

The **SIXTIES:**

The Years that Shaped a Generation

Lesson Plan: Divided Opinions

By Tobi Kibel Piatek

Introduction

Young or old, black or white, man or woman, Democrat or Republican, hawk or dove; one of the few things that most people will agree on when talking about the 1960s is that the world changed over the course of that decade. During those years, tensions ran high, attitudes were strong and definite, people were divided about what they believed was right and wrong. On subjects as diverse as the war in Vietnam, women's rights, civil rights, the environment, music, and the way people wore their hair, everyone had an opinion.

Everyone who lived through the decade had their own experience. In this series of activities, students will have the chance to discover living history, explore a broad spectrum of ideas and concepts, and learn about the impact of many different issues on people, places and politics around the world.

Through the lessons and activities in this project, students will have the opportunity to do the following:

- Assess what they already know about the '60s.
- Learn facts and details, and identify causes and issues that shaped the era.
- Consider the impact of the decade on individuals who experienced it.
- Think about how the '60s shaped the future of the U.S. and the world.
- Use a variety of resources and learning strategies to focus on what students know, and what they want to learn more about.

This project will integrate disciplines such as history, writing, art and technology, with presentations, research, and thinking and listening skills. Students will:

- Gather information in many ways and from many sources
 - Watch video clips, listen to music, view art and images, and read
 - Interview people who experienced the '60s
- Think deeply about what they learn
- Form and defend opinions
- Use available technology to access information, and design and present a product
- Express and present views and ideas in different ways

Note: To provide a foundation of information and cultivate interest, students and teachers are encouraged to use "The Sixties: The Years that Shaped a Generation" video as a primary resource, and to become familiar with the wide variety of resources and information available on this Web site, as well as other OPB and PBS sites. The suggested video clips, radio and TV programming, and supporting Web sites are an ideal way to provide students with access to the issues, faces, places, feelings, music, delights and horrors that shaped the 1960s.

CONTENT STANDARDS

Historical Understanding

- Understands historical perspective
 - Role of individuals in history
 - Causes and effects in history
- Understands that specific individuals had a great impact on history
- Knows examples of specific individuals who had a great impact on history
- Understands that specific ideas had an impact on history
- Understands that "chance events" had an impact on history
- Understands that specific decisions and events had an impact on history
- Understands that the consequences of human intentions are influenced by the means of carrying them out
- Understands how the past affects our private lives and society in general
- Understands that economic, social and cultural forces also have a great impact on history.

Civics: Ideals and reality in American political and social life

- Understands issues concerning the disparities between ideals and reality in American political and social life
- Understands the character of American political and social conflict and factors that tend to prevent or lower its intensity
- Understands the impact that current political developments around the world have on the United States (e.g., conflicts within and among other nations, efforts to establish democratic governments)
- Understands the concept of public opinion, and knows alternative views of the proper role of public opinion in a democracy
- Understands the **varying** influence that public opinion has on public policy and the behavior of public officials
- Knows some important American ideals (e.g., liberty and justice for all, an informed citizenry, civic virtue or concern for the common good, respect for the rights of others)
- Understands how Americans are united by the values, principles, and beliefs they share rather than by ethnicity, race, religion, class, language, gender, or national origin
- Understands how shared values, principles, and beliefs contribute to the continuation and improvement of American democracy
- Knows how various symbols are used to depict Americans' shared values, principles, and beliefs and explain their meaning (e.g., the flag, Statue of Liberty, Statue of Justice, Uncle Sam, great seal, national anthem, oaths of office, mottoes such as E Pluribus Unum)

Conducting historical research

Knows different types of primary and secondary sources and the motives, interests, and bias expressed in them (e.g., eyewitness accounts, letters, diaries, artifacts, photos; magazine articles, newspaper accounts, hearsay)

Historical time lines

Knows how to interpret data presented in time lines (e.g., identify the time at which events occurred; the sequence in which events developed; what else was occurring at the time)

Historical viewpoints and perspectives

- Knows how to view the past in terms of the norms and values of the time
- Knows how to perceive past events with historical empathy

Influence of ideas on society

Understands that specific ideas had an impact on history

- Understands influences on American society during the post-World War II years (e.g., the effects of the G.I. Bill, the influence of popular culture and the mass media)
- Understands how feminist movements and social conditions have affected the lives of women around the world, and the extent of women's progress toward social equality, economic opportunity, and political rights in various countries

Thinking and Reasoning

Understands and applies the basic principles of presenting an argument

- Understands that people are more likely to believe a person's ideas if that person can give good reasons for them
- Provides coherent (though not necessarily valid or convincing) answers when asked why one believes something to be true or how one knows something
- Uses facts from books, articles, and databases to support an argument
- Understands that reasoning can be distorted by strong feelings
- Makes basic distinctions between information that is based on fact and information that is based on opinion
- Identifies and questions arguments in which all members of a group are implied to possess nearly identical characteristics that are considered to be different from those of another group
- Identifies techniques used to slant information in subtle ways (e.g., selecting only information that supports a point; ignoring information that contradicts a point)
- Identifies or seeks out the critical assumptions behind a line of reasoning and uses that to judge the validity of an argument
- Evaluates an argument objectively by considering all sides of an issue (e.g., using past experience, data, logical analysis)

Language Arts

- Gathers and uses information for research purposes
- Uses a variety of strategies to plan research (e.g., identifies possible topic by brainstorming, listing questions, using idea webs; organizes prior knowledge about a topic; develops a course of action; determines how to locate necessary information)
- Uses electronic media to gather information (e.g., databases, Internet, CD-ROM, television shows, cassette recordings, videos, pull-down menus, word searches)
- Gathers data for research topics from interviews (e.g., prepares and asks relevant questions, makes notes of responses, compiles responses)
- Makes basic oral presentations to class (e.g., uses subject-related information and vocabulary; includes content appropriate to the audience; relates ideas and observations; incorporates visual aids or props; incorporates several sources of information)

Behavioral Studies

- Understands conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among individuals, groups, and institutions
- Knows conflicts that have arisen regarding fundamental values and principles (e.g., conflicts between liberty and equality, conflicts between individual rights and the common good, conflicts between majority rule and minority rights)
- Knows how disagreements regarding specific issues may arise between people even though the people agree on values or principles in the abstract (e.g., people may agree on the value of freedom of expression but disagree about the extent to which expression of unpopular and offensive views should be tolerated; people may agree on the value of equality but disagree about affirmative action programs)
- Understands issues that involve conflicts among fundamental values and principles such as the conflict between liberty and authority
- Knows that disagreements are common, even between family members or friends
- Knows that people involved in a dispute often have different points of view
- Understands that being a member of a group can increase an individual's social power and also can increase hostile actions toward or from other groups or individuals
- Understands that resolving a conflict by force rather than compromise can lead to more problems
- Understands that some informal ways of responding to conflict (e.g., pamphlets, demonstrations, cartoons) may reduce tensions and lead to compromise but may be inflammatory and make agreement more difficult to reach
- Knows that conflicts within groups can be affected by outside events

Subject Areas: social studies, history, technology, reading

Cognitive Skills: communication, listening, critical thinking and analysis, emotional intelligence, technological development, research skills, public speaking and presentation

Grade Level: These activities can be adapted to meet the needs of students in grades 6–12. (Note: the video clips contain strong images and content which may not be appropriate for younger students. Teachers are reminded to preview the clips before showing them.)

Learning Objectives

In this series of lessons, students will be able to:

- Understand why the 1960s was a pivotal era in world history
- Study significant issues and events of the decade, including the civil rights movement, Vietnam War, women's movement and student uprisings
- Learn how these events shaped the future of the U.S. and the world
- Critically assess events and situations that led up to the events of the '60s
- Think about how individual actions and beliefs can shape history
- Learn about people who played important roles in dramatic political and social events
- Understand radically different points of view about many issues, and how people expressed these in powerful ways
- Choose one event or issue to learn about in greater depth
- See the connections between the many events of the decade
- Research information from different media, including video and audio clips, books, periodicals and the Internet
- Gather and use information from a variety of sources, including conducting personal interviews
- Consider and express personal views

- Explore different creative media to express ideas and opinions
 - Writing – poetry, songs, stories
 - Art – posters, postage stamps, song lyrics and music, drama, photography, video
- Understand that there are rarely absolute answers to complex issues.
- Listen to and respectfully consider the views of others, even if they do not agree.
- Use design skills and technology such as a tape recorder, digital camera, word processor, presentation software or a Web development program to share views and learning.

Resources

PBS Resources:

American Experience, The: RFK (VHS)

<http://www.shoppbs.org/sm-pbs-american-experience-the-rfk--pi-1860120.html>

Web Resources:

PBS: VIETNAM ONLINE [American Experience]

Overview of the war and main events, including timeline, "who's who," selected primary sources, maps.

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/vietnam/index.html>

Battlefield: Vietnam

<http://www.pbs.org/battlefieldvietnam/>

Teaching With Documents: The War in Vietnam - A Story in Photographs

<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/vietnam-photos/>

People's Century

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/peoplescentury/>

Annenberg/CPB

The SIXTIES 1954 -1974 Biography of America

<http://www.learner.org/biographyofamerica/prog24/index.html>

Betty Freidan and "The Feminine Mystique"

<http://www.pbs.org/fmc/segments/progseg11.htm>

Resources for Teachers on Online Research Skills

Netfile

www.netfiles.org

Tools and techniques they need to successfully integrate the Internet into the curriculum.

Related Resources:

Newspaper and magazine stories

Research resources including encyclopedia, picture books, maps, etc

UNIT 1: Living History

Lesson 1: What, How and Who Do You Know?

Overview

In this lesson, students will consider what they know about the 1960s, one of the most significant eras in recent history, and will assess how they learned what they know.

Once students have established a foundation of information about the '60s, they will expand their knowledge using resources such as video, the Web books, and more. They will discover that one of the most important resources for information about this era will be people who lived through the decade, and experienced its effects firsthand.

Grade Level: Grade 6 -12

Time Needed for Completion: One or two 50-minute class periods

Video clip (THE BEGINNING 1:54 – 5:56) (Note: the video clips contain strong images and content which may not be appropriate for younger students. Teachers are reminded to preview the clips before showing them.)

On the Website:

The **About Page** includes two great quotes as well as an overview of the times that can help set the tone for a classroom discussion (<http://dipsy.pbs.org/opb/thesixties/about.html>)

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Consider what they know about the 60's
- Identify significant issues and figures of the decade
- Identify resources for firsthand accounts of events
- Identify sources of information about the 1960s
- Understand that there were many issues, and many ways people expressed their different points of view
- 1960s

Teaching Procedure

Discuss: Just as change and important events shape our lives today, many significant events happened in the 1960s. These events created great change not only in individuals' lives, but in society **and throughout the world.** We can still see the effects of the issues we faced, and changes that happened because of the events of the 1960s.

Relatives and friends who lived through the 1960s can share their experiences and memories as a source of living history for all of us. Check out the **Pop Culture** page to find information that will help students create a clearer picture of what life was like in the Sixties. (<http://dipsy.pbs.org/opb/thesixties/topics/culture/index.html>)

Ask: What do you know about the '60s?

Identify big themes and issues.

- **Encourage** students to brainstorm a ""1960s Knowledge" list, including facts, names, dates, places, issues, and their impressions of how people felt about the

issues. Students can consider issues such as the Vietnam War, hippies, civil rights, women's rights, equal rights, the war on poverty, Watergate, rock music, long hair, and student protests.

- **Identify** important people such as Martin Luther King, Jr., JFK, Johnson, Nixon, the Beatles, etc.

Ask: Where did you get your information?

Have students create a list of resources. If personal resources are not mentioned, remind students that people who experienced the '60s are important resources for learning about firsthand experiences.

Ask:

- What have you learned about the '60s from people who lived through them?
- What were they doing during the '60s ?
- How old were they?
- Where were they?
- What would you like to know about their experiences?

View video clip (THE BEGINNING 1:54 – 5:56)

After viewing the clip, have students build on their "1960s Knowledge" list. Using what they've seen in the video, students can add issues, the names of significant people, places, events, etc.

Extension Suggestion: Based on class discussion and the video clip, list three major issues of the 60's, five important names of people, and three questions you might ask a person who lived through the '60s.

Lesson 2: The People, the Places and the Things that Happened

Overview

In this lesson, students will think about why the '60s were considered the "Years that Shaped a Generation." They will watch video clips that describe major events and **issues**, create a comprehensive list of issues and events; and consider causes and effects of political struggles, cultural changes, and key individuals and their actions. They will consider how all of these issues fit together and shaped a time of passion, rage, creativity and great change.

Grade Level: Grade 6 -12

Time Needed for Completion: Two 50-minute class periods

Materials Required

World Map

Sixties Timeline: <http://dipsy.pbs.org/opb/thesixties/timeline/index.html>

Video Clips: (Note: the video clips contain strong images and content which may not be appropriate for younger students. Teachers are reminded to preview the clips before showing them.)

- Black Pride, Black Militants (15:00 approx)

- Vietnam (20:00)
- Revolution (28:00)
- Civil Rights (35:00)
 - Martin Luther King Assassination (40:00)
 - Student Rebellion (44:30)
 - Uprising at Columbia (46:40)
- Global Revolution (50:00 – 54:00)
- 1968 Primary Elections (58:00)
 - McCarthy
 - Robert F Kennedy
 - RFK Assassination
 - RFK Funeral Train (58:45)
- 1968 Democratic Convention (60:00)

On the Website:

War & Peace: Two Nations Divided

<http://dipsy.pbs.org/opb/thesixties/topics/war/index.html>

Pop Culture: Eric Burdon's **Reflections** on Woodstock:

http://dipsy.pbs.org/opb/thesixties/topics/culture/reflections_1.html

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify numerous issues and events that shaped the 1960s both nationally and globally
- Identify newsmakers and other people whose actions impacted the decade
- Consider the impact of the exceptional ways in which people expressed their views, such as riots, demonstrations and marches

Teaching Procedure

To help students understand the global effects of the events of the '60s, have students locate Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Russia, Czechoslovakia, France and Mexico on a world map before showing the video clips listed here. Have students look at the Sixties Timeline (<http://dipsy.pbs.org/opb/thesixties/timeline/index.html>) on this site to better understand the scope of the time period, the order of events, and other influences.

Then (after previewing them yourself), show the video clips to the class. Although this may take time, presenting all the clips to the whole class will provide a broad overview of the decade and set the tone for further conversation. Keep in mind that the video presents powerful and often disturbing images.

Discuss the video clips and the students' perspectives on what happened in the 1960s..

Ask:

- What events and issues were most significant?
- In what ways were separate issues and events related?
- What impact did individuals, their decisions, and their actions have on the '60s?
- Who had the greatest impact on the decade?
- How did individual movements and leaders affect the '60s?
- How did events happening in one place affect other places?

- How did the Republican National Convention (and the accompanying riots) affect the U.S.?

Tell students that in the next lesson, they will choose one issue to research in greater depth. Encourage students to build on their "1960s Knowledge" lists from earlier lessons.

Extension Suggestion: Create a graphic web to show how different events, issues, people and places mentioned in the videos relate and connect to each other.

Lesson 3: Talking Issues and Taking Sides

Overview

In this lesson, students will reflect on what they have learned about the events, actions, and reactions that shaped the 1960s. They will understand that people's opinions of the issues and events of the '60s were divided; that people at all levels of life disagreed on important issues and were willing to protest, fight, and sacrifice their comfort, freedom, and even their lives for what they believed was right.

Students will view more video clips, and conduct research using a variety of resources. They will gather information about their subject; identify significant names and events connected with the subject area, and create a list of the different points of view and opinions

Grade Level: Grade 6 -12

Time Needed for Completion: Two 50-minute class periods

Materials Required

Resources such as books, maps, magazines and Web sites

Video Clips (Note: the video clips contain strong images and content which may not be appropriate for younger students. Teachers are reminded to preview the clips before showing them.)

- Conservative Americans: George Wallace – What's Wrong with America (1:14)
- The Rage (1:20)
- People's Park (1:23)
- "Vietnamization" (1:30)
- War Against the Counter Culture (1:33)
- Confrontation: Black Panthers, White Radicals, Vietnam Vets Against the War (1:40)

On the Website:

Check out these pages for many different points of view

Revolutions

<http://dipsy.pbs.org/opb/thesixties/topics/revolution/index.html>

Politics: Newsmakers: Shirley Chishom

http://dipsy.pbs.org/opb/thesixties/topics/politics/newsmakers_2.html

Politics: Newsmakers: Barry Goldwater

http://dipsy.pbs.org/opb/thesixties/topics/politics/newsmakers_3.html

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Select one major issue concerning the '60s to study in depth
- Use research techniques to:
 - Identify events
 - Consider related events that lead up to, shaped, and affected the outcome of an issue
 - Identify key figures involved in an issue
 - Understand some of the causes and effects of an issue
 - State several different points of view about an issue
 - Identify several ways that people expressed their views
 - Identify at least two different points of view on an issue

Teaching Procedure

From student lists and discussion, identify five to seven big themes to explore in depth.

Choose one area to learn about in greater depth.

NOTE: Teachers may choose different ways to organize this, such as:

- Dividing the class into study groups
- Allowing students to self-select a topic and create their own groups
- Having students work individually

Examples include:

The Vietnam conflict

- Anti-war activism (Columbia, Chicago, Kent State, etc.)
- The Cold War
- Communism

Civil rights

- Black power
- Non-violent protest
- Martin Luther King
- The women's movement
- War on poverty

Protest and Revolution

- March on Washington
- Anti-war sentiments
- Soldier's point of view

Politics and Politicians

- Richard Nixon
- Lyndon Johnson
- Robert Kennedy
- Eugene McCarthy
- Barry Goldwater

Popular Culture

- Woodstock (music, music as a medium of getting the protest message out, culture change, youth movement, etc.)
- Art and literature (posters, poetry, song lyrics, etc.)

- Self expression (hair, clothes, etc.)
- Social changes (communal living, ideas about nature, etc.)

RESEARCH: Each group or individual will gather information about their subject, identify significant names and events connected with the subject area, and create a list of different points of view and opinions

View selected video clips

View the timeline for related events and information, and consider when events occurred throughout the scope of the decade

Research using books or articles, and the Web (number of resources is based on ability level and age)

- Images (in film, television, posters, photographs, etc.)
 - Include biographical information about one significant person
 - Include maps or other location-specific materials
- Arts and culture
 - Songs, slogans, etc.
- Locate living resources in family or community
 - Teachers might want to discuss protocol for requesting an interview, discussing potentially sensitive subjects, and creating a planning form for conducting and recording a personal interview

Identify multiple points of view: (e.g, pro- or anti-Vietnam War)

As students research, remind them that their goal is to learn as much as they can about the different opinions that people have about their subject, and to understand why they believed what they did.

LIST: From what students know and what they have just learned, list the different points of view that they have heard, read or discovered. Remind them to include their thoughts about why people disagreed about issues.

Extension Suggestions: As they research, remind students to keep notes on the following questions:

- What were some of the different opinions, points of view and feelings that people had about the issue you are researching?
- What events surround the issue (lead up to, happened during, happened after)?
- What are some of the reasons that people felt and believed what they did? Is there a connection between a person's age, gender, family background, education, war experience, personal experiences, upbringing, work history, etc., that might shape the way they viewed an issue?
- What are some of the causes and effects of this issue or event?
- How did people express their opinions about this issue?

UNIT 2: MANY SIDES TO EVERY STORY

Lesson 1- Expressing Point of View

Overview

In the 1960s, people used debates and demonstrations, posters, poetry and paintings, films and songs and even clothing to express their opinions.

In this lesson, students will choose different media to express their beliefs and points of view (or the point of view of another).

They will consider different methods for presenting their thoughts, ideas and learning. They will also think about how people in the '60s expressed their views and communicated messages.

In this unit, students may choose to:

- Develop a presentation (this includes speeches, Web sites, PowerPoint presentations, plays, etc.)
- Creatively write (an article, story, poem, play, song lyrics, etc.)
- Create a piece of art (a poster, painting, postage stamp, etc.)
- Develop a visual or aural program (using video, photographs, images, sound clips, voice recordings, etc.)

Grade Level: Grade 6 -12

Time Needed for Completion: Three or more 50-minute class periods

Resources

1960 Debates (Audio and Text)

<http://poynteronline.org/column.asp?id=49&aid=71327>

[1960 Presidential Debates](http://www.debates.org/pages/his_1960.html) (CPD)

http://www.debates.org/pages/his_1960.html

[1960 Presidential Debates](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/debatingourdestiny/dod/1960-broadcast.html)

(Debating Our Destiny, PBS)

<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/debatingourdestiny/dod/1960-broadcast.html>

[1960 Presidential Debates](http://museum.tv/debateweb/html/history/index.htm)

(Museum of Broadcast Communications)

<http://museum.tv/debateweb/html/history/index.htm>

[1960 Presidential Debates](http://www.jfklibrary.org/debates-1960.html) (Kennedy Library)

<http://www.jfklibrary.org/debates-1960.html>

Materials Required

Resources: books, maps, magazines, Web sites

- Songs of the '60s

- Literature of the '60s
- Art of the '60s (Peter Max posters, concert posters, etc.)

On the Website

Pop Culture: Newsmakers: The Beatles

http://dipsy.pbs.org/opb/thesixties/topics/culture/newsmakers_1.html

War & Peace: Newsmakers: The Chicago 7

http://dipsy.pbs.org/opb/thesixties/topics/war/newsmakers_2.html

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Create a presentation or product to convey their learning and point of view on the major issue they studied in depth
- Select appropriate media to express their thoughts and views
- Integrate thinking, writing, speaking, visual arts and more into their presentation

Teaching Procedure

Once students have completed their research about their subject related to the '60s, it is time for them to share what they know.

Discuss: As you looked at videos and conducted research, what were the ways that you noticed that people expressed their points of view? Make a list of all the responses:

Protests, demonstrations, marches

Songs, chants

Slogans on posters, banners, in art

Music

Speeches

Writing

Art

Film

Interviews, articles, TV programming, radio programming

Once this list is developed, have students (either individually or in the working groups created earlier) choose a mode of expression to present their points of view about the issue they have studied.

Ask: In what other ways did people express their points of view? (clothing, jewelry, hair, decorations, vehicles, and other symbols and icons)

Discuss: What if members of the groups do not all agree? Remind students that they can create more than one piece or work, or include more than one point of view in each product.

Invite students to combine media, and to consider the audience to whom they are addressing their message.

Invite students to consider the colors, styles, sounds, symbols, icons, images and voices of the '60s as they design their products, and integrate as much as they can.

Extension: When students present to the class (or extended audience) invite students to dress in the style that represents their point of view. Students may also use '60s slang expressions and music to enhance their presentations.

Student variations and enhancements:

- Write a protest song expressing their point of view
- Design a poster to promote their view
- Design a postage stamp to commemorate the era
- Create a video interview expressing two points of view

Lesson 2: DEBATE

Overview

One of the few things that everyone can agree on is that everyone has, and is entitled to, their own opinion. The 1960s were filled with multiple layers of debate on many issues, resulting in disagreement, dissatisfaction, and disharmony that characterized the decade. No matter what the subject, emotions can get in the way of thinking clearly and expressing one's thoughts. Well-researched and well-organized information is a powerful tool for creating a convincing argument. Preparing for a debate is a great way to organize your ideas, clarify thinking, and make sure you will express yourself clearly and thoughtfully. It is also a great way to understand other points of view, even if you don't agree with them.

Grade Level: Grade 6 -12

Time Needed for Completion: Three or more 50-minute class periods

Materials Required

Resources: books, maps, magazines, Web sites

- Songs of the '60s
- Literature of the '60s
- Art of the '60s (Peter Max posters, concert posters, etc.)

On the Website

War & Peace: Reflections: Henry Kissinger

http://dipsy.pbs.org/opb/thesixties/topics/war/reflections_1.html

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Understand that debate is a discussion of multiple sides of an issue
- Research information and organize their ideas
- Learn about different sides of an issue
- Prepare arguments to defend a point of view
- Debate and discuss differing points of view
- Support opinions with facts and stories from research

Teaching Procedure

To begin, define the word "debate" (a discussion of opposing viewpoints, usually held in a formal meeting or assembly). Remind students that a debate is an opportunity to argue one side of an issue.

Remind students that the key to a great debate is information. The more they know, the more effective their arguments, and the better prepared they will be to defend their point of view-- no matter which side they are on.

Have students generate a list of issues related to the '60s to debate.

To prepare for a debate, they must research and learn all they can about the **many facets** of an issue. Discuss why it is important to understand opposing viewpoints.

Discuss:

Are all opinions of equal value? How does morality shape the value of an opinion? What about popular views of right and wrong? What about the right of free speech? (For example, during the 1960s, not everyone believed that African-Americans and women deserved the same rights as white men. People on both sides of the issue held strong beliefs, and some were willing to die for what they believed.)

Discuss: What makes an issue good for debate?

- It is important to be unbiased and have an open mind when preparing for a debate. Remind students that the better they understand their opponent's point of view, the better they will be able to defend against their opponent's arguments.

You Decide: Questions to Consider or Debate

Johnson had great dreams for this country: a great society, war on poverty, yet his administration was also partially responsible for U.S. participation in the Vietnam War-- a very unpopular war, which threw the country into turmoil. What is Johnson's legacy?

During the 1960s, citizens saw what war really looked like through photographs and television. Newspapers showed killings, burned villages, starving children, bodies of soldiers, and lines of flag-draped coffins. What was the effect of media coverage on public opinion?

Did the feminist movement improve American women's lives? Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act outlawed discrimination according to sex. At the time, few Americans could have understood the significance of that small provision of the landmark law, or foresaw the ways in which a massive, grassroots women's movement would transform women's roles and rights in the last third of the twentieth century. Have women's lives changed for the better? How have women's expanded opportunities impacted their lives and families? Are men and women now truly equal in this country? Has the women's movement changed men's lives for better or worse?

Once students have selected a subject to debate, have them create a resource worksheet to record a brief summary of the contents of different sources of information they have encountered in their research. The resource worksheet can be a quick reminders of what they've learned about their subject.

Once students have a clear understanding of their issue, have them write or use a word processing program to organize their arguments into PRO and CON lists. When the lists and planning are complete, schedule a debate and assign each student a point of view to argue.

Have students use the arguments they have generated as the basis for preparing an opening statement for their debate.

Then, have them develop a closing statement that supports another viewpoint they do not hold.

Extension Suggestions

Students might want to consider types of issues that are debated, and by whom. What do candidates debate? What do lawyers debate? What were the subjects of famous historical debates? Students might want to assume the character and opinion of opposing politicians in a class debate.

Students might enjoy practicing their skills by debating simple issues such as: Which is the better pet, a cat or dog? Or they might debate which charity or cause to support, or whether they believe in the tooth fairy. Be imaginative in selecting a subject; debating encourages thinking, listening, and self-expression.

Switcheroo: once students have established and researched their point of view, have them argue against what they believe in.