

Thematic Unit:

Prose, Politics, Persuasion, and Propaganda:

A Look at Society Through Literature

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**Table of Contents**

*Rationale*.....3  
*Standards*.....8  
*Goals*.....11  
*Objectives*.....11  
*Materials*.....11  
*Unit Outline*.....12  
*Week One*.....12  
*Week Two*.....15  
*Week Three*.....17  
*Week Four*.....20  
*Week Five*.....22  
*Appendix A Democratic Comics*.....24  
*Appendix B Communist Comics*.....26  
*Appendix C Writing Assignment Rubric*.....29  
*Appendix D Final Project Rubric*.....30  
*Appendix E Final Project Handout*.....31  
*Appendix F Grade Matrix*.....32  
*Bibliography*.....34

### *Rationale*

One very important theme that will always be central to a public education in America is national, social, and civic awareness. Our society relies on the next generation being prepared for participation in the republic. Therefore it is important to educate the students on what it means to be a part of that ideal by fostering a sense of nationalism in them. By doing so we are ensuring that we are leaving the country in the hands of informed individuals that will be capable of leading the generations to come.

Since the inception of the United States our founding fathers were concerned with how to ensure the survival of the republic. Some of them sought this security through education. Thomas Jefferson maintained that no country “can be ignorant and free.” He expressed his concern for educating the next generation of freethinkers in much of his correspondence and notes. Jefferson felt that the public school system should be a social system in charge of passing on American culture (Smith, 1978).

Benjamin Rush, a prominent philosopher during Jefferson’s era championed his sentiments in an essay *On Republican Education*. “While we inculcate these republican duties upon our pupil, we must not neglect, at the same time, to inspire him with republican principles. He must be taught that there can be no durable liberty but in a republic, and that government, like all other sciences, is of a progressive nature” (Smith, 1978)

Despite their age these notions are just as important, if not more important today. One might argue that these principles should not be inculcated in our students, and that if we are a truly free society, then the students should be free to learn the principles they feel are important. I agree, which is why this unit is designed to teach the principles of the two prevailing government principles through multiple lenses without bias. This unit does not rely on direct

instruction in order to allow the students to focus on the ideas that are the most important to them.

This unit is designed to give the students a deeper understanding of government and society, and how they affect the citizens by going far below the surface. History lessons typically have enough time to teach the bare facts of government. What this unit is interested in is showing these facts within literature and music that is relevant to the students.

Using prior knowledge that the students in an 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade class will have on government and history the unit will first take a deeper look into literature that is central to both democratic, and communist points of view in the works of Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine, and Karl Marx. Then throughout the rest of the unit the students will have the opportunity to read an array of material that has government as a central theme to the piece.

The materials range from comic strips, short stories, comic books, essays, speeches, articles, letters, movies, and music including *Harrison Bergeron* by Kurt Vonnegut, *The Watchmen* by Alan Moore, and the *Armory Wars* comic books by Claudio Sanchez of the popular band Coheed & Cambria. Other music is provided by popular and notable artists such as: Incubus, Dave Matthews Band, and Creedence Clearwater Revival. Using materials that are relevant to the students' lives will help them relate to the themes presented, and along with having national, social, and civic significance this unit also contains cultural and ethical issues as well.

From the introduction into the unit that covers democratic and communist themes, the class will then move on to utopian societal views through *Harrison Bergeron* and the *Amory Wars* comic books. Once the students have an overview of what these societies look like they will journey deeper into them to discover what lies beneath. It is important to point out that even

utopian societies have problems and are not without discrimination. We will be studying the works of Martin Luther King Jr., and looking at some news stories relevant to public perception and politics.

The activities in conjunction with the reading will cover a large amount of types of instruction to cater to the different types of learners in the classroom. The unit will have the students using their kinesthetic, intrapersonal, interpersonal, logical, musical, verbal, and visual skills in order to complete the tasks. Nearly all of the activities are based on user content, meaning that the students themselves will be creating most of the content so that the instructor is not bogged down with handouts and rigid curriculum. Instead the curriculum is designed to scaffold the activities so the students can immerse themselves in the theme.

We are taught as prospective teachers of English that it is not important for our students to regurgitate the facts of literature back to us. In order to get them to start thinking about these themes at a higher level then it is more important to ask them what they think about and perceive from what they've read. This unit would not be beholden to its theme if it didn't require the students' input to teach the class. Telling the students what to think about the literature would not be a very democratic way of teaching, and it would severely limit what the student could take away from the experience.

Parents and administrators may find this thematic unit to be controversial on the surface. However I would say to them, "take a closer look at the curriculum." The lessons never get into the less redeeming qualities of politics. There are no political lines drawn within the curriculum that would sway the students to become affiliated with any types of political parties, nor does it have any rhetoric that could skew a student's perspective. Rather it is designed to require the

students to think critically about the core texts. The unit is merely a vehicle to inform the students of the political landscape as seen through literature.

The students will keep a portfolio so that they can keep track of their growth throughout the unit. All in-class written assignments will be done in this portfolio, and the purpose of this is to give the students something tangible at the end of the unit, but it will also give the instructor the means to take the content and use it for discussion. Along with the portfolio the students will also participate in a class NING where they will respond to reflection questions from the reading and write reactions to assignments. Much of the class discussion will be produced from the students content on the NING, so that the whole class can answer any questions and comments they might have.

Vocabulary will be taught indirectly with the reading, and will be pulled directly from the reading, or it will be related to the theme in some way. The students will have the opportunity to talk about and use the vocabulary to further understand the reading. They will take occasional quizzes to assess their knowledge of the words throughout the unit.

The students will also be doing a wide array of different writing assignments throughout the unit as well. They will be required to do a large amount of reflective writing assignments, which will steer the curriculum and discussions, as well as some free writing and persuasive writing in order for them to look deeper into their own understanding of the concepts being taught.

The final assessment will be an informal assessment that will measure the students' ability to process political information into a multimedia presentation using mediums that they've been exposed to over the course of the unit. During the last week the students will be sharing a political cartoon they've created based on an issue of their choice, as well as a political

video that will show the students' ability to talk about and offer solutions to political problems. The point of the final project is to put the concepts and materials of the unit in their hands and let them recreate them in their image.

The end of the unit will better inform the students of their place in society and how different ideas can affect that society. The purpose is for them to immerse themselves as active participants so that they can make informed decisions for themselves in the future. The political landscape of the United States is fraught with propaganda created to persuade the less informed of the public into opinions that could result in the harm of the most important aspects of the republic fabric. In a year or two these students will be taking their place among the masses that have come before them. They will be the next guiding light for this society and it will be important that they are informed individuals capable of making their own decisions. After all the nature of our republic is of a progressive nature.

**Works Cited:**

1. Smith, W. (1973). 15: Thomas Jefferson's Bill for the Diffusion of Knowledge. *Theories of Education in Early America 1655-1819. The American Heritage Series, Leonard W. Levy & Alfred Young General Editors* (p. 230). New York: Bobbs-Merrill.
2. Smith, W. (1973). 16: Benjamin Rush on Public Education. *Theories of Education in Early America 1655-1819. The American Heritage Series, Leonard W. Levy & Alfred Young General Editors* (p. 248). New York: Bobbs-Merrill.

## **Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy**

### **\*Reading Standards for Literature 6–12: Grades 11–12 students:**

- 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.*
- 2. Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.*
- 3. Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).*
- 4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)*
- 5. Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.*
- 9. Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.*
- 10. By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.  
By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.*

### **\*Reading Standards for Informational Text 6–12: Grades 11–12 students:**

- 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.*
- 2. Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.*
- 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 (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.*

*9. Analyze seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century foundational U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (including The Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address) for their themes, purposes, and rhetorical features.*

*10. By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.*

*By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.*

**\*Writing Standards 6–12: Grades 11–12 students:**

*1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.*

*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.*

*3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.*

*4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)*

*5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grades 11–12 on page 54.)*

*6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.*

9. *Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.*

10. *Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.*

**\*Speaking & Listening Standards 6–12: Grades 11–12 students:**

1. *Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.*

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.*

4. *Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.*

5. *Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.*

**\*Language Standards 6–12: Grades 11–12 students:**

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.*

3. *Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.*

5. *Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.*

6. *Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.*

### Goals

For the students to have or gain

1. A deeper understanding of the differences and complexities between democracy and communism.
2. A broader view of the world outside of their own political and social system.
3. An understanding of the way politics, art, and literature commingle in the world and how they affect people.
4. A new perspective on the world of politics and philosophies of other nations.
5. The ability to filter through propoganda in order to build their own political perspective.
6. A better understanding of how they can contribute to the American republic.
7. The ability to identify political issues within our society and offer solutions to them.

### Objectives

For the students to...

1. Write responses to the prompts given on the class NING.
2. Identify, define, and use vocabulary words taken from the reading.
3. Write reflectively about assignments to show an understanding of the material.
4. Create a writing portfolio that shows the students' growth over time.
5. Participate in daily discussions pertaining to the subject matter.
6. Offer insights on what is important and relevant to them about the material.
7. Bring materials into the classroom, which are relevant to them that further our study.
8. Make informed decisions and offer reasoning for those choices in their writing.
9. Analyze and respond to political propoganda including comic strips and videos.
10. Create a political video and comic strip addressing an issue important to them.

### Materials List

**Student's Needs:** Class NING account, Writing Portfolio, Computer w/ Internet access, Newspaper Article (see unit), music of their choice (see unit), (Optional, needs to complete final project) video camera, drawing materials.

**Instructor's Needs:** Computer w/ Internet Access, Overhead Projector, Class NING, Political cartoons (see appendix), **Literature:** *The Watchmen*, *Stupid History*, *Unfortunate English*, *Harrison Bergeron*, *Communist Manifesto*, *Common Sense*, *Declaration of Independence*, *Armory Wars*, & *Letter From a Birmingham Jail*. **Music:** *Megalomaniac* Incubus, *War* Bob Marley, *Cry Freedom* Dave Matthews Band, *BYOB* System of a Down, *Fortunate Son* Creedence Clearwater Revival, *In Keeping Secrets of Silent Earth: 3* (entire album) Coheed & Cambria. **Videos:** *The Watchmen* movie (edited), Daily Show Episode (optional, situational, see unit), Colbert Report (optional, situational, see unit).

## Unit Outline:

### Week One

#### Day One

**Materials:** Projector, and Democratic Comic Strips (see appendix a)

**Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 15 Minutes - Discussion on the students' prior knowledge of key words: Democracy, Capitalism, Republic, and Politics. Have them write these words in their portfolio with their own definitions derived from the discussion.
- ✓ 30 Minutes – Show the Democratic Comic Strips. Have the students write reactions to the comics as well as answering the prompt: Is this Pro Democracy, or Anti-Democracy? What does this remind you of? After giving the students time to write their responses discuss them as a class.
- ✓ 5 Minutes – Wrap it up and explain homework.

**Homework:** Due Next Class: Find a political cartoon of your own to be brought to class. Either rewrite the caption or explain what is going on within the comic. Upload to the class NING discussion board before class.

Due Day 5: Have the students start picking out a political/protest song, or a song they can relate to the material covered to be presented to the class on Day 5.

**Purpose/Notes:** This is the introduction lesson to the Democracy lens of the unit. Focus the discussion on having the students relate the vocabulary to each word and have them relate it to the United States. Have them take their portfolios home to help them with their homework.

#### Day Two

**Materials:** *Declaration of Independence*

**Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 30 Minutes – Group Activity: Split the students into groups. No more than 4 students per group. Have them discuss the comics they brought in and have everyone give their reaction to each. Have each group choose their favorite to present to the class discussing the different reactions from the group.
- ✓ 20 Minutes – Handout copies of the Declaration. Vocabulary for discussion and student portfolios: Evident, Endowed, Unalienable, and Liberty. Read out loud and stop to explain passages and answer questions.

**Homework:** Due before next class: Respond on the NING discussion board: Point out and discuss something about the Declaration you agree with and something you might not agree with.

**Purpose/Notes:** This lesson is to get them thinking critically about how propaganda can influence our ideas, and to give them a prompt to get them thinking critically about one of the most important documents in US history.

### **Day Three**

**Materials:** Class NING, Projector, *Common Sense*, *Stupid History*

#### **Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 10 Minutes – Use the class NING to discuss what the students wrote about. Discuss propaganda again and read from *Stupid History* pg 254 “Springtime for Hitler.” Have them write in their portfolios how propaganda was used in this story.
- ✓ 5 Minutes – Read “Bravery” from *Unfortunate English* pg 72. Lead this into and relate it to the Declaration and to *Common Sense*.
- ✓ 35 Minutes – Hand out copies of *Common Sense*. Have the students read and highlight passages they have questions about, or believe are important. Have them write their questions in their portfolios.

**Homework:** Due by next class: Finish reading and highlighting the reading to be discussed in class. Post at least two questions, concerns, or comments about the reading on the class NING discussion board. Study their portfolio for vocabulary test.

**Purpose/Notes:** *Common Sense* was a brave act. Relate the reading from *Unfortunate English* to this act.

### **Day Four**

**Materials:** Vocabulary Quiz #1, Song: Dave Matthews Band “Cry Freedom.”

#### **Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 20 Minutes – Have the students open their copies of the reading and use their portfolios to take notes on the discussion. Breakdown *Common Sense* using the student’s questions and comments from the class NING.
- ✓ 20 Minutes – Vocabulary quiz #1 Define in your own words: Democracy, Capitalism, Republic, Politics, Evident, Endowed, Unalienable, and Liberty.
- ✓ 10 Minutes – Free writing in portfolios using the song and these prompts: What is the song saying? How does it make you feel? How does it relate to what we’ve learned about including vocabulary?

**Homework:** Due by next class: Respond to two peers questions about *Common Sense* on the class NING. Finish free writing. Bring in a political/protest song or a song that you can relate to the material covered and be prepared to present it to the class. Answer the prompt: What is the

song saying? How does it make you feel? How does it relate to what we've learned about including vocabulary? The song and the answer to this prompt should be uploaded to the class NING discussion board before class.

### **Day Five**

#### **Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 45 Minutes – Have as many students as possible present their songs and allow them to be played.
- ✓ 5 Minutes – Answer any questions. Take up Portfolios for grading.

**Homework:** Due by next class: 300 Word Blog on class NING: Write about anything relating to the material or use these prompts: What you learned? What you liked/disliked? What you want to learn next?

**Purpose/Notes:** The students are turning in the portfolios to have them checked for completion grades for the assignments in the previous lessons.

## Week Two

### Day One

**Materials:** Projector, Communist Comic Strips (see appendix b), *Communist Manifesto*

**Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 15 Minutes - Vocabulary for discussion and student portfolios: Marxism, Communism, Rhetoric, Propaganda, Agglomerate, Bourgeoisie, Appropriation, and Subjugate.
- ✓ 30 Minutes – Show the Communist Comic Strips. Have the students write reactions to the comics as well as answering the prompt: Is this Pro Communist, or Anti-Communist? What does this remind you of? After giving the students time to write their responses discuss them as a class.
- ✓ 5 Minutes – Wrap it up and hand out *Communist Manifesto*

**Homework:** Read *Communist Manifesto*

**Purpose/Notes:** This is the introduction lesson to the Communist/Marxist lens of the unit. Focus the discussion on having the students relate the vocabulary to each word and have them relate it to what they know about Cuba, or the former Soviet Union. Have them take their portfolios home to help them with their homework. I don't expect them to actually do the reading homework and the next lesson doesn't require that they have read it.

### Day Two

**Materials:** *Communist Manifesto*, Incubus “Megalomaniac”

**Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 40 Minutes – Break the reading into groups by chapters. Have the students read and then jigsaw the material by giving a summary, act out a skit explaining the information in the chapter, and ask a question about the chapter to the class.
- ✓ 10 Minutes – Free writing in portfolios using the song and these prompts: What is the song saying? Based on the lyrics, what is a megalomaniac? Can you identify someone who you would describe as a megalomaniac? Who are they? Why do you say this?

**Homework:** Finish the Free Writing

### Day Three

**Materials:** *The Watchmen* (graphic novel), *Stupid History* “A Revolutionary Item Up For Sale”

**Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 15 Minutes – Read and discuss excerpt from *Stupid History*.

- ✓ 35 Minutes – Read *The Watchmen* individually.

**Homework:** Finish the reading.

**Purpose/Notes:** *The Watchmen* is important to show how Communism and Democracy collide during the Cold War. It gives an overview of how the fundamental differences in the cultures creates tensions that could lead to planetary devastation.

### **Day Four**

**Materials:** *The Watchmen* (movie), Creedence Clearwater Revival “Fortunate Son”

**Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 20 Minutes – Free Writing activity using the song. What does the singer mean when he says he is not a “fortunate one?” Does fortune make things easier for people in America? Would things be easier if the singer lived in Communist Russia?
- ✓ 30 Minutes – Watch movie

**Homework:** None

**Purpose/Notes:** The students will be watching a severely edited version of the movie due to time constraints.

### **Day Five**

**Materials:** *The Watchmen* (movie)

**Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 50 Minutes – Watch movie. Take up Portfolios for grading.

**Homework:** 300 word blog on the class NING. Respond to the movie and/or the comic book. Prompt: There are many issues brought up in the movie based around the Cold War between Russia and the United States. Identify one of these issues and offer a solution.

**Purpose/Notes:** This writing prompt is to prepare them for their writing assignment they will start the following week.



### **Week Three**

#### **Day One**

**Materials:** The Watchmen (movie)

**Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 50 Minutes – Finish Movie

**Homework:** Study Portfolio for vocabulary test. Start paper about the end of the movie. Prompt: The heroes come up with a very controversial solution to ending the Cold War. Do one of two: 1. Rewrite the ending of the movie and show how the world would turn out if the heroes decided on something different. OR 2. The heroes sacrifice many lives to save the “greater majority.” Did they do what is best for the greater good, or was their actions unacceptable? Is there something they could have done different? (500 words) due the following Monday.

#### **Day Two**

**Materials:** Vocabulary Quiz #2

**Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 20 Minutes – Vocabulary quiz #2. Define in your own words: Marxism, Communism, Rhetoric, Propaganda, Agglomerate, Bourgeoisie, Appropriation, and Subjugate.
- ✓ 30 Minutes – In class writing prompt: In *The Watchmen* we see what happens in the world with so many different ways of thinking. Would a utopian society work in the world? What if everyone was equal? What if we all looked and talked alike? What if no one was smarter or more physically adept than anyone else? Would this type of society work? What would it be like? (2 written pages in the writing portfolio)

**Homework:** Work on 500-word essay. Finish in class writing.

**Purpose/Notes:** This writing assignment is to get them thinking about the society in *Harrison Bergeron* and what it means to be a part of a utopia.

#### **Day Three**

**Materials:** *Harrison Bergeron*

**Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 20 Minutes – Discuss the writing from the previous day.
- ✓ 30 Minutes – hand out copies and have the students read *Harrison Bergeron* individually.

**Homework:** Work on 500-word essay. Respond to the discussion on the class NING. Prompt: Have your views about a utopian society changed since the reading? Why or why not?

**Purpose/Notes:** The homework is to get them thinking critically about their previous writing assignment.

### **Day Four**

**Materials:** *Letters from a Birmingham Prison, Unfortunate English.*

#### **Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 5 Minutes – Read excerpt from *Unfortunate English* pg 144 “Segregation.” Discuss how the word has changed.
- ✓ 30 Minutes – Hand out copies of the reading and have the students highlight excerpts that are powerful. Prompt: MLK Jr. uses some very powerful and persuasive language to get his point across. Highlight portions of the reading that are important to you and parts that persuade that his cause is just and righteous.
- ✓ 15 Minutes – Discuss the portions the students highlighted and how the language used helps persuade us to join his cause.

**Homework:** Work on 500-word essay. Pick the most important section you highlighted in the reading and discuss why this section this is the most important part of his argument for equality in America on class NING.

**Purpose/Notes:**

### **Day Five**

**Materials:** Political News Article(s), Daily Show with Jon Stewart Clip(s), and Colbert Report with Steven Colbert Clip(s). (These clips and articles should reflect recent events in political and social history. These should be chosen at the instructor’s discretion and the length of the materials should be based on class time constraints. The news article should correlate with the clips used (see Purpose/Notes for more.)

#### **Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 20 Minutes – Pass out the news article and have the students take turns reading it aloud. Discuss the implications of this on their lives. What will this mean for the rest of the country? Is there a particular group of people that are affected by this more than others? Is this issue something that is important to you? (The discussion questions can vary depending on the issue being discussed.)
- ✓ 15 Minutes – Both “fake news” shows report on the same issues so take clips from the shows that deal with the issue being talked about.

- ✓ 15 Minutes – Discuss how these shows trivialize the issues being talked about. What are the major differences between the two shows and how they present the information. Are there any biases present? Does the issue now seem to be less important now? Why is that? Take up Portfolios for grading.

**Homework:** Work on 500-word essay.

**Purpose/Notes:** The article(s) chosen should be based on the same issues as that the clips show. Because the clips are “fake news” this will show the contrast between the issues and how they are presented and how they can be trivialized. This assignment is to give the students practice at finding political issues and discussing them, which will help them to complete their final project.

## **Week Four**

### **Day One**

**Materials:** Computer Lab

**Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 20 Minutes – Turn in the 500 word essay on *The Watchmen*. Go over the final project and give the students the handout explaining the project (see appendix). Answer any questions the students have about the project.
- ✓ 30 Minutes – Go to the computer lab and have the students begin their Webquest. They will be searching for a clip from the Colbert Report or from The Daily Show on an issue that they choose. Then they should find a news article that correlates with the issue.

**Homework:** None

**Purpose/Notes:** The Webquest will mirror the in-class discussion done using the news article and the video clips. (Explained in the next lesson.)

### **Day Two**

**Materials:** Computer Lab

**Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 50 Minutes – Complete the Webquest. If there is any time left then have the students complete their homework assignment.

**Homework:** On the class NING write a 300 word blog. Prompt: Write about any or all of these questions: What will this mean for the rest of the country? Is there a particular group of people that are affected by this more than others? Is this issue something that is important to you?

**Purpose/Notes:** This Webquest will give the students a perfect opportunity to pick a topic for their Final Project.

### **Day Three**

**Materials:** *The Armory Wars*

**Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 50 Minutes – Read *The Armory Wars* Vol. 1 1-3

**Homework:** Work on Final Project

**Purpose/Notes:** This final reading is to show one last societal lens through a totalitarian government.

**Day Four**

**Materials:** *The Armory Wars*

**Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 50 Minutes – Read *The Armory Wars* Vol. 1 4-6

**Homework:** Work on Final Project

**Day Five**

**Materials:** *The Armory Wars*

**Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 50 Minutes – Read *The Armory Wars* Vol. 2 1-3.

**Homework:** Write a 300 word blog on the class NING due next Monday. Prediction Prompt: How will the comic book series end in the last three issues? Will Coheed and Cambria survive? What will become of Claudio? Will he ever see Newo again? Will Inferno get to Mariah in time?

## Week Five

### Day One

**Materials:** *The Armory Wars*

**Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 50 Minutes – Read *The Armory Wars* Vol. 2 4-6

**Homework:** Work on Final Project

### Day Two

**Materials:** Coheed & Cambria *In Keeping Secrets of Silent Earth: 3*

**Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 50 Minutes – Have the class listen to the album *In Keeping Secrets of Silent Earth: 3*. Allow them to listen ONLY to the first three tracks on the album. Allow the album to continue playing and give the students the writing prompt: In *The Armory Wars* we see how a totalitarian government can corrupt and destroy a society, but it does allow change in a society to happen quickly. What are some of the other advantages to this type of government? What are the disadvantages? 2 written pages in Portfolio.

**Homework:** Finish Final Project

**Purpose:**

### Day Three

**Materials:** None

**Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 50 Minutes – Students will have a free day to complete their Final Project.

**Homework:** Finish the Final Project

### Day Four

**Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

- ✓ 50 Minutes – The students will be presenting their Final Projects and turn them in to be graded.

### Day Five

**Teaching Strategy/Procedure/Activity:**

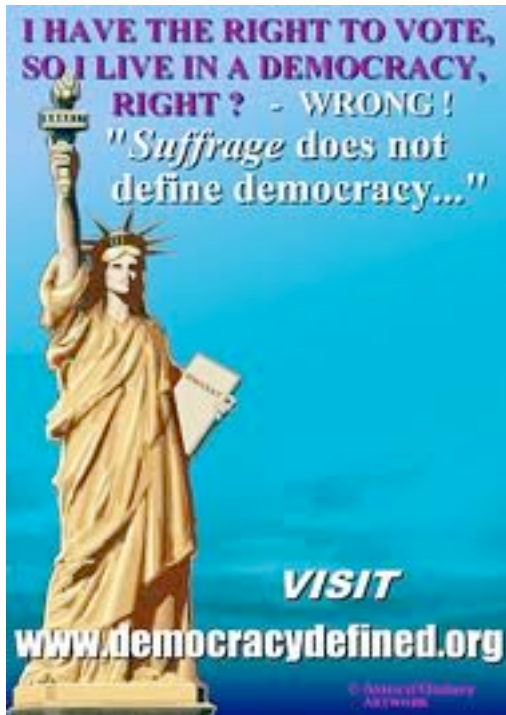
- ✓ 50 Minutes – The students will finish presenting their Final Projects and turn them in to be graded. Take up Portfolios for grading.

Appendix

a) Democratic Comics



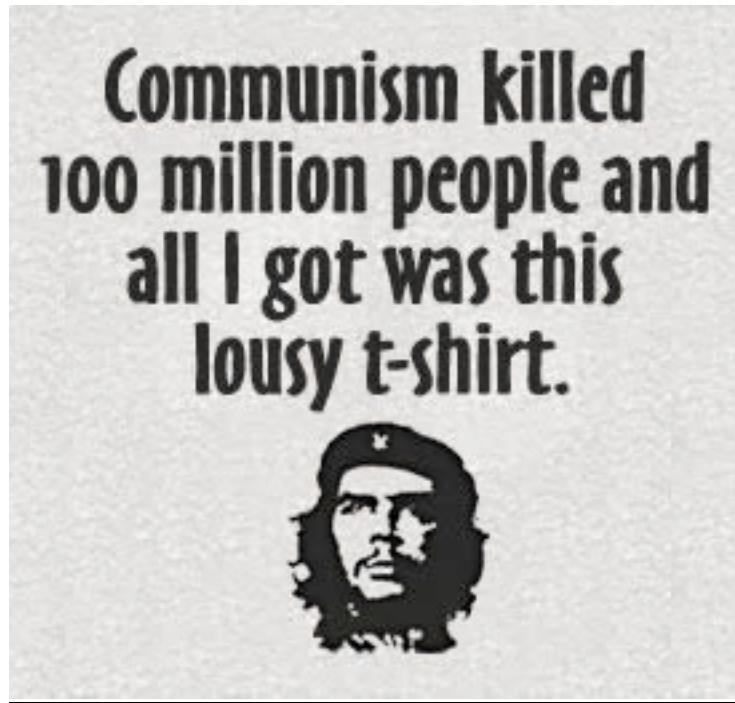




b) Communist Comics







## c) Writing Assignment Rubric (Created using Rubistar.org)

CATEGORY	4 – Above Standards	3 – Meets Standards	2 – Approaching Standards	1 – Below Standards	0 – Not Turned In
Evidence and Examples	All of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author's position.	Most of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author's position.	At least one of the pieces of evidence and examples is relevant and has an explanation that shows how that piece of evidence supports the author's position.	Evidence and examples are NOT relevant AND/OR are not explained.	Not turned In

## d) Final Presentation Rubric (Created using Rubistar.org)

CATEGORY	20	15	10	5
Sources	Source information collected for all graphics, facts and quotes. All documented in desired format.	Source information collected for all graphics, facts and quotes. Most documented in desired format.	Source information collected for graphics, facts and quotes, but not documented in desired format.	Very little or no source information was collected.
Requirements	All requirements are met and exceeded.	All requirements are met.	One requirement was not completely met.	More than one requirement was not completely met.
Content	Covers topic in-depth with details and examples. Subject knowledge is excellent.	Includes essential knowledge about the topic. Subject knowledge appears to be good.	Includes essential information about the topic but there are 1-2 factual errors.	Content is minimal OR there are several factual errors.
Organization	Content is well organized using headings or bulleted lists to group related material.	Uses headings or bulleted lists to organize, but the overall organization of topics appears flawed.	Content is logically organized for the most part.	There was no clear or logical organizational structure, just lots of facts.
Presentation	Well-rehearsed with smooth delivery that holds audience attention.	Rehearsed with fairly smooth delivery that holds audience attention most of the time.	Delivery not smooth, but able to maintain interest of the audience most of the time.	Delivery not smooth and audience attention often lost.

## e) Final Presentation Handout

Due: Week 5 Day 4

Points Possible:100

Throughout this unit of instruction you've been exposed to politics from many angles. You have seen newspaper articles, political journals, music, comics, and television clips that deal with these issues. For your final project you will produce and present three artifacts of your choosing.

1. Article – First you will find an article that talks about an issue of political and social importance. This can be from a newspaper, magazine, website, or any reliable source (you may not use a blog for instance). Read the article thoroughly and make sure to write the most important facts down. Identify the problem and identify any solutions that are present in the article. This artifact will be the basis for the other two artifacts.
2. Comic – Use the problem you've identified from the article and create a comic frame or comic strip. This artifact should explain the problem through illustration, and either dialogue or captions. The comic may be one frame or a strip of frames that identifies and shows the problem from the article and then offers the solution. You may use satyr and humor to make the comic humorous, or to offer a solution that is ironic. Look back to the comics that we discussed in class, as well as the ones you and your peers reviewed. Pay attention to the way the artists convey the information and use them as a framework for your own if you need.
3. Video – The third artifact will be a video you create that either informs the audience of the problem and possible solutions, or you may create a video that uses satyr to make the video humorous. You will first need to write a script to be turned in with the project. You may use as many outside actors as you want. Don't be afraid to use your family and friends. Look at clips from The Daily Show, and The Colbert Report and pay attention to the way they convey the information. You may also choose to make a serious video like a newscast, or a public service announcement. Try to keep the video under two minutes.

Once you are done you will need to write a one-page reflection in your portfolio that details the point you were making in your video, why you chose the issue you presented, and a rationale for why you presented it in the manner you did. You will turn all of this in on the due date of the assignment and present all of your artifacts to the class by giving a summary of your article, explaining your comic, and showing your video.

## f) Grade Matrix

<b>Participation Grades by Day: Student receive all or no points</b>	<b>Points Possible</b>
Week 1 Day 1	5
Week 1 Day 2	5
Week 1 Day 3	5
Week 1 Day 4	5
Week 1 Day 5	5
Week 2 Day 1	5
Week 2 Day 2	5
Week 2 Day 3	5
Week 2 Day 4	5
Week 2 Day 5	5
Week 3 Day 1	5
Week 3 Day 2	5
Week 3 Day 3	5
Week 3 Day 4	5
Week 3 Day 5	5
Week 4 Day 1	5
Week 4 Day 2	5
Week 4 Day 3	5
Week 4 Day 4	5
Week 4 Day 5	5
Week 5 Day 1	5
Week 5 Day 2	5
Week 5 Day 3	5
Week 5 Day 4	5
Week 5 Day 5	5
<b>Portfolio Grades by Week Turned in</b>	<b>Points Possible</b>
<b>Turned in after Week 1</b>	<b>Total: 16</b>
Democratic Comic reactions	4
Common Sense Questions	4
Stupid History Reflection	4
Free Write 1	4
<b>Turned in after Week 2</b>	<b>Total: 8</b>
Free Write 2	4
Free Write 3	4
<b>Turned in after Week 3</b>	<b>Total: 8</b>
Watchmen Prompt	8
<b>Turned in after Week 5</b>	<b>Total: 16</b>
Coheed & Cambria Prompt	8
Presentation Reflection	8
<b>Homework Assignments</b>	<b>Points</b>



	<b>Possible</b>
Political Cartoon Post NING	4
Song Presentation	4
Declaration of Independence Response NING	4
Common Sense Discussion NING	4
Common Sense Response NING	4
Blog 1 NING	4
Blog 2 NING	4
500 Word Essay	16
Harrison Bergeron Introduction Response	4
Harrison Bergeron Reflection NING	4
Martin Luther King Response NING	4
Webquest Introduction	4
Webquest Response NING	4
Coheed & Cambria Predictions NING	4
<b>Assessments</b>	<b>Points Possible</b>
Vocabulary Quiz 1 (4 Points per word correct)	32
Vocabulary Quiz 2 (4 Points per word correct)	32
Final Presentation	100

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