

So What of the American Constitution Classroom Application

...

Constitutional Literacy Institute
June 30th, 2023

Civil Discussion



How to have difficult conversations

Background

Grew up in the LA area (Covina, CA) in a large family (9 kids)

Came to Utah - BYU - Graduated w/ Teaching Social Science degree (TESOL Minor)

Took a religious sabbatical for a year and a half in Knoxville, Tennessee

Teaching for 8 years (Gov & Cit, CE POLS 1100, US History, Geog, Soc, Utah Hist)

Saratoga Springs (Vista Heights & Westlake) & Eagle Mountain (Cedar Valley High)

Coached basketball (6 years), softball (2 years), soccer conditioning (3 years)

Taught through 2016 election, 2020 election, and COVID (still had a job)

Purpose of these sessions

The morning sessions are to increase our knowledge (Think like a Student)

The Quill sessions are to increase students and our research skills (Think like a Researcher)

The pedagogy sessions are to provide specific lesson plans (Think like a Teacher)

The classroom application sessions are to break down into ideas, concepts and units for students. (Think like a Teacher)

Big picture Unit Outline of Constitutional Literacy

Monday- Foundations and Big Concepts of CL (Knowledge)

Tuesday- Dispositions of CL, Making our leaders Human (Dispositions)

Wednesday- Process of CL (Skills)

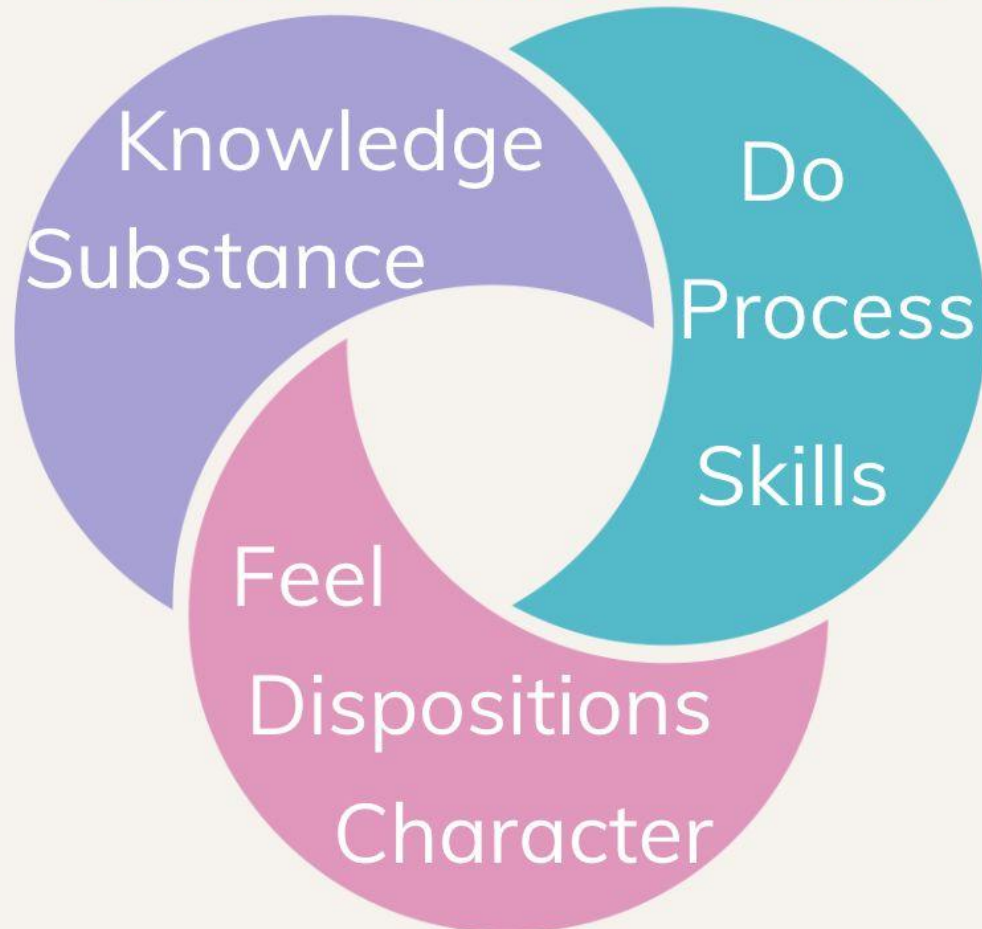
Thursday- Race and CL, Talking to Strangers Chapter 1 and 2

Friday- Reflections and “Why’s” of CL

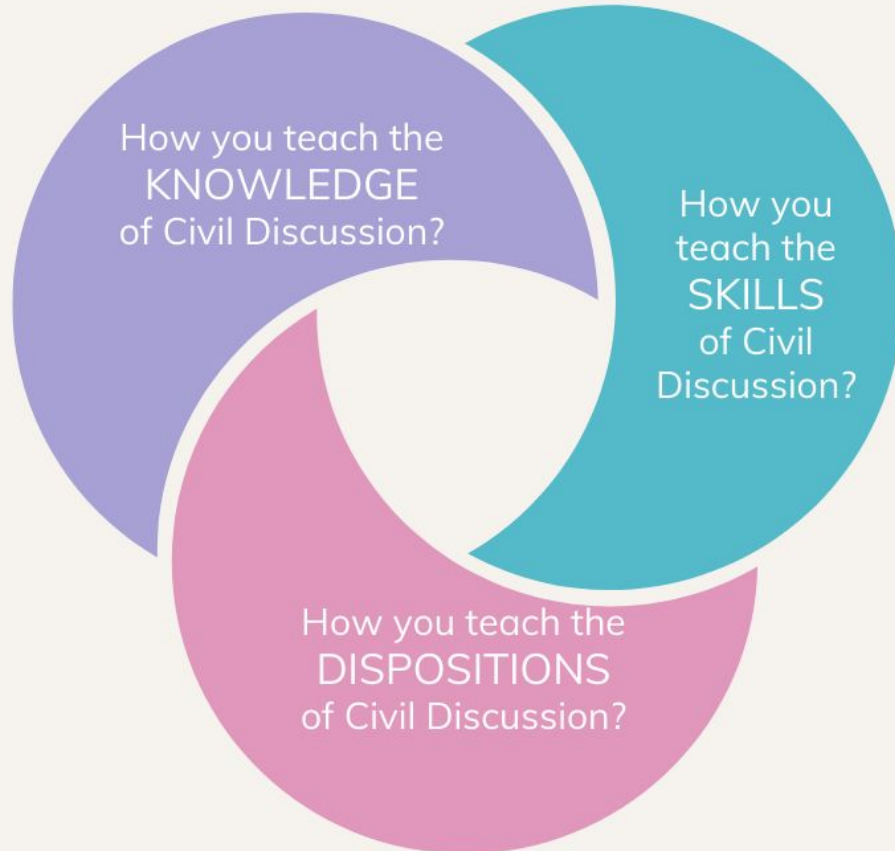
Objectives for Today

- 1) Teachers will reflect on the importance of Constitutional Literacy for themselves and their students. Think about own passion and why CL. Most important knowledge, skills and dispositions are most important to me to give to my students?
- 2) Teachers will understand that the Constitution is messy and hard work and is not only a unit in curriculum but central to American history and society.
- 3) Teachers will reflect on the own Pedagogy Content Knowledge.
- 4) Teachers will feel confident engaging students in the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of Civility.
 - a) Know: Teachers will have a basic formula to engage their students in meaningful civic dialogue.
 - b) Do: Teachers will discuss strategies for meaningful civic dialogue.
 - c) Feel: Teachers will feel reflective about their own classrooms.

DEEPER LEARNING FRAMEWORK



DEEPER LEARNING FRAMEWORK



REPUBLIC OF THE UNITED STATES

CONSTITUTION (C)

PROTESTANT
CHRISTIANITY

BRITISH
ENLIGHTENMENT

CLASSICAL
REPUBLICANISM

AMERICAN
EXPERIENCE

CIVIL RIGHT and
CIVIL LIBERTIES

ABOLITION AND
RECONSTRUCTION

CIVIC VIRTUES/ DISPOSITIONS (c)

July 4th, 1776

British: just saying you're independent
doesn't make it true

Thomas Jefferson:



What are Dispositions?

Character Traits, Values, Actions, Attitudes, and Beliefs that are a part of a person's Identity or Behavior.



What Dispositions are our students seeing? What are we modeling?

WELL IN THAT CASE...

ILL SPEAK TO YOU NEVER.

WHOM SHOULD I KILL FIRST

FAKE FRIENDS OR MY ENEMIES

THE PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES
2020

TRUMP vs BIDEN

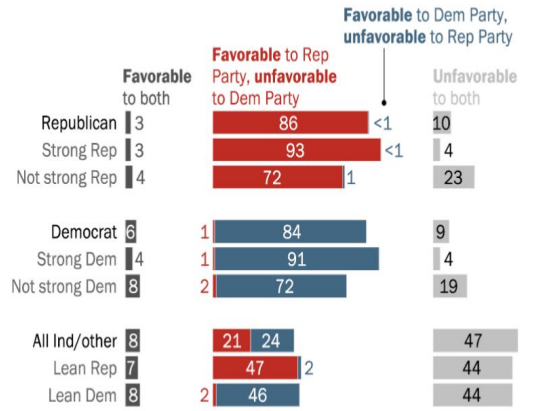
HOW TO DEBATE LEFTISTS
AND DESTROY THEM
10 RULES FOR WINNING THE ARGUMENT

I have an
opinion.

So did
Hitler!

Partisans with weaker ties to their party more likely to have unfavorable views of both parties

% who are ...



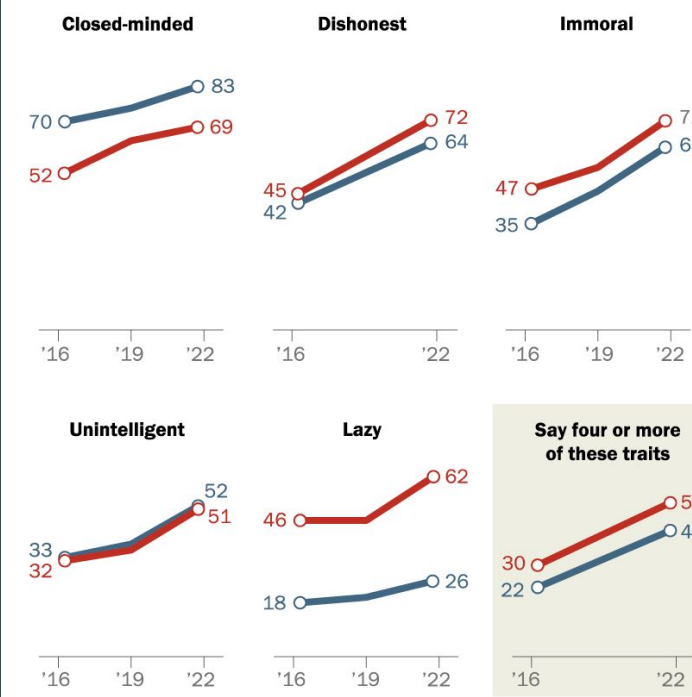
Note: Based on those who rated both the Republican and Democratic parties.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted June 27-July 4, 2022.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Growing shares of both Republicans and Democrats say members of the other party are more immoral, dishonest, closed-minded than other Americans

% who say members of the **other** party are a lot/somewhat more _____ compared to other Americans

— Republicans say Democrats are more ...
— Democrats say Republicans are more ...

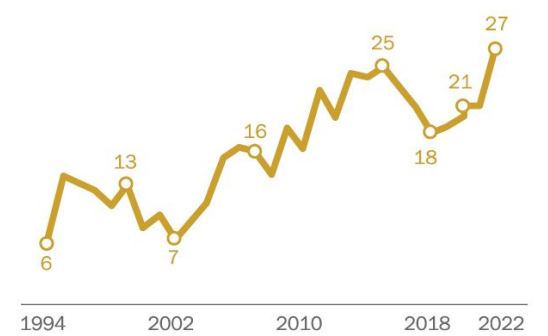


Note: Partisans do not include those who lean to each party.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted June 27-July 4, 2022.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Share of Americans holding unfavorable views of both parties among the highest in decades

% who have an unfavorable view of the Republican and Democratic parties



Note: Based on those who rated both the Republican and Democratic parties.

Source: Yearly averages of survey data from Pew Research Center American Trends Panel (2020-2022) and Pew Research Center phone surveys of U.S. adults (1994-2019).

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Bonds of Affection

“The Constitution is the result of the spirit of amity [love, brotherly love] and mutual deference [respect] which the peculiarity of our political situation rendered indispensable.”

- George Washington

Bonds of Affection

“We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection.”

- Abraham Lincoln, “First Inaugural Address of Abraham Lincoln”

Love Your Enemies

“Overcoming a culture of contempt (mix of hatred and disgust) will require more than a rousing chorus of ‘Kumbaya’ and a basket of platitudes. Building real harmony in the face of difference and disagreement is hard work. Nevertheless, equipped with a new outlook on our culture, a better approach to leadership, the right tools of communication, and a healthy dose of courage, we can bridge the political divides that have proliferated across the country in recent years.”

- Arthur Brooks, *Love Your Enemies*, Introduction

Civic Charity

“...charity requires a devotion to God [higher power] and care for other human beings where or not those humans veins reciprocate that care or provide some personal gratification.”

“Civic charity, while by definition respectful and caring to all citizens as free beings, is not a principle that will, or needs to, speak to everyone. But given the continuing political and religious convictions of vast members of America today, it is a concept that may be well worth identifying and reviving.”

- Matthew Holland, *Bonds of Affection*, Prologue

What does this look like in the classroom?

Yankees

Dodgers

Which Team is the Best?
(What is sports?)

Jazz

Lakers

Recommended Knowledge

Students:

- Civil Discussion Guidelines (Parliamentary Procedure)
- Credible resources from both sides of the argument

Teachers:

- Have posted the Discussion Guidelines
- Find provide credible sources
- Engagement strategies
- Basic understanding of both sides of the argument

Knowledge: Potential Pitfalls

Teacher:

- Sometimes the procedure takes over the product (simplify steps)
- Non-equitable arguments or not credible (celebrity does not equal credibility)
- Not educated on both sides of the argument

Student:

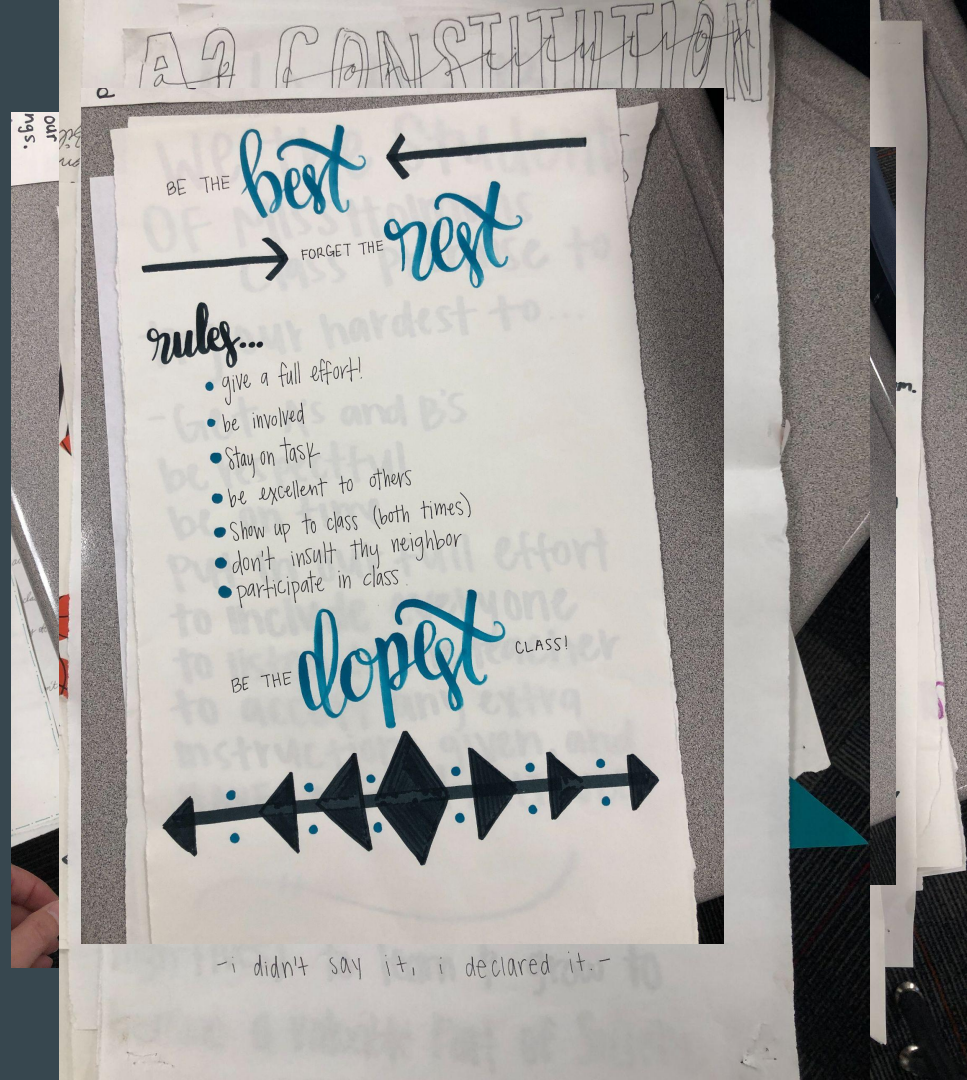
- They don't participate -> make the topic interesting and relevant, assign tasks
- Celebrity does not equal credibility

Knowledge: Examples

Classroom Constitution

- Preamble = class mottos or goals
 - Ex. Create a safe learning environment
- Body = how they are going to accomplish those goals
 - Ex. Listen to the ideas of others

Debating Great Society Programs



Recommended Skills

Students:

- They say, You say, I say, We say
- Interpreting texts: Comprehension and crafting an argument
- Active listening: comprehension

Teachers:

- Referee: Ensure all sides of the argument given equitable time and merit
 - Make sure the kids make their own decisions
 - Be the voice to balance the ideology (liberal/conservative)
- Assign topics
 - Provide rich Primary resources
 - Scaffold text interpretation skills

Skills: Potential Pitfalls

Teacher:

- Allow one side to dominate the conversation (unconscious bias)
- Not checking for comprehension skills
- Active listening is not practiced -> model how to navigate those conversations

Student:

- Active listening is not practiced
- Lack text interpretations skills

Skills: Examples

CIVIL DISCUSSION <i>skills</i>	
GROUND RULES	Listen to the complete thought Do not interrupt No name-calling
MINDSET	See people as people Do not attack the person Break down the idea or look at the argument
CLARIFY	Seek clarification: This is what I am hearing _____ Is this what you mean _____
EVIDENCE	What is the evidence? Where did you get the evidence? Is the information reliable?
IDEA	Propose a different idea: Would this be possible _____? Can both viewpoints agree to this?
THEY SAY, YOU SAY, I SAY, WE SAY	

@mzholman

They say, You say, I say, We say

Civic Engagement Project
(Lesson Plan)

Debate Dropping Atomic Bomb

Recommended Dispositions

Students:

- Empathy
- Accepting of criticism
 - Don't take offense
- Allowing people to change: Forgiveness
- Agree to find common ground before we agree to disagree

Teachers:

- Seeking to resolve and compromise and not seeking to win
- Commitment to unbiased
- Passionate enough to get the kids engaged but remove the emotional tie
- Model Student dispositions

Dispositions: Potential Pitfalls

Teacher:

- Put too much of their own opinion into the conversation
- Disingenuous

Student:

- Becoming defensive
- Winning or Fighting is more important than Understanding

Scalia and RBG



Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Justice Antonin Scalia appear onstage during opening night of the Washington National Opera production of *Ariadne auf Naxos* at The Kennedy Center Opera House, Oct. 2009, in Washington.

Teaching Dispositions Example

- Teach specific examples of like: kindness, listening, trust, growth mindset...
- Find a video or article and prompt to the students to ignore the content of the argument and look specifically for dispositions on who they are saying or responding to the argument.
- Discuss what you find and model and create expectations for the dispositions.

Source

<https://www.uscourts.gov/educational-resources/educational-activities/setting-ground-rules-civil-discourse-and-difficult>



Specific Examples to consider

Conversation on the Constitution Breyer and Scalia (Originalist vs Evolutionist) (36 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VGKgIdW55nc>

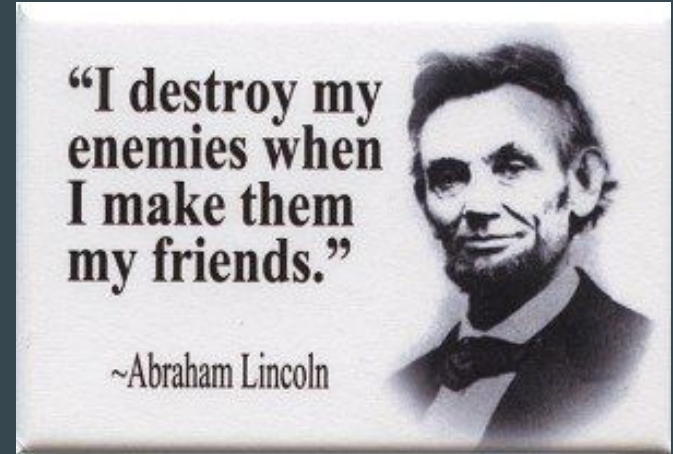
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P5HHaUdVgsw>

[How to win an Argument without making Enemies](#) Trevor Noah

[Dr. King Principles of Non-Violence](#)

The West Wing- The Supremes

Daryl Davis- Why I as a Black man attend KKK Rallies- [Ted Talk](#)



What examples do you use in your class to teach/model the Dispositions of Civility to our students?

Reflection of the Dispositions of our Classroom?

What are the Dispositions you want in your classroom?

Are you a model of the Dispositions?

How are you intentionally planning to incorporate the practice of those Dispositions into your classroom?



Four Tezcatlipocas

- 1) Honest Self Reflection
- 2) Listening to Precious Knowledge of Others
- 3) Positive and Creative Action
- 4) Willingness to Change

Reframing the Debate - Argumentative vs Inquisitive

What are the points your opponent has and what arguments can you use in response?

To

What are the points your opponent has and what questions do you have in response?



Sir Ernest Ryder- Lord Justice of Appeals and Master of Pembroke College at Oxford

Example of Civil Discussion Gov Spencer Cox and Chris Peterson



Share Out - So What?

- 1) Reflect on what you've learned this week.
- 2) Take a minute to ponder
- 3) Write down a goal of something you want to accomplish or incorporate into your curriculum.
 - a) When planning your lessons be intentional in Objectives
 - i) Students will KNOW (Knowledge)....
 - ii) Students will DO (Skills)....
 - iii) Students will FEEL (Dispositions)....

Final Thought

You say, I say Example

- Caesar, Jan 2017

Department	Issue
Justice	Money spent on prisoners - is it a real deterrent
Health & Human Services	Medical marijuana - legalize
Health & Human Services	Family violence - identify the cause
Homeland Security	Immigration - decrease criminal immigration
Health & Human Services	Healthcare is reactive and not proactive
Immigration/ Foreign Affairs	The Wall - decrease illegal -Immigration
Education	What to spend money on?
Justice	Police brutality - BLM
Health & Human Services	Healthcare - Obamacare
Environmental Protection Agency	Pollution - business induced air

Final Thought

You say, I say Example

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How did we accomplish this kind of discussion?

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