

Civic Engagement for Us?



Trustee: Charles Clymer

Subject: Civic Education, Government

Grade Level: 10-12

Topics: State and Local Government, Forms of Participation

Time: 45 minutes

[View how this lesson plan first state standards](#)

[View the video](#) or [read the transcript](#)

Materials:

- Computer with Internet access, external speakers, and a LCD projector OR access to a computer lab with Internet access and headphones for each student
- Updated Media Player recommended. [Download QuickTime](#). Problems playing? [Check our Media Help page](#).
- Worksheets ([Word](#), [PDF](#))
- Download Lesson Plan ([Word](#), [PDF](#))

Learning Objectives:

Students will:

1. differentiate between responsibilities of government at the national, state and local level;
2. examine forms & ways of civic engagement;
3. recognize the possibilities and opportunities for participation in the political process; and
4. write an expository/analytical paragraph.

PREVIEWING (20 minutes)

NOTE: This lesson comes as a continuation of "Young & Elected" featuring a high school student running for a city council. If you have not seen the video clip before, briefly introduce the topic of elections and civic engagement and watch the clip as a whole class.

1. On the board, write the beginning of a sentence (taken from the text of video):

- My age group stands for...
2. Start a class discussion by asking the students to continue the sentence individually in their notebooks. After 2-3 minutes invite students to share their thoughts and write down the list of answers on the board.

VIEWING & DISCUSSION (15 minutes)

1. As a class, watch the brief Charles Clymer video about his run for city council in Round Rock, Texas. The video can be accessed online at www.americantrusteesproject.org. If you have difficulties accessing the videos, please visit our [Media Help page](#).
2. Ask students if they think that young elected officials have an obligation to focus on representing young people? Why or why not? Elicit as many answers as possible.
3. Ask students to recall the division between national, state, and local government responsibilities. Pass out the **WORKSHEET** and ask students to complete in it pairs.
4. For each level of government, ask students to name issues concerning young people in general or for their generation in particular that can be addressed there. Make sure the students come up with several examples for each level of government.

APPLICATION (10 minutes)

1. Point out to students that young people have a vested interest in politics and can change the way politicians handle issues related to young people.
2. Break the class into small discussion groups and invite them to consider the following question:
 - What sorts of organized efforts might bring more young people into political participation, including electoral politics?
 - What can institutions (city council, the legislature, universities, etc.) do to expand and enhance civic engagement?
 - Encourage groups to brainstorm the options. To make the activity more dynamic, organize a competition among the groups to name as many ways as possible to engage young people.
3. Pull all the options together and vote on the three most popular ideas.
4. To wrap up, ask the students to reflect on what they have learned about young people, politics, and civic engagement. Ask them to write a paragraph offering a (young) person advice on how to run for office.

ASSESSMENT

Students may be assessed on:

1. completion of the **WORKSHEET**;
2. writing skills; and
3. participation in the classroom discussion.