

History and Citizenship 6: The Quebec Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Course

History and Citizenship Cycle 1

Unit/Social Phenomenon/Theme

A Social Phenomenon of the Present

Lesson and Focus

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Trigger Warning

Discussion and research may contain sexist, racist, homophobic, transphobic and ableist content and opinions. Use of stereotypes might be used as a learning tool in this lesson plan but should be addressed and clarified.

Aim/Rationale

The purpose of this lesson is to introduce students to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and to inspire students to actively engage with and critically analyse information in a way that is relevant to their lives.

Competencies

- 1) Examines social phenomena from a historical perspective:
 - Denial of rights, struggle, winning of rights (recognition of civil rights and freedoms).
- 2) Interprets social phenomena using the historical method:
 - The impact on societies of the winning of civil rights and freedoms.
- 3) Constructs his/her consciousness of citizenship through the study of history:
 - The responsibilities of individuals in the struggle for and recognition of civil rights and freedoms.

Materials

- Access to a computer lab or laptop cart.

Central Concepts

Freedom, Censorship, Democratization, Discrimination, Equality, Repression, Rights, Segregation

Hook

Ask students what the Charter of Rights and Freedoms is, to whom it applies, and how it was made. The teacher should fill in any evident gaps and mention that the charter was the first governmental legislation larger than a county or district that prohibited discrimination based on sexual orientation. This occurred in 1977, one year after the charter became law.

Development/Teaching Methods

1. Dissecting the Charter: Group skit/visuals:

- Display section one chapter I.1: “Right to Equal Recognition and Exercise of Rights and Freedoms” on the board or using a projector:

“10. Every person has a right to full and equal recognition and exercise of his human rights and freedoms, without distinction, exclusion or preference based on race, colour, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, civil status, age except as provided by law, religion, political convictions, language, ethnic or national origin, social condition, a handicap or the use of any means to palliate a handicap.”

*The full text of the charter can be found here: <http://www.cdpdj.qc.ca/en/>

- With 3-4 students, groups will each be given a section of chapter I.1 of the Charter. Groups should then choose one of the often-excluded groups to pair with the section they are given.
- Each group will “translate” their section into colloquial language, draft a short explanation of its implications, create a very brief skit to display them or make/find/adapt a visual representation of the right they have been given on a computer or with available classroom materials.

2. Presentation:

- Each group will present their translation, implications, skit or visual.
- If any group portrays a stereotype of a certain group of people, use it as a learning opportunity rather than merely telling them not to, asking questions such as:
 - Where they got the idea?
 - If they believe it is accurate and, if so, why?
 - If anyone in the class can add more to the discussion from personal experience.

Culmination

- Oral feedback on the presentations from peers and teacher.

Performance Objectives

By the end of this lesson:

- Students will be able to explain the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in depth and with concrete examples.
- Students will have exercised and developed critical thinking skills by exploring what/who the Charter satisfies or does not, especially by considering what information is and is not mentioned in the charter and who/what this effects and how.
- Students will examine the Charter of Rights and Freedoms from a historical perspective because they will apply previous knowledge to question context and multiple perspectives in order to interpret and understand the implications of the Charter as well as explain their findings to an audience.
- They will interpret using the historical method through the process of examining a primary document, considering phenomena that gave rise to its development, and analysing its impact today.
- Consciousness of citizenship is constructed through developing an understanding of (in)equity, their role in its formation and definition in society, and their individual and collective power for change.

Assessment Ideas

- 1) Students will return to their groups and research news articles related to their assigned section of the charter. These can include court cases, opinion pieces, or movements. Students will prepare short summaries of these news articles to share with the class.
- 2) Groups will research similar or opposing legislation in other countries and present a succinct summary and brief history to the class. Presentations can be used as a means to connect material of study on a global scale.



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