

Name of Course: Current Events & Issues
Grade Level(s): 10-12 Grade
<p>This course will be divided into ten units of study. Each week a unit will be determined by the review of current events and issues that are occurring as the course is progressing.</p> <p>Unit I: Controversy in a Democracy Unit II: Concerns of Each Generation Unit III: The Family in Our Society Unit IV: Economic Issues Unit V: Health Issues Unit VI: Americans All Unit VII: Criminal Justice Unit VIII: Civil Liberties Unit IX: Environmental Issues Unit X: World Affairs</p>
<p>Estimated Instructional Time: 9 or 18 weeks (students may select)</p>
<p>PA Academic Standards:</p> <p>8.1.9 C Analyze the fundamentals of historical interpretation</p> <p>8.1.12 C Evaluate historical interpretation of events</p> <p>8.2.12 A Evaluate the political and cultural contributions of individuals and groups to Pennsylvania history from 1890 to present</p> <p>8.3.12A Identify and evaluate the political and cultural contributions of individuals and groups to United States history from 1890 to present</p> <p>8.3.12 C Evaluate how continuity and change has influenced United States history from 1890 to present</p> <p>8.3.12 D Identify and evaluate conflict and cooperation among social groups and organizations in the United States history from 1890 to present</p> <p>8.4.12 A Evaluate the significance of individuals and groups who made major political and cultural contributions to world history from 1450 to present</p> <p>8.4.12 C Evaluate how continuity and change has impacted belief systems and religions, commerce and industry, innovations, settlement patterns, social organization, transportation, and the roles of women from 1450 to present</p> <p>8.4.12 D Evaluate how conflict and cooperation among social groups and organizations impacted world history from 1450 to present in Africa, America, Asia, and Europe</p>
<p>New Standards Performance Standards:</p> <p>E1 C The student reads and comprehends informational materials to develop understanding and expertise and produces written or oral work that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ restates or summarizes information ▪ relates new information to prior knowledge and experience ▪ extends ideas ▪ makes connections to related topics or information <p>E2 E The student produces a persuasive essay that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ develops a controlling idea that makes a clear and knowledgeable judgment ▪ includes appropriate information and arguments

- excludes information and arguments that are irrelevant
- anticipates and addresses reader concerns and counter-arguments
- supports arguments with detailed evidence, citing sources of information as appropriate
- uses a range of strategies to elaborate and persuade, such as definitions, illustrations, examples from evidence, and anecdotes

E3 B The student participates in group meetings in which the student:

- displays appropriate turn-taking behaviors
- actively solicits another person's comment or opinion
- offers own opinion forcefully without dominating
- responds appropriately to comments and questions
- volunteers contributions and responds when directly solicited by the teacher or discussion leader
- gives reasons in support of opinions expressed
- clarifies, illustrates, or expands on a response when asked to do so; asks classmates for similar expansions

E3 D The student makes informed judgments about television, radio, and film productions; that is the student:

- demonstrates an awareness of the presence of the media in the daily lives of most people
- evaluates the role of the media in focusing attention and in forming opinion

E6 A The student critiques public documents with an eye to strategies common in public discourse, including:

- effective use of argument
- anticipation of counter-claims
- appeal to audiences both friendly and hostile to the position presented
- use of emotionally laden words and imagery
- citing of appropriate references or authorities

Unit Objectives:

Unit I: Controversy in a Democracy

Students will:

- explain the meaning of democracy and the democratic way of life
- compare democracies with undemocratic forms of government
- describe the role of the individual in a democracy
- explain why it is necessary to discuss issues
- distinguish between facts and opinion
- describe and use the inquiry method
- detect the whole story in a controversy
- tell what forces shape ideological views
- explain the effect of public opinion
- describe how propaganda works and influences

Unit II: Concerns of Each Generation

Students will:

- explain who young adults are
- discuss the influence of young adults in society
- draw a conclusion on what a young adult's role in society should be
- analyze why there are problems among generations

- discuss what youth culture is
- discuss the meaning of the phrase “our aging society”
- evaluate adjustments that our society may need due to population changes
- explain and give examples of age bias
- review ways in which the elderly can help themselves

Unit III: The Family in Our Society

Students will:

- discuss the evolving definition of what a family is
- detail different functions of families
- describe how families are organized
- state ways in which the family is different today than from the past
- explain why the family is a changing concept
- compare old and new attitudes toward gender roles
- discuss the effect of the feminist movement on changing attitudes and laws affecting women in America
- analyze the impact of the changing roles for the sexes on American life

Unit IV: Economic Issues

Students will:

- evaluate the rapid growth of government spending
- describe the role of taxes in society
- evaluate various types of taxes
- identify categories of Americans who have a high rate of poverty
- cite causes of poverty in America
- discuss proposals to reduce poverty in America
- distinguish between welfare and antipoverty programs
- explain why nations trade
- determine advantages and disadvantages of free trade
- debate free trade vs. protectionism

Unit V: Health Issues

Students will:

- discuss the rising costs of health care
- explain the different levels of health care for different groups of Americans
- evaluate alternative plans for extending health care coverage
- identify the major drugs abused in America
- debate why people use drugs
- discuss the dangers of drug abuse
- evaluate measures that can be taken to combat drug abuse
- analyze government actions that have been designed to help consumers
- list several government agencies and private organizations that attempt to protect the health and safety of US consumers
- debate the role of government in greater consumer protection

Unit VI: Americans All

Students will:

- debate US immigration policy
- identify reasons people immigrate to the US
- discuss the challenges of prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping
- discuss past and current challenge faced by African Americans, Hispanic

Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, and Arab Americans

- analyze trends throughout US history to present

Unit VII: Criminal Justice

Students will:

- discuss the crime rate in the US
- explain how the criminal justice system in the US is organized
- evaluate proposed solutions to crime
- determine the limits that a democratic society puts on the police
- consider various attitudes that Americans have towards the police
- describe the structure of the US court system
- debate some of the problems and ruling of US courts
- evaluate proposals for improving the court system
- analyze the role of prisons in the US
- examine the effectiveness of the US corrections system
- analyze the role of prisons in the US
- examine the effectiveness of the US corrections system
- evaluate proposals for reform of the US corrections system

Unit VIII: Civil Liberties

Students will:

- explain why dissent is vital to a democracy
- identify constitutional guarantees of dissent
- trace the history of dissent in the US
- compare and contrast lawful and unlawful dissent
- define civil disobedience and provide examples
- debate the role of the press in a democracy
- discuss the US Patriot Act

Unit IX: Environmental Issues

Students will:

- describe the impact that humans are having on the environment
- enumerate and discuss the challenges of air and water pollution
- debate the role of the US government in protecting the environment and wildlife
- evaluate the effectiveness of the EPA
- debate drilling for oil in the ANWR
- analyze the arguments for global warming
- debate US involvement in the Kyoto Treaty
- discuss the relationship between economic growth and the state of the environment

Unit X: World Affairs

Students will:

- discuss the reasons nation go to war
- evaluate various theories of how to obtain and maintain peace
- debate the "just war" belief
- analyze the effectiveness of the United Nations
- analyze the effectiveness of the United Nations
- identify and explain some of the causes of terrorism
- evaluate measures in combating or ending terrorism

Text/Resource Materials:

- Current Issues in American Democracy Textbook
- USA Today Newspaper
- Easton Express-Times Newspaper
- The Week Magazine
- Various Periodical (school library)
- On-Line Sources (computer lab)
- Various TV News Programs

Activities/Materials:

Each week student will review the following:

- Main Stories
- Controversy
- The World at a Glance
- Briefing (in-depth look at a topic)
- Opinions

Each week students will also:

- analyze current events and issues
- compare and discuss various viewpoints on controversial current issues
- locate various nations in the news and explain their current events and issues
- appraise various opinions and state own opinions on current events and issues

Students will use:

- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Internet
- Library
- Television

Assessment:

Participation (Class Discussions)

Assignments

Quizzes

Binder