

SLC ordinances from the 1860's get students involved in local government!

Summary

A discussion of Salt Lake City ordinances from the early 1860's leads to drafting ordinances to present to local government.

Time Frame

3 class periods of 45 minutes each

Group Size

Small Groups

Life Skills

Social & Civic Responsibility

Materials

Brief summary of SLC ordinances from the early 1860's (below), a selection of current local ordinances, a member of the community's government to visit class.

Background for Teachers

As society developed in Utah, ordinances were passed to keep order. Students will review a few early ordinances, discuss their value, and then compare them to similar current local ordinances. They will then prepare their own ordinances to present to local officials.

Intended Learning Outcomes

The students will explain why communities establish formal ordinances, and compare ordinances from Salt Lake City in the early 1860's to similar local ordinances today. The students will then draft ordinances that they think would benefit their community.

Instructional Procedures

Temporarily add a rule to your classroom rules. It should be practical in that it helps things go smoother, such as having pencils sharpened before class starts, but not critical. (I realize for some teachers this is critical.) Explain the rule, but invite student responses as to its value in the classroom. Expand the introductory discussion to talk about the need for laws or ordinances in the community. Present a selection of ordinances from Salt Lake City which were adopted between 1860 and 1864. Discuss the need or purpose of these rules in that time period. Compare and contrast these ordinances with the needs of today's communities. Forecast possible situations from which students can create new ordinances. What categories can these ideas be divided into? Assign students in groups or pairs to draft ordinances in a chosen category for their community. Encourage self-assessment or exchanging among groups to improve the proposals. Invite a member of local government to come to class. Have the students present their suggestions and supporting reasoning. Encourage students to follow up on their proposals by submitting them to the local government or writing letters to the editor of the local paper, etc.

Extensions

Role play Salt Lake City in the 1860's. Form a city council within the class and have students present the 1860's ordinances as though they were being addressed for the first time.

Bibliography

Carter, Kate B. Our Pioneer Heritage, vol. 4 (Daughters of the Utah Pioneers,)

Authors

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