

Cultural Lit. 33: U.S. and Iroquois Governments

Summary

Students will: Compare the roles and functions of the different branches of the Iroquois and US governments, and the principles of separation of power and checks and balances, after receiving direct instruction from instructor, reading selected texts, and working in group structures, within 1 class period.

Time Frame

1 class periods of 60 minutes each

Materials

1. Daly, Janet. 1997. [*US Constitution: Is it a Native American Myth?*](#) . Fitchburg, MA: Fitchburg State College Social Science Journal.
2. Grinde, Donald A. 1987. [*The Iroquois and the Origins of American Democracy*](#) . Speech delivered at Cornell University, September 11, 1987.
3. The Constitution of the United States
4. Iroquois Constitution (Gayanashagowa)
5. Stephens, E. and Brown, J. 2000. *A Handbook of Content Literacy Strategies*. Norwood, MA: Christopher Gordon.
6. Journal or notebook.

Instructional Procedures

Anticipatory Set:

Post the words 'moieties, principles, consensus, divergent, hearth, Puritans' on the board, on a flipchart or on a projection device and ask the class if they are familiar with these words and their meaning. Conduct a collective brainstorming session and add the generated vocabulary words to listed words. Allow students to postulate the meaning of words and their understanding of concepts.

Activities:

1. Students will be given copies of US Constitution (or use class textbook) and Iroquois Constitution (Gayanashagowa) for reference during lessons.
2. Instructor and/or students will read aloud while student's follow along, or students will read in cooperative group structures, Janet Daly paragraphs 7-17.
3. Working in cooperative group structures, and using aforementioned texts as reference, students will compare the functioning of two Iroquois branches of government (1. Mohawk, Onondaga, Seneca; 2. Oneida and Cayuga) to the functioning of the three US Constitutional branches.
4. Working in cooperative group structures, and using aforementioned texts as reference, students will compare the checks and balances system of the Iroquois (Daly, paragraphs 8-10) to the checks and balances system of the US Constitution.
5. Students will record the comparisons in their journals (see Stephens & Brown--Content Journal, p. 28) and report to class from groups.

Assessment Plan

Students will record the comparisons in their journals

Unit Assessment:

Utilizing their journal entries and in-class notes, students will take a teacher-generated test/quiz. And

respond in paragraph form to questions about the similarities and differences between the US and Iroquois Constitutional governmental structures.

Students will write a, minimum one page, paper discussing their opinion of the indigenous origins of the US Constitution.

Authors

[Utah LessonPlans](#)