

Lesson Description Format

David Minhondo Edna Brewer Middle School

Lesson name: Hierarchy

Grade Level: 7th

Topic or Unit of Study: Follow-up to review of Feudalism in Japan and early Medieval Europe

Objectives:

1. Academic learning objectives: I can create an argument on whether or not Hierarchies play an important role in society or if there is another alternative to societal organization
2. Social/moral development objectives (specify domain and developmental objectives): I can determine the reasons why societies create hierarchy and can posit an alternative to organize society efficiently.

Lesson Summary

Paragraph summary of lesson: This lesson is meant to be a follow-up discussion around why civilizations in the medieval period, such as Japan or Europe, created hierarchies to help organize their societies and make them run more efficiently. The guided handout is meant to guide students in to critically thinking about why societies, both historical and modern-day, use hierarchies. Furthermore, students will get to state their opinion on whether or not this system itself is a moral concept or posit what possible alternatives might exist to having hierarchy. The lesson itself will begin with a student's reflection whereby they are given examples, hints, and helpful information to clarify what might otherwise seem like very higher-order philosophical questions. Ultimately, the lesson will end with a thrash-out style discussion. This type of discussion place students physically on opposite sides of the room based on what they believe about the following question: Is a hierarchy a good thing, bad thing, or both? Students form a line on either side of the room based on what they believe. Then, one-by-one students will get a chance to step forward, explain their rationale in order to try to convince people to change their mind. If someone's mind is changed, they would physically show this by walking across the room thereby physically showing that their mental attitude has changed. The teacher will help guide this discussion by controlling the equity of voices and following-up with students who have changed their mind (i.e. asking why they changed their mind).

Procedure

1. Step by step description of lesson
 - a. Do Now (5 minutes):
 - i. Define Hierarchy
 - ii. Give examples of Feudalistic hierarchies that we have review
 - b. Handout (20 minutes)
 - i. Present each question to students and give them a chance to respond
 1. Teacher will provide modern-day and historical examples to help students engage in what otherwise might be lofty philosophical thought
 - c. Thrash Out Discussion (15- 20 Minutes)
 - i. Have students place themselves on either side of the room (or middle) in their response to question #4
 - ii. Explain the rules of a thrash-out to students

- iii. Have a volunteer begin the process
- iv. Continue thrash-out until voice has been exhausted or time has run out
- d. Reflection (10 minutes)
 - i. Students return to their desks and complete the reflection
 - ii. If there is time, call on volunteer students (or those who were highlighted during the discussion) to share their response
- e. Pack Up (2-3 minutes)

- 2. Time allotment: 55 minutes
- 3. Questions used to guide discussion and/or reflective homework
 - a. See handout
- 4. Describe homework or in-class written assignment to accompany discussion
 - a. Students will state their opinion through a form of guided discussion where examples, modern and historical, will be provided to help students access their thoughts and opinions.

Managing learning Environment

- 1. Student will be seated in their assigned seat for personal response to the discussion questions and the subsequent reflection
 - a. Students will physically stand up and go to one or the other side of the room based on their response to questions #4. During the “thrash-out” students are allowed to move around the room, but only if their thinking was changed due to an argument posited by the alternative side.
- 2. Students will work independently to answer the discussion questions and the subsequent reflection following the discussion itself.

Instructional Materials

- 1. Student handout – Hierarchy: Human nature or creation?
- 2. Class Guide – Powerpoint presentation helped to guide student thinking along for each discussion question.