



THE COMMONS: OUR RIGHT AND OUR RESPONSIBILITY?

Teacher's Guide

Grade: 9 - 12

Lesson: The Commons: Our Right and Our Responsibility?

Number of Class Periods: 3 45-minute periods



The Healthy Commons Lesson Set was co-created by TerraCycle, The Cloud Institute for Sustainability Education, and Learner-Centered Initiatives.



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Standards

Common Core State Standards

ELA

9-10

Reading: Informational text - 1, 2, 4, 6 7

Writing - 2a, b, d, e, f

Speaking and Listening - 1, a-e; 2

Language - 1, 2

11-12

Reading: Informational text - 1, 4, 6, 7

Writing 2a, b, d, e, f

Speaking and Listening 1, a-d; 2

Language - 1, 2

MCREL National Standards 9-12

Civics- Level IV (9-12)

Standard 27. Understands how certain character traits enhance citizens' ability to fulfill personal and civic responsibilities

1. Understands the distinction between personal and civic responsibilities and the tensions that may arise between them

Health -Level IV (9-12)

Standard 2. Knows environmental and external factors that affect individual and community health

2. Knows how individuals can improve or maintain community health (e.g., becoming active in environmental and economic issues that affect health, assisting in the development of public health policies and laws, exercising voting privileges) EFS Standards and performance Indicators

E. 5 Healthy Commons Develop criteria that they can use [discuss ways] to reconcile the conflicts that exist between our individual rights and our responsibilities as citizens to tend the Commons, in relation to specific Commons.

E. 7 Engage regularly with some of the questions that need to be asked about the tenure, welfare and future of the Commons. Develop ideas, solutions and/or thoughts about the Commons and generate new questions that address areas with which they are grappling.

EFS Enduring Understandings (EU)

EU 1—A healthy and sustainable future is possible

EU 4—Recognize and Protect the Commons

EU 5—Reconcile Individual Rights with Collective Responsibilities

LESSON SUMMARY

In order to respond to the question, “How can we reconcile the conflicts that exist between our individual rights and our collective responsibilities for the Commons?” students examine a variety of documents (artwork, an essay, a law, a graph, etc.) and develop a list of criteria that they believe will support the reconciliation of individual rights with collective responsibilities. The drafted criteria are then tested when students apply them to a series of scenarios. As a result of these test runs, and subsequent critical conversations, the criteria are revised and posted. During the course of the rest of the year, they are used to mediate conflicts that arise between individual rights and responsibilities to the Commons.

OVERARCHING QUESTION

The Commons: Our Right and Our Responsibility?

GUIDING QUESTIONS

WHAT ARE OUR INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS WITH RESPECT TO THE COMMONS? (EU5)

AS CITIZENS, WHAT ARE OUR RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARD THE COMMONS? (EU4, EU5)

WHAT CRITERIA ARE BEING USED TO UNDERSTAND HOW TO TAKE CARE OF THE COMMONS? (EU1)

WHAT KINDS OF ISSUES AND SOLUTIONS ARE BEING PRESENTED THAT INVOLVE THE COMMONS?

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO CREATE CRITERIA THAT CAN HELP US TO RECONCILE THE CONFLICTS THAT EXIST BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS AND OUR COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARD THE COMMONS?

Resources/materials for this lesson:

Document #1: The Common Good by Claire Andre and Manuel Velasquez

Document #2: Human Rights and Universal Responsibility by Dalai Lama

Document #3: “The Hidden Commons” by Jonathan Rowe

Document #4: “Take it Back” by Eric Lombardi

Document #5: “Ship of Fools” by Chris Madden

Scenario #1: Motorcycle Helmets

Scenario #2: Tobacco

Scenario #3: Infectious Diseases

DAY 1 - EXPLORING THE COMMONS

1. Provide each student with a complete "Document Packet."
2. Create small, "document expert" groups of 3 or 4 students (It may be possible to use this as a differentiation opportunity, grouping students by learning style or ability and strategically assigning documents depending on their level). Be sure that each document has been assigned to at least one group.
3. In their document expert groups, students work on the assigned document. They analyze, discuss and respond to all questions for that document, making notes in their document packets. It is important that each student record responses in their packets, as they will use those notes in the next phase of the activity.
4. Once each group has read their documents and responded to the questions reorganize the class into new groups, each made up of one document expert from the original groups.
5. In a discussion led by its expert(s), each of the documents and set of questions are reviewed. Responses may be augmented as a result of tapping the perspectives and thinking of those seeing the document for the first time. Once again, all students should make individual notes. At the end of this second round, all students will have responded to each question, and new ideas and thinking will have been surfaced.



DAY 2 - INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Students return to their original document expert groups and review the additional information that they collected the day before.
2. Expert groups narrow their focus now, spending the rest of their time together addressing the following questions:
 - a. What are our individual rights with respect to the Commons?
 - b. As citizens, what are our responsibilities toward the Commons?
 - c. What criteria are being used to understand how to take care of the Commons?
3. Each expert group produces a list of criteria, based on the article they read. (e.g. not allowed to yell fire in a theatre because our individual right is trumped by the collective safety and health of the public), and these criteria are posted on chart paper.
4. Students visit each chart paper list and mark the criteria in each list that they ascribe to or that they feel would be important to reconciling the conflict between individual rights and responsibilities to the Commons.
5. Groups return to their own lists and report out on the criteria that received the most affirmations, eliminating duplicates. This criteria form the basis of a class list. Additional criteria can be added if groups feel strongly that it is critical to mediating the conflict between individual rights and responsibilities to the Commons.
6. Engage students in organizing the list, by clustering and categorizing related criteria so that each group is named. If desired, the groups can be further organized by prioritizing or otherwise ordering the categories.

DAY 3 - TESTING OUR CRITERIA

1. In pairs or triads, students read the first of the scenarios, applying their criteria to resolve the conflict presented. In each case, the criteria should be rated from 1-5 (1 being low and 5 being high) with respect to how useful it was in helping the group address the conflict.
2. Groups share their results and the reasoning behind their ratings.
3. This process is repeated with the remaining two scenarios. After each, students share results.
4. Once all three scenarios have been used, each pair or triad submits their suggestions for revisions, eliminations and/or additions to the criteria list. These nominations are discussed, and agreed upon changes are made.
5. The revised criteria list is written on chart paper and posted. This criteria should be used each time an opportunity to address the conflict between individual rights and our responsibilities to the Commons arises during the year.

INSTRUCTIONAL/ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFICATIONS/DIFFERENTIATED STRATEGIES

Students for whom the level of difficulty of the reading precludes them from being able to engage with any of the texts should either read in small groups with the teacher, scaffolding understanding with frequent questions or explanations, or read aloud with their partner and question the text as needed. Students who have difficulty writing should be provided extra time to complete the assignment and an opportunity to be provided with coaching support from the teacher.

EFS ASSESSMENT/SCORING CRITERIA

What do I need to collect or administer to prove that students have grown towards and/or achieved desired outcomes/standards?

Efs/National Standard	Efs/State Performance Indicator (letter and number)	Assessment Instrument	Scoring Criteria
E. Healthy Commons	E. 7	<p>Students respond to six different sets of questions for each of the documents in the packet that reflect what is provided in the answer key.</p> <p>Students incorporate teacher comments and guiding questions into generating deeper thoughts and ideas that they record in their document packets.</p>	Engage regularly with some of the questions that need to be asked about the tenure, welfare and future of the Commons. Develop ideas, solutions and/or thoughts about the Commons and generate new questions that address areas with which they are grappling.
	E. 5	Students generate a list of criteria to reconcile conflicts between individual rights and responsibilities for the Commons, and then test and revise them	Develop criteria that they can use [discuss ways] to reconcile the conflicts that exist between our individual rights and our responsibilities as citizens to tend the Commons, in relation to specific Commons.

Efs/National Standard	Efs/State Performance Indicator (letter and number)	Assessment Instrument	Scoring Criteria
<p>Common Core State Standards</p> <p>ELA</p> <p>Reading: Informational text</p>	Key Ideas and Details	<p>Group work and responses to questions</p> <p>Criteria drafts</p>	<p>Grade 9 and 10 Students Can:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. 2. Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, ...; provide an objective summary of the text. <p>Grade 11 and 12 Students Can:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
	Craft and Structure	Group work and responses to questions	<p>Grade 9 and 10 students Can:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text... 6. Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose. <p>Grade 11 and 12 Students Can:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text... 6. Analyze a case in which grasping point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).
	Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	<p>Group work and responses to questions</p> <p>Criteria drafts</p>	<p>Grade 9 and 10 students Can:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person’s life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account. <p>Grade 11 and 12 Students Can:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10). 6. Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text. 7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats

Efs/National Standard	Efs/State Performance Indicator (letter and number)	Assessment Instrument	Scoring Criteria
ELA Writing	Text Types and Purposes	Group work and responses to questions Criteria drafts	<p>Grade 9 and 10 students Can:</p> <p>2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.</p> <p>a. Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions.</p> <p>b. Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic.</p> <p>d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.</p> <p>e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.</p> <p>f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).</p> <p>Grade 11 and 12 Students Can:</p> <p>2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.</p> <p>a. Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole;</p> <p>b. Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic.</p> <p>d. Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.</p> <p>e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.</p> <p>f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).</p>

Efs/National Standard	Efs/State Performance Indicator (letter and number)	Assessment Instrument	Scoring Criteria
ELA Listening and Speaking	Comprehension and Collaboration	Group work and responses to questions Criteria drafts	<p>Grade 9 and 10 Students Can:</p> <p>1. Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions ..., building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</p> <p>a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.</p> <p>b. Work with peers to set rules for collegial discussions ...</p> <p>c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.</p> <p>d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.</p> <p>2. Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.</p> <p>Grade 11 and 12 Students Can:</p> <p>1. Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</p> <p>a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.</p> <p>b. Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions</p> <p>c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.</p> <p>d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.</p> <p>2. Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.</p>

Efs/National Standard	Efs/State Performance Indicator (letter and number)	Assessment Instrument	Scoring Criteria
ELA Language		Criteria drafts	Grade 9-12 Students Can: 1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. 2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
McCREL Civics	Standard 27.1	Group work and responses to questions Criteria drafts	Students evidence an understanding and appreciation of the tensions between the needs and rights of individuals and the needs and responsibilities associated with protecting and nurturing Commons
McCREL Health	Standard 2.2	Group work and responses to questions Criteria drafts	Students make explicit connections between the health of the Commons and the well being of the community and its individuals.

Note to teachers: Student acquisition of Enduring Understandings can be monitored through responses to questions identified by (EU).