a word count.

Double Spaced: (5 points) You will receive a 5 in this area if your work is double spaced.

Mechanics: (25 points) This is a formal essay and therefore you will receive a 25 only if your essay meets mechanical specifications and is completely free of grammatical errors.

Lesson 8: What rights are important to you? (2 days)

Goal: To allow time for students to work on their Essay while engaging in meaningful discussion of rights and liberties.

Objectives:

As a result of this lesson the students will be able to

- 1. Peer edit a partner's outline/ first draft.
- 2. Read the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and *Harrison Bergeron* critically assessing their points of view on civil rights and liberties.
- 3. Create their own list of rights and expectations that they would want in an ideal future of their own creation.

Materials:

UDHR, *Harrison Bergeron*, Notebooks, Pen, Board, Marker

Anticipatory Set:

Day 1: List 5 rights you would like to have in an ideal world.

Day 2: List 5 responsibilities government would have to you in your ideal world.

Procedure:

1. Class will begin each day with one to one peer editing of the outlines, and the rough drafts.
2. The teacher will then reconvene class and switch gears by brainstorming the Anticipatory Set with the students, putting the answers on the board.
3. When this is complete the teacher will break the students into heterogeneous reading groups of 3 or 4 and pass out one of the 2 readings.
4. The students will go through the reading together as the teacher goes around to check their work.
5. The students will be going through the reading with the goal of determining what kind of world the document imagines and determining whether or not it is a positive view of the future.
6. When this is complete the students will be asked to write up a description (individually) of their ideal situation. After reading the UDHR, they should write up the rights they want in an ideal world. After reading HB, they will be asked to write up their ideal role of government in protecting these rights.

Closure:

Each day class will end with a discussion of the group's work.

Homework:

Day 1. Rough Draft of Essay.

Day 2. Final Essay Draft.

Quotes

Thomas Hobbes

On the equality of Men: "Nature hath made men so equal, in the faculties of body, and mind; as that though there be found one man sometimes manifestly stronger in body, or of quicker mind than another; yet when all is reckoned together, the difference between man, and man, is not so considerable, as that one man can thereupon claim to himself any benefit, to which another may not pretend, as well as he."3

On the creation of Commonwealths: "The final Cause, End, or Design of men (who naturally love Liberty, and Dominion over others,) in the introduction of that restraint upon themselves, (in which we see them live in Commonwealths,) is the foresight of their own preservation, and of a more contented live thereby; that is to say, of getting themselves out from the miserable condition of war, which is necessarily consequent (as hath been shown) to the natural passions of all men, when there is no visible power to keep them in awe, and tie them by fear of punishment to the performance of their Covenants..."4

On the office of the Sovereign: "The office of the Sovereign, (be it a monarch or an assembly,) consisteth in the end, for which he was trusted with the Sovereign Power, namely the procuration of *the safety of the people*; to which he is obliged by the Law of Nature, and to render an account thereof to God, the Author of that Law, and to none but him."5

In summary of his position on government: "That the condition of meer Nature, that is to say, of absolute Liberty, such as is theirs, that neither are Sovereigns, nor Subjects, is Anarchy, and the condition of War: That the Precepts, by which men are guided to avoid that condition are the Laws of Nature: That a Commonwealth, without Sovereign Power, is but a word, without substance, and cannot stand: That Subjects owe to Sovereigns, simple Obedience, in all things, wherein their obedience is not repugnant to the Laws of God, I have sufficiently proved, in that which I have already written."6

John Locke

On the creation of a commonwealth: "Wherever therefore any number of Men are so united into one Society, as to quit every one of his Executive Power of the Law of Nature, and to resign it to the public, there and there only is there a *Political, or Civil Society*."7

On life, liberty and property: "For all being Kings as much as he, every Man his Equal, and the greater part no strict Observers of Equity and Justice, the enjoyment of the property he has in the state is very unsafe, very

unsecure. This makes him willing to quit a Condition, which however free, is full of fears and continual dangers: And 'tis not without reason, that he seeks out, and is willing to join in Society with others who are already united, or have a mind to unite for the mutual *Preservation* of their Lives, Liberties and Estates, which I call by the general name, *Property*."8

On tyranny: "As Usurpation is the exercise of Power, which another hat a Right to; so *Tyranny is the exercise of Power beyond Right*, which no Body can have a Right to. And this is making use of the Power, any one has in his hands; not for the good of those who are under it, but for his own private and separate Advantage. When the Governour, however intituled, makes not the Law, but his Will, the Rule; and his Commands and Actions are not directed to the Preservation of the Properties of his People, but to the satisfaction of his own Ambitions, Revenge, Covetousness, or any other irregular Passion."9

On rebellion: "For since it can never be supposed to be the Will of the Society, that the Legislative should have a Power to destroy that, which every one designs to secure, by entering into Society, and for which the People submitted themselves to the Legislators of their own making; whenever the *Legislators endeavor to take away, and destroy the Property of the People*, or to reduce them to Slavery under Arbitrary Power, they put themselves into a stat of War with the People, who are thereupon absolved from any farther Obedience, and are left to the common Refuge, which God hath provided for all Men against Force and Violence. Whensoever therefore the *Legislative* shall transgress this fundamental Rule of Society; and either by Ambition, Fear, Folly, or Corruption, *endeavor to grasp themselves, or put into the hands of any other an Absolute Power* over the Lives, Liberties and Estates of the People; by this breach of Trust they *forfeit the Power*, the People had put into their hands..."10

Bibliography

Beck, Roger, Et al. Eds. *World History: Patterns of Interaction*. Boston, MA: McDougal Little, 2003.

Patterns of Interaction is a World History textbook geared toward high school students. It seeks to offer a view of world history as a series of patterns of interaction, and in some measure succeeds and in some measure fails. Though the book makes a valid effort to avoid becoming Eurocentric, it does not succeed. It also tries too hard at times to fit world history into the narrowly prescribed patterns of interaction it outlines.

It does, on the other hand, offer some fairly comprehensive information on the hunter gatherer lifestyle, which makes it a useful resource for this unit.

Chappel, Vere. Ed. *Essays on Early Modern Philosophers Thomas Hobbes*. Volume 5. New York, NY, Garland Publishing 1992.

This book is an excellent companion to any reading of Hobbes. It offers a superb, accessible, and short biography of Hobbes, which is uniquely suited to use in this kind of unit. Furthermore the book offers a wide array of essays from modern scholars on the works and impact of Thomas Hobbes.

Chappel, Vere. Ed. *Essays on Early Modern Philosophers John Lock Theory of Knowledge*. Volume 8. New York, NY, Garland Publishing 1992.

Continuing her work as editor of the *Modern Philosophers* series, Chappell edits yet another valuable work for this unit. This book

offers a series of essays on John Locke's theory of knowledge. The essays probe deeply into Locke's philosophy exposing the depth and breadth of this man's work. Chappel provides an extremely useful and short, biography of Locke as the introduction to the book, which functions nicely as a primer to the life and times of John Locke.

Chappel, Vere. Ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Locke*. New York, NY, Cambridge University Press, 1994.

This book offers an in depth look into the life, times, and work of John Locke. It makes use of modern scholarship and essays to delve into Locke's work in a way that opens many doors into understanding this complex philosopher. Perhaps the most useful essay is by J.R. Milton entitled "Locke's Life and Times." While it is too long to give to students, it can serve very nicely as a primer for the teacher into the life and works of John Locke.

Condren, Conal. *Thomas Hobbes*. New York, NY. Twayne Publishers, 2000.

Condren's biography of Thomas Hobbes is clear, succinct and well-written. It is short enough and comprehensive enough to be used by a teacher seeking a solid background on Hobbes before teaching this unit. Condren's work offers many insights into Hobbes' life and his work, allowing a teacher to fully flesh out many of the ideas conveyed throughout this unit.

Laslett, Peter. Ed. *John Locke Two Treatises of Government A Critical Edition with an Introduction and Aparatus Criticus*. Second Edition. New York, NY. Cambridge University Press. 1960-1967.

This critical edition of Locke's *Two Treatises of Government* is both comprehensive and well researched. Laslett has put a great deal of research into this book, and that research shows. It is evidenced in an extremely comprehensive introduction, which includes notes on Locke and Hobbes (eminently useful for a teacher of this unit), insight into the role of the 1688 revolution on Locke, and a good deal of historical information on Locke and his *Treatises*.

Tuck, Richard. Eds. *Thomas Hobbes Leviathan Revised Student Edition*. New York, NY. Cambridge University Press. 1996.

With this edition of *Leviathan*, Richard Tuck has succeeded in providing the original text in fashion and form very close to original. He includes a very good introduction and a full list of citations and annotations which allow the reader to approach the text more fully. Tuck also includes an index which is organized along multiple levels and includes a concordance with earlier editions.

Vonnegut, Kurt. *Harrison Bergeron*. 1961. <http://instruct.westvalley.edu/lafave/hb.html> Last accessed July 27, 2005.

Harrison Bergeron is a short story that explores a possible future in which all Americans are made equal by a series of arcane measures. It is a look into the future, which could be amusing or disturbing depending upon the reader. It does, however, present a very distinct view of a potential future in which all men are indeed created equal. Furthermore, it does an outstanding job of portraying a very specific concept of the role of government and civil liberties.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights <http://www.un.org/overview/rights.html> Last accessed July 27, 2005.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a 30 part treaty adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1948. It outlines the rights of every human being, simply as a function of the fact that they were alive. The document itself has been the basis for a number of constitutions around the world, and a growing body of international law concerning human rights.

Student Resource List

McDougal Littel's *Patterns of Interaction*.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Kurt Vonnegut's *Harrison Bergeron*

Teacher Resources

Tuck's Hobbes' *Leviathan*

Laslett's Locke's *Two Treatises on Government*

Chappel's *The Cambridge Companion to Locke*

Chappel's *Essays on Early Modern Philosophers Thomas Hobbes*

Chappel's *Essays on Early Modern Philosophers John Locke*

Condren's *Thomas Hobbes*

Notes

1. Chappel, Vere. Ed. *Essays on Early Modern Philosophers Thomas Hobbes*. New York, NY, Garland Publishing 1992. Pgs. ix-xi
2. Chappel, Vere. Ed. *Essays on Early Modern Philosophers John Locke*. New York, NY, Garland Publishing 1992. Pgs. ix-xi
3. Tuck, Richard. Ed. *Thomas Hobbes Leviathan Revised Student Edition*. New York, NY. Cambridge University Press. 1996. Pg. 86
4. Tuck, Richard. Ed. *Thomas Hobbes Leviathan Revised Student Edition*. New York, NY. Cambridge University Press. 1996. Pg. 117
5. Tuck, Richard. Eds. *Thomas Hobbes Leviathan Revised Student Edition*. New York, NY. Cambridge University Press. 1996. Pg. 231.
6. Tuck, Richard. Ed. *Thomas Hobbes Leviathan Revised Student Edition*. New York, NY. Cambridge University Press. 1996. Pg 245.
7. Laslett, Peter. Ed. *John Locke Two Treatises of Government A Critical Edition with an Introduction and Aparatus Criticus*. Second Edition. New York, NY. Cambridge University Press. 1960-1967. Pg. 343.
8. Laslett, Peter. Ed. *John Locke Two Treatises of Government A Critical Edition with an Introduction and Aparatus Criticus*. Second Edition. New York, NY. Cambridge University Press. 1960-1967. Pg. 368.
9. Laslett, Peter. Ed. *John Locke Two Treatises of Government A Critical Edition with an Introduction and Aparatus Criticus*. Second Edition. New York, NY. Cambridge University Press. 1960-1967. Pgs. 416-417.
10. Laslett, Peter. Ed. *John Locke Two Treatises of Government A Critical Edition with an Introduction and Aparatus Criticus*. Second Edition. New York, NY. Cambridge University Press. 1960-1967. Pg. 430.

<https://teachers.yale.edu>

©2023 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University, All Rights Reserved. Yale National Initiative®, Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute®, On Common Ground®, and League of Teachers Institutes® are registered trademarks of Yale University.

For terms of use visit https://teachers.yale.edu/terms_of_use