

**MHCC UNIT PLAN #2**  
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**Grade Level:** High School

**ABSTRACT:**

Students will engage their peers in constructive conversation about issues of public policy. Students will also arrive at a position on an issue of public policy and express that position both orally and in writing with reasoned arguments and research.

**PRIMARY STANDARDS AND BENCHMARKS ADDRESSED:**

VI.2HS 1

VI.3HS 1

**ESTIMATED TIME TO COMPLETE ALL COMPONENTS OF LESSON:** 2-3 class sessions of approximately 55 minutes for each session.

**MATERIALS:**

- CDV Handout
- Issue determined by Unit #1 (Unit #1 is a pre-requisite to this lesson and must be completed prior to the facilitation of this unit.)

**PROCEDURE:**

Day 1 \*Note: A thorough class discussion may take an additional class session.

The teacher will facilitate a class discussion. During the class discussion each student will be responsible for an individual analysis of the effectiveness of an issue of public policy as thoroughly researched in Unit #1. Students should refer to the scoring rubrics found in download #1 as a guide to the required elements of their presentations for class discussion.

Assessment: Group discussion. Scoring rubrics can be located in download #1: *Classroom Analytic Scoring Guide, Holistic Features Scoring Guide, and Group Discussion Scoring Table.*

Day 2

The teacher will facilitate a writing clinic for the composition of extensively elaborated essays for students to express and justify their decisions on public policy. Each required component of the essay should be modeled by the teacher using an unrelated public policy issue as an example. For a student writing assignment instruction page and a scoring rubric, see download #2: *Public Policy Evaluation: Assignment Guidelines, Public Policy Evaluation Scoring Rubric.*

## CLASSROOM ANALYTIC SCORING GUIDE

	Standard: VI.2	Group Discussion	Later Elementary	
	Made a relevant statement	Applied core democratic values	Responded appropriately	Asked a pertinent question
<b>Performance Level 4</b>	Participated in the discussion by making many highly relevant, insightful, and complex statements throughout the discussion	Demonstrates an understanding of the competing core democratic values relevant to the issue under discussion.	Responded appropriately at all times and made a concerted effort to invite and acknowledge the contributions of others.	Asked in-depth questions that led others to think about different views directly related to the issue being discussed.
<b>Performance Level 3</b>	Participated in discussion by making relevant statements	Correctly applies at least one appropriate core democratic value to support their position on the issue.	Responded appropriately at all times.	Asked relevant questions that kept others on topic.
<b>Performance Level 2</b>	Participated in discussion but statements were only marginally relevant	Student alludes to a core democratic value but does not make a clear connection to their position	Responded inappropriately but made some appropriate comments.	Questions posed were either marginally relevant or inappropriate.
<b>Performance Level 1</b>	Did not make any relevant statements during the discussion	Student makes no reference to core democratic values, <u>OR</u> the value cited has no apparent connection to the issue under discussion	Responded inappropriately and made no appropriate comments <u>OR</u> did not take part in the discussion	Asked no questions <u>OR</u> the questions were irrelevant.

The student is responding **appropriately** when he/she exhibits one or more of the following behaviors:

- Invites the contributions of others
- Acknowledges the statements of others
- Challenges the accuracy, logic, relevance, or clarity of statements made by others
- Summarizes points of agreement and disagreement

The student is responding **inappropriately** when he/she exhibits one or more of the following behaviors:

- Making irrelevant distracting statements
- Interrupting
- Monopolizing
- Engaging in personal attacks

**PLEASE NOTE:** Performance Level 3 is the standard. The student is successful and has met the standard when he/she reaches Performance Level 3. Performance Level 4 is included for comparison purposes only.

**HOLISTIC FEATURE SCORING FOR  
GROUP DISCUSSION:  
GRADES 3-12**

<b>Points</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>4</b>	In order to receive a 4-point score, during discussion the student must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate an understanding of core democratic values</li> <li>• Make at least 2 relevant statements</li> <li>• Respond appropriately at all times</li> <li>• Ask at least 2 pertinent questions</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	In order to receive a 3-point score, during discussion the student must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate an understanding of core democratic values</li> <li>• Achieve the performance standard on 2 of the remaining 3 elements</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	In order to receive a 2-point score, during discussion the student must <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve the performance standard on 2 of the remaining 4 elements</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	In order to receive a 1-point score, during discussion the student must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve the standard on 1 of the remaining 4 elements</li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	In order to receive a 0-point score, the students' discussion will show no evidence of any of the elements associated with this standard.

**PLEASE NOTE:** This scoring guide is designed to be used with its corresponding Classroom Analytic Scoring Guide. There are four elements (features) to this task. The four elements are listed in the 4-point score description. To receive credit for the elements listed above, a student must reach or exceed Performance Level 3 (see Classroom Analytic Scoring Guide) for that element.

Question Discussed:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Discussion Time: \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Students: #1 \_\_\_\_\_ #2 \_\_\_\_\_ #3 \_\_\_\_\_

#4 \_\_\_\_\_ #5 \_\_\_\_\_ #6 \_\_\_\_\_

#1 #2 #3 #4 #5 #6

**Student used core democratic values**

**Student made a statement about the issue that was accurate and relevant**

**Student asked pertinent questions**

*Responded Appropriately*

**Invited the contributions of others  
Acknowledged statements of others  
Tactfully challenged the accuracy, logic,**

**relevance, or clarity of statements made**

**by others**

**Summarized points of agreement and disagreement**

*Responded Inappropriately*

**Made irrelevant/distracting statements**

**Interrupted**

**Monopolized the discussion**

**Engaged in personal attacks**

**Rating for Responded Appropriately**

**FINAL SCORE**

## PUBLIC POLICY EVALUATION ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES

You have engaged your peers in constructive conversation about matters of public policy through extensive identification, investigation, research, and analysis. You will now evaluate your thoroughly researched public policy issue with regard to its impact to state and local levels of government in an essay. Prepare an essay evaluating the **effectiveness** of your public policy issue.

In your essay be sure to include the following elements:

- A brief history and description of the issue as it relates to a local and/or state level of government.
- A brief description of the proposed or implemented public policy that addresses the researched issue.
- A clearly stated position as to the level of effectiveness of the public policy.
- Supporting information that references at least one core democratic value of American constitutional democracy.
- Data (statistics, facts, references, etc.) that supports your evaluative statement.
- Acknowledgement of an alternate course of action and rationale behind the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of that alternate course of action.

You may want to refer to the following layout as a guide for essay construction:

- Introductory Paragraph (s)
  1. Brief history and description of the issue as it relates to the state and/or local level(s) of government.
  2. Brief description of the proposed or implemented public policy.
  3. Clearly stated position as to the level of effectiveness of the public policy.
- Supporting Paragraphs
  1. Supporting information that references at least one core democratic value of American constitutional democracy.
  2. Data (statistics, facts, references, etc.) that supports your evaluative statement.
  3. Acknowledgement of an alternate course of action and rationale behind the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of that alternate course of action.
- Concluding Paragraph (s)
  1. Connect back to introduction and summarize your arguments.

\*For grading criteria, refer to the Public Policy Evaluation Scoring Rubric

## PUBLIC POLICY EVALUATION SCORING RUBRIC

<b>Points</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>4</b>	<p>In order to receive a 4-point score, the student must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clearly stated position as to the level of effectiveness of the public policy.</li> <li>• A brief description of the proposed or implemented policy that addresses the researched issue.</li> <li>• Supporting information that references at least one core democratic value of American constitutional democracy.</li> <li>• Data that supports the evaluative statement.</li> <li>• A brief history and description of the issue as it relates to a local and/or state level of government.</li> <li>• Acknowledgement of an alternate course of action and rationale behind the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of that alternate course of action.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<p>In order to receive a 3-point score, the student must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A brief description of the proposed or implemented policy that addresses the researched issue.</li> <li>• A clearly stated position as to the effectiveness of the public policy.</li> <li>• Supporting information that references at least one core democratic value of American constitutional democracy.</li> <li>• A brief history and description of the issue as it relates to a local and/or state level of government.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<p>In order to receive a 2-point score, the student must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A brief description of the proposed or implemented policy that addresses the researched issue.</li> <li>• A clearly stated position as to the effectiveness of the public policy.</li> <li>• Supporting information that references at least one core democratic value of American constitutional democracy.</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<p>In order to receive a 1-point score, the student must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A brief description of the proposed or implemented policy that addresses the researched issue.</li> <li>• A clearly stated position as to the effectiveness of the public policy.</li> </ul>