Profile Sheet
PBL Lesson Plan for Diverse Learners

Original Title: How Can Americans Get Involved in the Government?
Primary Subject Area: Social Studies
Outside Subject Area: Language Arts

Description of student roles and problem situation:
The students represent a group of political activists/educators. A possible audience that would be interested in the student’s solutions would be teachers of elementary-college-aged students around the country. These teachers would then incorporate those suggestions into teaching their students how to be more involved in the government. The problem the students are asked to solve is one of a decreasing involvement in government. Fewer people, especially young people, are participating in government by doing things like voting, staying informed on issues, contacting their representatives, etc. The students must work together to research this problem and come up with solutions to help educate and encourage Americans, especially young Americans, to become more involved in their government.

Teacher: Jocelyn Simmermaker
Grade level: 3rd grade
Time Allotted: 10-12 hours of classroom time

Adaptations for Student from Non-Western culture:
- Those not from this culture would probably be very unfamiliar with the concept of democracy and participating in government. I would put them with another student to do peer tutoring. Prior to this assignment, I would have this student tutor explain to them how government works in America and help them along the way with understanding concepts involved in the project.
- I would discuss with the student the way voting and government participation is handled in their country, then have them present that information to their group. This would allow for a respectful discussion of the differences and similarities.

Adaptations for ESOL Student:
- I would provide visual aids for this student whenever possible. These visual aids would include pictures of voting centers and procedures, state and local representatives at work, political rallies/events, and Americans volunteering in the area of government, etc.
- I would provide this student with a list of important vocabulary words and definitions that will be used in this area and for this assignment. Sample words would include government, vote/voters, representatives, rallies, politics, etc.
Title/Learner Characteristics/NGSSS

Teacher:  Jocelyn Simmermaker
Subject Area:  Social Studies
Class:  Social Studies
Class Level:  None
Grade Level:  3rd grade
Outside Subj. Area:  Language Arts

TITLE

How Can Americans Get Involved in the Government?

NEXT GENERATION SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS

SS.3.C.1.2
Describe how government gains its power from the people.

SS.3.C.2.1
Identify group and individual actions of citizens that demonstrate civility, cooperation, volunteerism, and other civic virtues.

LA.3.6.2.3
The student will communicate information in an informational report that includes main ideas and relevant ideas with visual support (e.g., text supported by poster, diagram, idea map)

LEARNER CHARACTERISTICS

1. PHYSICAL: This age group is very active and often has a ton of energy.

   Justification: This characteristic will be important to consider in my lesson plan because students will not be able to sit still for long periods of time to do the work. I will need to plan the schedule to allow for students to get out some of their energy at different points and in different ways during the learning process.

2. SOCIAL: This age group is very competitive, and group games can get out of hand at times.

   Justification: This is crucial to know as I plan this PBL plan because I need to be careful to limit competition amongst the groups. If there is an opportunity
for them to race or compete against each other, I should make it clear that it is just for fun and that things should not get out of hand.

3. COGNITIVE: *This age group is able to make decisions based on facts that are presented to them, rather than just on what they think or feel.*

Justification: I want to incorporate this ability into my PBL plan because this issue is one on which I want my students to learn to think about the facts, rather than just what they feel. I want to show them the difference between making a decision based on their feelings and making a decision based on the facts, and at this age level, they can begin to understand that.

4. EMOTIONAL: *This age group really wants to please their authority, especially a teacher.*

Justification: This is important to consider because I need to be excited and enthusiastic about this project. The more I get into this and communicate my expectations to my students, the more they will get on board and be excited to complete it.

5. COGNITIVE: *This age group needs breaks in between stretches of learning as they are not able to take in as much as older students.*

Justification: This age group cannot handle as deep of thought processes as older students, but they are beginning to. I need to be careful in my PBL that I simplify this issue and not make it too complex, as it is a very complicated issue. I also need to intersperse lecture with activity so the student does not get overwhelmed.
Learning Outcomes; Student Role/Problem Situation; Meet the Problem Method

Teacher: Jocelyn Simmermaker
Subject Area: Social Studies
Grade Level: 3rd grade
Outside Subj. Area: Language Arts

**TITLE**

How Can Americans Get Involved in the Government?

**SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS**

**SS.3.C.1.2**
Describe how government gains its power from the people.

LO #1: Given information from textbook and student research, the students in small groups will accurately conclude that the government gets its power from people in at least three different, concrete ways. (Analysis)

**SS.3.C.2.1**
Identify group and individual actions of citizens that demonstrate civility, cooperation, volunteerism, and other civic virtues.

LO #2: Given information gleaned from research, the students in small groups will accurately choose and rate five activities/actions that Americans can do to be involved in the government. (Evaluation)

**LA.3.6.2.3**
The student will communicate information in an informational report that includes main ideas and relevant ideas with visual support (e.g., text supported by poster, diagram, idea map)

LO #3: Given research and the information compiled in LO 1 and LO 2, each student will work with his group to create and present reports of their conclusions. Each student will create/present his own report. They must score at least an 8 out of 10 on the report rubric. (Synthesis)
POSSIBLE STUDENT ROLES

ROLE #1: Political Activists

ROLE #2: Educators

PROBLEM SITUATION

The students represent a group of political activists/educators. A possible audience that would be interested in the student’s solutions would be teachers of elementary-college-aged students around the country. These teachers would then incorporate those suggestions into teaching their students how to be more involved in the government.

The problem the students are asked to solve is one of a decreasing involvement in government. Fewer people, especially young people, are participating in government by doing things like voting, staying informed on issues, contacting their representatives, etc. The students must work together to research this problem and come up with solutions to help educate and encourage Americans, especially young Americans, to become more involved in their government.

MEET THE PROBLEM

My students will receive a letter from the President asking them to help educate teachers of students (elementary through college) on this matter. They will also receive two articles on this subject, giving them information with which to understand the problem.
To Whom It May Concern:

I am contacting you on concerning an alarming trend our country: the issue of young Americans not getting involved with in our government. A growing number of young people in our country are not coming out to vote. Many of them are not aware of who their senators and representatives are or how to contact them. Often they are not aware of the bills in front of Congress. Many of them do not even understand how our government works and that the government is “by the people.”

I thought of no better group of people to handle this growing problem than you as political activists and educators. Please come up with a solution to help educate this generation to increase American involvement in our country. You will present these solutions to a gathering of teachers from around the country as plausible ways to teach their students about our government and how they can get more involved.

Thank you for your participation in this matter. Please have your solutions ready to present by the first of June. America was made great by the active participation of her people in the government. She must remain strong as a government “by the people and for the people.”

President of the United States
The Surprising Trends That Suggest Young People Won’t Vote in 2012


By Cheryl Russell

For many, the 2008 election wasn’t just a victory for Democrats—it was also the long-awaited return of young adults to the voting booth. Now Obama supporters are hoping that, come Election Day 2012, young adults will once again turn out in droves. But 2008 probably didn’t signal a permanent resurgence of the youth vote. In fact, there are good reasons to believe that young people will vote in significantly lower numbers this time around.

It has long been a puzzle why so many young adults do not vote—and why their already low voting rate has generally fallen over the decades. In 1972, 53 percent of 18-to-29-year-olds went to the polls. By 2000, the figure had fallen to just 36 percent, a historic low. (In contrast, the voting rate among people aged 65 or older rose five percentage points during those years, to 68 percent.) There is no doubt that the Obama campaign of 2008 energized the under-30 crowd, boosting their voting rate to 46 percent. But even then, fewer than half of 18-to-29-year-olds went to the polls compared with more than two-thirds of people aged 65 or older, according to the Census Bureau.

So why don’t young adults vote? That’s a vexing question political campaigns have been asking for decades. The most likely answer is that young adults do not vote because many are still—in a sense—children, without adult commitments or responsibilities. The data suggest that three factors consistently make a difference in voting rates: money, marriage, and homeownership. Those are the adult commitments that give people a stake in society; to protect and expand their stake, they vote. Take a look at money and voting: The gap in voter participation between the highest and lowest income groups is a stunning 26 percentage points. For marriage and homeownership, the gaps are 16 to 17 percent.

Recent years have seen Americans in their twenties delay starting careers, getting married, and buying homes—and as the road to adulthood has lengthened, voting rates among the young have generally fallen (the notable exceptions are 2004 and 2008). Now, the bad economy is exacerbating these trends. For the nation’s young, the Great Recession has turned money, marriage, and homeownership into an impossible dream.

Let’s start with money. Among 18-to-29-year-olds in the labor force, fully 44 percent are unemployed or underemployed, according to a Gallup survey—that’s more than any other demographic segment. The financial consequences are not pretty. Householders under age 25 lost more ground than any other group between 2008 and 2010, according to the Census Bureau, their median income falling by 13 percent after adjusting for inflation. Those aged 25 to 29 had the next highest decline, with their median income falling five percent.
This economic climate has led twentysomethings to put off another traditional marker of adulthood: marriage. Young adults are not just postponing marriage—they are shunning it, and it’s not hard to figure out why. Being holed up in your parents’ basement with creditors pounding on the door does not impress the guys or girls. That scenario, playing out in communities across the nation, explains why 64 percent of men aged 25 to 29 were still single in 2011, up from 59 percent in 2008. Among women in the age group, the never-married share grew from 45 percent to just over 50 percent. Without financial security, marriage is increasingly off the table.

Not surprisingly, homeownership rates have similarly plunged among young adults. Historically, homeowners become the norm in the 30-to-34 age group, when the homeownership rate rises above 50 percent. This has been the case in every year of the Census Bureau’s data series, which began in 1982. A 53.5 percent majority of householders aged 30 to 34 owned their home in 2008. By 2011, however, only 49.8 percent were homeowners—the first time the figure has fallen below the 50 percent threshold.

It’s true that the economy has shown signs of recovery in the past few months. The number of jobs is growing, and unemployment is down. But the nine months between now and Election Day are not enough to gestate a generation of youth and turn them into voting adults. It takes years to catch up. Studies show that those who graduate from college into a bad economy experience long-term wage losses—particularly after being underemployed—with lower earnings even six years after recovery. Those wage losses will likely continue to have an effect on marriage and homeownership rates, which will in turn have an effect on voter turnout.

It’s a grim picture, and it almost (but not quite) guarantees that 18-to-29-year-olds will be less likely to vote in 2012 than in 2008. This is bad news for Obama, who will need the youth vote to win in November. It doesn’t mean, of course, that he shouldn’t try to recreate some of the enthusiasm he sparked among young voters in 2008—it just means he will be facing an uphill battle.

### Strategies for Reconnecting Citizens and Government

MRSC Focus, June 2001

http://www.mrsc.org/focuspub/strategiesmrscfocus.aspx

**Excerpt**

**Evidence of a Problem**

Recent opinion polls paint a grim picture of citizen understanding and trust in government. One such survey found that two-thirds of the people surveyed could not name their representative in Congress and that most respondents were misinformed about how the federal (or local) budgets were spent. Numerous polls conducted nationally and
in Washington State indicate that trust in government has eroded significantly, and that most respondents feel they don't "have a real say" in what government does.

A national survey conducted by Hart/Teeter for the Council for Excellence in Government found that 9 out of 10 respondents could readily cite examples of the "biggest problems" with government, while 42 percent could not name any successes. However, when asked about the value of specific government programs, large majorities judged many of them to be successful and worthwhile. Reminding respondents about specific government programs apparently elicited a more positive response toward government. Surveys of Washington State citizens show similar results and trends. (Examples of these and other polls may be viewed on MRSC's Web site).

A number of studies suggest a parallel decline in the level of participation in civic, religious, and other voluntary associations. Researcher Robert Putnam stirred considerable interest with a study that observed, symbolically, that more people are bowling than ever before, but they are bowling alone-no longer in teams. According to his studies, participation in many community organizations, service clubs, and church-related activities has dropped significantly since the 1960's. These declines are a concern because such organizations have functioned as training grounds for future leaders and to build skills and habits of cooperating for mutual benefit.

**Roots of the Problem**

Citizen discontent is, in part, a reflection of the failure of local governments to stay sufficiently in touch with citizens. As the population and government agencies grow in size, representatives in government begin to seem less accessible, less accountable, and less in tune with the needs of the diverse groups they represent. Government delivery of services by larger agencies may seem faceless. Government regulations and permit processes tend to become more complex with growth. Negative campaigning, misleading ads, and broken promises have further eroded confidence in elected officials. Campaign financing practices lead citizens to suspect that special interest groups and those with money control public policy decisions rather than Joe Citizen.

However, government may also be blamed for societal trends and evolutionary changes that government did not create. Changing demographics and family relationships, global competition, and an impersonal technology revolution have triggered anxieties about job loss, isolation, and other social ills. These fears may get redirected toward government agencies that don't seem to be doing enough to cushion Jane Citizen from a very bumpy road as we transition into the information age.

A number of trends leave citizens with less time and opportunity to put down roots in their community or to participate in community affairs. An increased share of households are single parent or childless households or households with two wage earners. People are moving more often to the suburbs, or in pursuit of jobs, affordable housing, and more pleasing environment. People also are commuting farther. Many newer residential areas, including some gated communities, seem to be designed more to "protect people from
community" rather than to connect them to it. Studies indicate that TV viewing is consuming increasing amounts of our leisure time, in place of more interactive pursuits.

Economic trends, such as global competition, corporate consolidation, down-sizing, and the technology revolution are disorienting. They also have created job instability, especially for those who lack technology skills required for new jobs. Meanwhile, welfare reform, regulatory reform, and decreased federal and state funding have punched holes in safety net programs.

The Internet and other communication innovations transmit what Mindy Cameron, former Seattle Times editor, terms a "babble of information" that doesn't distinguish between well-researched information and opinion not based on fact. New communications tools can contribute both to information overload and the rapid spread of misinformation.
Sample Problem Statements; Know and Need-to-Know Boards; Possible Resources

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MEET THE PROBLEM

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SAMPLE PROBLEM STATEMENTS

How can we, as educators and political activists, educate and encourage young Americans to become more involved in government in such a way that

We determine our solutions by June 1st at 1:00pm?

We spread our message to the majority of the students in the United States?

We consider the causes and effects of the lack of voter involvement?

We involve the community?

KNOW STATEMENTS

1. In the year 2000, only 36% of young Americans were actually voting.

2. Young people often do not vote because they are immature and lacking responsibility.

3. Money, marriage, and home ownership have a large effect on young people voting.

4. If the economy is poor, fewer young Americans will vote.

5. According to a survey done, only 2/3 of people surveyed cannot name their representatives in Congress.

6. Fewer people are participating in civic and community groups.

7. People are not involved because the government is not doing a good job reaching out to them and communicating with them.

NEED-TO-KNOW STATEMENTS

1. Why do people need to participate in the government?

2. What are some ways people can be involved in the government?

3. What are some famous young Americans who have made a difference in their government?
4. Who are our local representatives?
5. What are some political groups that young people can be involved in?
6. What influence can one person’s vote have?
7. What are some civic groups that have made a big difference in the community and in the government?
8. What are some other reasons why young people do not participate in government?
9. What is currently being done to try to involve young people in government?
10. Who are some other groups of people that are concerned with this issue?

RESOURCES

1. The Dirksen Congressional Center, Congress for Kids, http://www.congressforkids.net/
2. The Ballot Box Battle, by Emily Arnold McCully
3. See How They Run, by Susan E. Goodman
4. Candidates, Campaigns, & Elections (3rd edition), Linda Scher
8. Video:
Capstone Performance

The student will do his own individual research and come up with 2 solutions to the problem. He will then pick his best option of the two and give four reasons why that solution is best. He will then present his best solution to his team. The other members of the team will do the same. The group will then decide what are the best two options (of all presented), then pick the best option and give four justifications as to why that is the best option. This information (the two group solutions and the four reasons) will be the subject of their presentation to the class and guests. Each student will do his own research and will turn in his own written report complete with research, the two solutions, and the four reasons why they chose the solution they did.

Students use autonomy in creating their own individual reports and doing their own individual research. Each student must also participate in the group by joining in on discussions and playing some vocal role in the presentation to the classes. Students will be graded on their individual work and participation, not as a group. They utilize metacognition by taking the research they have done, thinking about it and processing it, then deciding on proper solutions. The time limit for the preparation is 1 week, working in class. Groups will have 45-60 minutes to discuss their solutions and decide on the best ones. The final group presentation time limit is 7-10 minutes per group. Other students, both from our class and other 3rd grade classes, will act as the audience members (teachers/administrators from all over the country). I will also invite a local government official to be a part of our audience as well. The performance will be held in the gym with chairs set up in rows like a conference. The presenters will stand on stage to present, and the audience members will sit in the rows facing them.
# Rubric for Assessing Capstone Performance

## Oral Presentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Superior</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>15 pts.</td>
<td>10 pts.</td>
<td>5 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy of Student’s Individual Work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>The best solution is presented. The solution only meets 2 of the conditions in the Sample Problem Statements. Only 2-3 justifications are given. The solution and justifications are 70% accurate and based on facts the student has researched.</td>
<td>Student presents his best solution. Solution meets the four conditions listed in the Sample Problem Statements. Four clear justifications are given for why that solution is the best to solve the problem. All solutions and justifications are 100% accurate and based on facts the student has researched.</td>
<td>No solution presented OR 0-1 justifications given OR Solution and justification are less than 70% accurate and based on facts that the student has researched.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adequate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Student did not provide a justification OR Justification given is less than 70% accurate</td>
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<td>Accuracy of Group’s Work</td>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>The student provides one justification for why the group’s chosen solution is the best. This justification is understandable and 100% accurate and based on facts the student has researched. This justification is given in 1-2 spoken sentences.</td>
<td>The student provides one justification, but the justification is not applicable to the group’s solution. The solution is not understandable and only 70% accurate and based on facts the student has researched.</td>
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<td>Adequate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Student accurately</td>
<td>Student accurately</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Accuracy of Student’s Individual</td>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>Student accurately</td>
<td>Student accurately</td>
<td>Student answers 1</td>
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<td>Adequate</td>
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<td>Poor</td>
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### Response to Questions

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<tr>
<th>Score Conversion</th>
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<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>34-40</td>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>26-33</td>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>Poor</td>
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<tr>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Poor</td>
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<td>12-17</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Poor</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-11</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Poor</td>
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</table>

#### Delivery and Mechanics of the Speech

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Conversion</th>
<th>Superior</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Poor</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 pts.</td>
<td>Student had a speaking part in the presentation. The student could be heard and understood. The student made eye contact with the audience.</td>
<td>Student had a speaking part in the oral presentation. It was difficult to hear or understand him at times. Eye contact was made 50% of the time.</td>
<td>Student did not participate in oral presentation OR Student was not understood or heard at all during presentation.</td>
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**Written Report**

### Mechanics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Conversion</th>
<th>Superior</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Poor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 pts.</td>
<td>Proper use of</td>
<td>Three to five</td>
<td>More than five</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 pts.</td>
<td>Proper use of</td>
<td>Three to five</td>
<td>More than five</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pt.</td>
<td>Proper use of</td>
<td>Three to five</td>
<td>More than five</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Superior 15 pts.</td>
<td>Adequate 10 pts.</td>
<td>Poor 5 pts.</td>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy of Content</td>
<td>All information presented in the written report is 100% accurate and fact-based. All sources consulted for research are 100% accurate and from reputable sources.</td>
<td>Information presented in the written report is 70% accurate and fact-based. At least 50% of the sources consulted for research are 100% accurate and from reputable sources.</td>
<td>Information presented is less than 70% accurate. Less than 50% of sources consulted for research are 100% accurate and from reputable sources.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Required Components</td>
<td>Report contains these elements below. They are all 100% accurate and fact-based.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Two solutions to the problem. Solutions are written paragraph form with 3-5 sentences each.</td>
<td>All required information is presented, however, it is only 70% accurate.</td>
<td>Information provided is less than 70% accurate OR</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The best solution is identified, and four justifications are given as to why. Justifications are 1-2 sentences each.</td>
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<td>Not all required information is provided</td>
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<td>• Three ways the</td>
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government gains power from the people. Paragraph written that is 5-8 sentences.

- Five ways in which an American can be involved in government. Each action/activity is written so that a person could easily duplicate that action/activity. Each is described in 3-5 sentences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alignment of Solution to Problem</th>
<th>Superior 5 pts.</th>
<th>Adequate 3 pts.</th>
<th>Poor 1 pt.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both solutions presented in the report meet at the conditions of the Sample Problem Statements AND both solutions could accurately solve the problem given in the Meet the Problem Statement</td>
<td>One of the solutions presented meet the conditions and could solve the problem OR</td>
<td>One or both problems only meet 2-3 of the conditions</td>
<td>Neither problem meets all of the conditions and could solve the problem OR One or both problems only meet 1 of the conditions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>Score Conversion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>34-41 A</td>
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<tr>
<td>26-34 B</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>12-17 D</td>
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Two Alternative Solutions and “Best” Solution Analysis

SOLUTION 1

The political activists and educators recommend that high school be required to complete 20 hours of community political involvement during their junior and senior years. Students may volunteer to help with a political party, volunteer to help with voting, volunteer for political rallies, take tours of local and state governments, volunteer at a local government office, or other similarly approved activities. These 20 hours of political involvement must be completed in order for a diploma to be earned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROS</th>
<th>CONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This would be universal and affect every student in America.</td>
<td>There may not be enough roles to fill in the community political scene for every high school student to complete the requirement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students would be aware of practical ways to be involved in government in their very own community and would curb some of the distrust and dislike for government.</td>
<td>This would require much oversight and supervision and one more thing for schools/state governments to keep track of.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are influenced in the years right before they reach voting age, which should show them the importance and encourage voting.</td>
<td>This would only affect all American students once they got to their junior/senior year, not all along during their education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The local and state governments and groups would benefit from the extra help.</td>
<td>Students may not be allowed to do certain things because they are minors.</td>
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Consequences:

1) Local government agencies and political organizations would have to reorganize their set-up and procedures to accommodate this flux of volunteers each year. There may be groups/organizations that protest this action.

2) Each public high school would have to hire full- or part-time help to handle all the paperwork and scheduling involved in completing this requirement. This would take much-needed money from other areas in local schools.

3) A law would have to be passed in each state to change graduation requirements.
SOLUTION 2

The political activists and educators recommend that we get local governments and political parties to come to local schools once a year (or every two years) and hold rallies. In these school-wide rallies and presentations, the groups will educate students about the need and urgency behind them being involved in government and provide them with local opportunities for ways to get involved in the government at their appropriate age level. For juniors/seniors, it would be beneficial to focus on voting procedures and offer voter registration right there on site.

<table>
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<th>PROS</th>
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<tr>
<td>This would cover a large majority of young Americans of all ages.</td>
<td>This would provide a lot of planning and extra work for government officials and political parties.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The constant reinforcement would constantly keep it in front of their mind so when they get to adult age, it is a way of life for them.</td>
<td>Just talking about and encouraging kids to participate does not necessarily mean they will actually choose to do anything.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This would be little or no cost for the school systems.</td>
<td>This will take away valuable instructional time from the teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This would foster support and collaboration with the local governments and political parties and the community.</td>
<td>This plan does not address reaching college students, which is the age group most responsible for the lack of participation.</td>
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Consequences:

1) All American public school students would be more educated about the necessity of government participation and practical ways they can be involved. This would lead to more people being involved in local government and in the community in general.

2) Job positions may have to be created in local government and political parties to provide for the preparation and implementation of these yearly (or bi-yearly) rallies.
RATIONALE

The best solution of the two is Solution 2. This solution clearly meets all the four conditions listed in the Problem Statement. This is also most cost-effective and the easiest to manage. It will also be information that is reinforced year after year, throughout a child's formative years. Research has shown that something that is repeated sticks with a person longer and is more easily remembered. This plan will help Americans to better understand and trust the government, which has been proven to be a cause for lack of involvement. Secondly, as they get more involved, they will realize that they can have a huge impact and say in the government, which will also encourage them to continue to be involved. Research has shown that many do not get involved because they feel it does not really matter. Thirdly, this particular plan will make government participation a way of life in the local community. As people get more accustomed to that, the government as a whole will improve, thus improving people’s opinion of it and encouraging more participation.

One concern that may arise is that this plan does not focus on twenty-something’s, who have been the targeted age group in research in this area. That age group refers to those who are not involved and not voting. It could be said that this plan does not address the issues behind that, including late marriages, unemployment, and limited homeownership. In response to that, the goal of this plan is to educate and motivate Americans before they reach their twenties. If this can become a way of thinking and a way of life for them when they are young, it is our hope that it will continue into their twenties. If government involvement has always been important to them and they have been given opportunities to get involved throughout their school years, research has shown that, more than likely, it will continue into their twenties.
Debriefing Plan and Coaching Questions

DEBRIEFING PLAN

Each group of educators and political activists will present their ideas to a gathering of national educators and administrators, who will consist of other students in their grade, the teacher, and a local government official. The group leader will present the solution decided upon, and each team member will give a justification as to why that solution would be the best. After all groups have presented, all the group leaders from each team will come back on stage and give a brief review of their solution (in 2-3 sentences). The audience members will be given piece of paper on which to rate each solution (see form below). 1 will be the lowest rating, and 5 will be the highest. The solution with the highest overall rating will be considered the best solution. The students will complete the form at that time and turn in their voting sheets to the teacher. I will compile the votes and select the best solution. If there is a tie between two solutions, those two solutions will be reviewed in the next class period, and new rating sheets will be filled out.

During the next class period, I will go over the results and announce the chosen best solution. I will then open the floor back up to anyone in the class that would like to add or adjust that solution (with any of their own team’s ideas) to make it even better. The suggestions will be discussed and voted on in class using hand-raising. A particular change must have a majority vote to be implemented.

SAMPLE RATING FORM (the form given to the student will include a set of these five questions for every solution presented)

SOLUTION #

How well does this solution meet the four conditions?

1  2  3  4  5

How well could we realistically make this solution happen?

1  2  3  4  5

How well does this solution solve the initial problem?

1  2  3  4  5

How cost effective is this solution?

1  2  3  4  5

How would your rate this solution compared to the other solutions?
FIVE ESSENTIAL CONCEPTS

These five areas must be covered and addressed so that the students fully understand the learning outcomes taught through this assignment.

1. Role of the federal government
2. Voting purposes and procedures
3. Power of the people in government
4. Ways in which people can be involved in local and state governments
5. Role of the state/local governments and political organizations in the community

In addition to these five social studies’ areas, the student must also be able to put together an information report. They must also learn good oral presentation skills.

COACHING QUESTIONS

C = Cognitive (related to the 5 steps of Bloom’s)
E = Epistemic (evaluating/judging)
M = Meta-cognitive (thinking about thinking)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Question</th>
<th>Question</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meet the Problem</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>What are some main ideas presented in the documents you have been given?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Have you seen that this a common problem among people you know? (Family? Friends?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>What is the first step we should do to begin thinking about this problem?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Know/Need to Know Board</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>What do we already know about this problem?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Problem Statement</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Can you summarize what the conditions are for our solution?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Why are deadlines important when problem solving?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>If we have more than four conditions, could you still come up with a solution? Would it be harder or easier?</td>
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<tr>
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<th><strong>Research</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Can you identify some good places to find reputable information?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Do students really have to research information? Could they not just make it up or use their own prior knowledge? Why or why not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>How can I know if a particular piece of information that I find is helpful to coming up with our solution?</td>
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<th><strong>Generating Possible Solutions</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>What materials will I need to make this solution work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>How do you think your audience will view your solution?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Have you considered some weakness to your solution? How would you address them?</td>
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