

Watergate Scandal Lesson Plan Visual Discovery with Response Groups

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Duration of lesson: Suggested two regular class periods plus one block schedule.

Standard:

1. 11.11.4 explain the constitutional crisis originating from the Watergate scandal.

**Historical and Social Sciences Analysis skills:
Chronological and Spatial Thinking**

2. Students compare the present with the past, evaluating the consequences of past events and decisions and determining the lessons that were learned.

Historical Research, Evidence, and Point of View

3. Students distinguish valid arguments from fallacious arguments in historical interpretations.
4. Students identify bias and prejudice in historical interpretations.
5. Students evaluate major debates among historians concerning alternative interpretations of the past, including an analysis of authors' use of evidence and the distinctions between sound generalizations and misleading oversimplifications.

Essential Question: How did the Watergate scandal transform the public's opinion of American politics and politicians?

Objective: Students will be able to explain the increase in contemporary American's cynicism towards government.

Vocabulary: cynicism, scandal or scandalous, DNC, the Plumbers, Deep Throat, conspiracy, wire tap, impeachment, resignation

EL/Inclusion Strategies: 2.0 Reading Comprehension (Focus on Informational Materials), 3.0 Literary Response and Analysis 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 1.0 Listening and Speaking Strategies

Grouping: Groups of three heterogeneous grouping done by instructor.

Materials: TCI transparencies(Contemporary American Society 4.1), computer, projector, notebooks, white board, whiteboard pens, and primary source

documents (Excerpts from Imperial Presidency, Washington Post article, etc...)

Procedure: To set up this lesson students will be asked to preview this lesson with a homework assignment, “What is a scandal and then list three things that could qualify as a scandal or as scandalous behavior.” When the students’ walk-in the following day I will place them in heterogeneous response groups and we will list their information on the board. “What is a common theme here?”(Answer should be someone in power abusing the power they have.) Then we begin with the Watergate scandal.

Following their individual discussions and class discussion we will then begin to view the TCI transparencies. I will use spiraling questions to guide the discussion. Following a select few of the transparencies and the discussion notes they will be given two copies of the transparencies to analyze for homework using these questions:

1. Who is the audience?
2. How does this political cartoon involve American society?
3. How does the author’s message change the public’s view of American government during this time?

When they come back the next day each response group will be given an excerpt from a different primary source. Like they did on their homework with the political cartoons they will answer these three questions while in their group:

1. What is the message and who is meant to read this document?
2. What evidence do these documents allow the public access to the corruption in our government?
3. What is the most important aspect of your document?

Each group will be given a different document to analyze.

Technology Component: Transparencies will be scanned in and viewed via a projector.

Assessment: Students will for homework find a scandal or scandalous event in our government from the last 15 years. They must then also explain why this event has increased American cynicism in politics.

Rubric:

4	Student has found an event that is a scandal our government or a governmental official was a part of and explains clearly in his/her own terms how this has increased American cynicism in politics.
3	Student has found an event that is a scandal our government or a governmental official was a part of but does not explain clearly in his/her own terms how this has increased American cynicism in politics.
2	Student has found an event but is not a scandal in our government and attempted to explain how it increased American cynicism.

1	Student is missing an event and/or missing an explanation.
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