Revolution: In the Hearts and Minds of People

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Abstract

This is a lesson set, or mini-unit, for students in grades 7 – 9 focused on the concept of revolutions. It follows a learning cycle format. This lesson set takes approximately four to five days to teach.

NCSS themes: II. Time, Continuity, and Change and VI. Power, Authority, and Governance

Lesson Set Overview

Exploratory Introduction

The goal of this phase of the lesson is to test the prior knowledge of students concerning revolution. The concept of revolution is also a major focus for the lesson. The lesson involves the middle grades’ performance expectations of the following: identifying and using key concepts such as chronology, causality, change, conflict, and complexity to explain, analyze, and demonstrate connections among patterns of historical change and continuity as shown in Table 1

Lesson Development

This lesson phase tries to help students understand that revolution is a word used for a broader scope of situations in history and to help them understand the misconception that all revolutions involve war. Students will gather data on revolutions through a WebQuest to help them construct correlations. As shown in Table 2, the lesson development phase of this learning cycle focuses on helping students evaluate the generalization: Not all revolutions involve war and/or bloodshed. The performance expectations include (1) involving students in identifying and describing selected historical periods (revolutionary) and patterns or characteristics within cultures and civilizations and (2) explaining the purpose of government and analyzing how its powers are acquired, used, and justified.
Expansion

In the lesson phase presented in Table 3, students apply as well as compare and contrast what they have learned about revolutions to their understanding of the American Revolution. They revisit their correlation and consider whether or not it applies to the American Revolution. They also construct a concept web showing their understanding of the words conflict and change and how they apply these words to revolution. Lastly, students analyze an abstract statement on revolution. This lesson phase involves demonstrating knowledge of the words change and conflict as well as determining process or inquiry, and applying skills of connecting the information in a concept web using organization, communication, inference, and hypothesis.

The author, shown above, notes that our flags often are part of our revolutions. They have inspired revolutionaries and have commemorated their cause.
Table 1

*Learning Cycle: Revolution--In the Hearts and Minds of People*

**Exploratory Introduction**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials: paper, colored pencils, chart paper</th>
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**Objectives**

Students review prior knowledge of revolution by identifying examples of revolutions.

**Procedures**

1. Place students in small groups.
2. Ask the following: When I mention the word *revolution*, what first comes to your mind? Using colored pencils, please draw a picture of this image on the paper I’ve handed you.
3. Have students share their drawings in the small group and give reasons explaining why they chose to draw this particular image.
4. Ask students to discuss the following questions in their small groups: Did any of us have a similar picture? What were the similarities? Did any of us have contrasting images? If so, what were they? Have students record the answers from all group members on one sheet of paper.
5. Have group reporters present their findings to the whole class and keep track of these on chart paper.
6. Have each student look at the image he or she drew. Ask the following: As you look at your drawing, did you draw an actual...  

**Assessments**

Students complete a drawing which depicts their understanding of revolution and share it with their small group.

Students identify and record comparisons and contrasts of their images of revolution and report these to the teacher who records findings on chart paper.

Using their own pictures, students will identify and discuss possible causes for revolutions.
revolution? Can you tell us one of the possible causes for this revolution?

*Note:* Some may not have a drawing that enables them to answer these questions.

(7) Ask students to discuss and explain to their small group any revolutions that they can think of from their own home country and identify one cause, if possible. They will record their examples on their group paper. Continue to keep notes of the different names for these revolutions and their possible causes.

Students share and record examples of revolutions from their home country. Teacher records information.
Table 2

**Learning Cycle: Revolution--In the Hearts and Minds of People**

**Lesson Development**


Generalization: Revolutions do not necessarily involve war and/or bloodshed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
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<th>Assessments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using the Revolutions! WebQuest, students define revolution.</td>
<td>(1) Ask the following: Do all revolutions involve war and/or bloodshed? Discussion involves asking students to defend their answers. (2) Have students access the Revolutions! WebQuest, record their work, and follow the directions.</td>
<td>Students find two definitions of revolution.</td>
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<td>Students will research, identify, and characterize different types of revolutions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students evaluate a generalization: Revolutions do not necessarily involve war and/or bloodshed.</td>
<td>WebQuest Note: Students will define revolution. They will investigate the French Revolution, Castro’s revolution, the Glorious Revolution, the Cultural Revolution, and the Technological Revolution, noting characteristics of each revolution. Students will compare these characteristics and construct a conclusion about revolution from these characteristics. They also will evaluate the target</td>
<td>Students research the different revolutions adequately and identify three characteristics for each one.</td>
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<td>Students evaluate and agree or disagree with the given generalization and defend their answer with evidence.</td>
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Students identify revolutions in the past and present. Students identify two recent revolutions.

generalization. Then, they will compare their research with the definitions they have discovered. Lastly, they will name two recent revolutions and discuss whether they possibly could be involved in a revolution themselves. (3) Closure: Formulate a consensus class definition of revolution. Together, determine whether the evidence they collected in their work on the WebQuest supports the target generalization. Instruct students to turn in their group work.
Table 3

*Learning Cycle: Revolution—In the Hearts and Minds of People*

**Expansion**

Materials: paper, pen or pencil, and WebQuest research information

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<td>Students recall what they already know about the American Revolution.</td>
<td>(1) Divide students into three groups. Explain that each group will have two minutes in which to write down everything its members can list about the American Revolution. In a <em>Scattergories</em>® format, a group’s list will be eliminated if other groups’ lists contain the same ideas. The list with the most unrepeated facts on the revolution wins.</td>
<td>Students respond with their team, constructing a list of the things that they know about the American Revolution.</td>
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<td>Students compare prior knowledge of revolution to their generalization and to the different characteristics they discovered in the <em>Revolutions!</em> WebQuest.</td>
<td>(2) Ask the following: How does the information you have just compiled on the American Revolution fit with the generalization you researched in the <em>Revolutions</em> WebQuest? Discussion will occur in small groups. Ask students to give a thumbs-up or thumbs-down and report on why it does or does not work.</td>
<td>Students can explain why their conclusions and the generalizations do or do not fit with what they know so far about the American revolution.</td>
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<td>Students discuss how change and conflict influence revolutions.</td>
<td>(3) Ask the following: How do change and conflict play a large part in a revolution, specifically the American revolution? Discuss responses.</td>
<td>Students will generate a concept web and demonstrate an understanding of how change can bring conflict</td>
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Students identify causes of the American Revolution. Students explain John Adams’ statement “The revolution was in the hearts and minds of the people.” Discuss its possible meaning.

A revolution concept web with American Revolution in the center of the web. The web should depict how change can bring conflict. (5) Ask the following: Would you say, then, that these changes were the causes of the American Revolution, or would you say that some of the causes for the American Revolution are missing? (6) Note that John Adams stated, after the American Revolution, “The revolution was in the hearts and minds of the people.” Ask the following: After completing the research on revolutions, does this statement fit with what you have discovered? What did John Adams mean? What was in the hearts and minds of people before the American Revolution? List the statement and questions on a transparency and ask groups to discuss the questions and record their responses.

(7) Lesson Summary: Have students briefly review the lesson activities and describe common characteristics of revolutions.