

Title: Quote Walk: Why Local Government Matters

Level: High School

Overview: This is an introduction to local government. The goal of this lesson is to engage students in the unit and to be used as a starting point for understanding how constitutional principles are expressed at the local level.

Length: 1 class period

Standard: 3- Analyze how public policy- domestic and foreign- is developed at the local, state, and national levels and compare how policy making occurs in other forms of government.

Evidence outcome: a. discuss multiple perspectives on local issues and options for participating in civic life, f. compare and contrast how different systems of government function

Activities

1. Quote Walk (See Document 2, three attachments). Place all of the quotes on large posters around the room. Have students stand up and walk around and read each quote. After reading the quotes, have students return to their desks and respond to two to three quotes.
2. As a class, discuss the quotes using the following questions as a guide: What do they tell us about our government? What is the responsibility of government?
3. Read and respond to a current local issue: vandalism, gangs, curfew, free speech, teen jobs, police relationships, schools, recreation, etc. These topics are often in the news. Search local news sources for articles and discuss them highlighting the types of local government involved.
4. Ask students to summarize the issue, describe local government's role in the issue, and explain their own opinion.
5. Challenge: Ask students to use one or more quotes to connect to their opinion and government action.

Key Vocabulary

- **Civic Virtue, Common Good, Democracy, Federalism, Separation of Powers**

Quote Walk: “Get up, stand up! Stand up for your rights!”

Student Instructions:

With a paper and pencil walk around the room and read all the quotes. Think about them carefully. Select three quotes to thoughtfully respond to. At least one must directly focus on local government. Each response should be at least four sentences. Use the following ideas to help you create thoughtful responses. **Please write down the three quotes you choose to respond to.**

- ~Do you agree? Disagree?
- ~What do they make you think about? Explain and use examples.
- ~What history is behind these words?
- ~What does this quote say about our governmental system?

Use the quotes and your responses to answer the question:
Why is local government so important?

Enlarge these quotes and place them around the room, so students can walk around and react to them.

“Local government is the foundation of democracy; if it fails, democracy will fail.” - Robert W. Flack

“Sure there are dishonest men in local government. But there are dishonest men in national government, too.” - Richard M. Nixon

“I mean, just because you're a musician doesn't mean all your ideas are about music. So every once in a while I get an idea about plumbing, I get an idea about city government, and they come the way they come.” - Jerry Garcia

“City government can and must help San Franciscans prepare for emergencies in order to avoid tragedy where possible and minimize loss of life and property when emergencies occur.” - Gavin Newsom

“All politics is local.” – Thomas P. “Tip” O’Neil

“Public instruction should be the first object of government.” -
Napoleon Bonaparte

“The best government is that which teaches us to govern ourselves.”
– Johann von Goethe

“All good government must begin at home.” – H.R. Haweis

“To be free, one must be chained.”

“I believe burning the American flag is political protest, not treason.”

“There is nothing wrong with America that cannot be cured with what is right in America” –William J. Clinton

“To announce that there must be no criticism of the President, right or wrong, is not only unpatriotic and servile, but is morally treasonable to the American public.” –Teddy Roosevelt

“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.” –Martin Luther King Jr.

“Government is not reason. Government is not eloquence. It is force. And, like fire it is a dangerous servant and a fearful master.” – George Washington

“Though I may disagree with your ideas, I will defend to the death your right to say them.” –Voltaire

“Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but rising every time we fall.” –Confucius

“We tend to think that history is written in stone, that it's unchanging, immutable, fixed. But history isn't a one-way conversation; it's a continuing dialogue between the past and the present.” –Stengel