

Brazos Valley African American Museum



**Curriculum Learning Trunk
Lesson Plans for Middle School- 8th Grade**

**November Voting:
8th Grade**

November Voting: Middle School 8th Grade Lesson Plan
BVAAM
Curriculum Learning Trunk - Lesson Plan

- OBJECTIVE:** By the end of this lesson using, “Suffrage Sequence Cards” voting timeline cards, 8th grade students will be able to construct a timeline of voting rights and complete the “Voting Knowledge Assessment” at a 90% success rate.
- TEKS:** **Knowledge and Skills**
SS 8.16: Government. The student understands the process of changing the U.S. constitution and the impact of amendments on American society. The student is expected to:
8.16 A: Summarize the purposes for and process of amending the U.S. Constitution; and
8.16 B: Describe the impact of 19th-century amendments, including the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments, on life in the United States.
- BACKGROUND INFO:** When setting up the United States, the founding fathers knew that the constitution should be able to change as the people living in the country do. Through Article Five, the founding fathers made this possible. In order for the amendment to be made, it must first be proposed by Congress if two-thirds of the House of Representatives and Senate agree with it. The second method is that two-thirds of legislatures of the states call for a convention. The proposed amendment can then be ratified if three-fourths of the state legislatures agree upon the amendment. Congress can also call for a ratifying convention for the states that requires a three-fourth vote. One of the greatest amendments made to the constitution was the change in voting rights. The main focus for today’s lesson will be on the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments. The 13th Amendment forbids forced and involuntary slavery unless for a criminal offense. The 14th Amendment states that the states cannot take about the basic rights of citizens. The 15th Amendment states that all citizens have the right to vote regardless of their race, color, or previous servitude.
<http://totallyhistory.com/list-of-27-amendments-to-the-u-s-constitution/>
(amendments 13-15)

<http://www.thisnation.com/textbook/constitution-amend.html>
- TIME ESTIMATE:** 30-45 minutes
- MATERIALS NEEDED:** “Suffrage Sequence Cards” worksheet
“Voting Knowledge Assessment,”
jar of jelly beans
- ENGAGE:** Present the jar of jelly beans to the students and ask the students to guess how many are in the jar. If the students are not in range of the number, tell the student that they are not allowed to vote since they did not pass the test. Then introduce the ideas of poll taxes and literacy tests.

EXPLORE:

Step 1: *Engage:* introduce students to concept of unequal voting rights through jelly bean jar.

Step 2: *Focus:* have students complete “Suffrage Sequence Cards.”

Step 3: *Discuss:* discuss the history of voting rights, watch “Amending America: How Do We Amend?”

Step 4: *Assess:* complete “Voting Knowledge Assessment” individually

EXPLAIN:

Introduce the days topic by using the jelly bean jar. Ask the students to guess how many jellybeans are in the jar. If they are not in range, tell the student they are not allowed to vote. Tie this activity to poll taxes and literacy tests, as if you were missing a certain quality or failed a test, you could not vote.

Present the next activity by passing out “Suffrage Sequence Cards” to put the cards in chronological order. Check the students’ order and correct as needed.

Follow by instructing over the history of voting rights and watching “Amending America: How Do We Amend?”

Finish the lesson with the “Voting Knowledge Assessment.”

ELABORATE:

To extend the lesson and elaborate on the ideas introduced during class, have students make a flow chart of the processes of making an amendment to the constitution based on the video, “Amending America: How Do We Amend?”

EVALUATE:

After completing the “Suffrage Sequence Cards” and watching “Amending America: How Do We amend,” students can assess their knowledge of the process and purpose for amending the constitution, and the impact that the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendment had on American life. <https://www.ritenour.k12.mo.us/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=1799&dataid=1639&FileName=KVUSA-6-8Activities.pdf> (page 68-70)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c_wbxHmSQKc

<https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/what-suffrage/>

http://sc.lawforkids.org/speakup/view_question.cfm?id=394

ACCOMMODATIONS:

For students who have behavioral issues, they can assist the teacher by passing out the activities to their classmates. For students who learn at a slower pace, students can be placed into larger groups for the “Suffrage Sequence Cards.” For students who are ESL, the video can include captions of their first learned language. For students with learning disabilities, technology can be implemented so they can be fully involved.

Name:

Date:

Voting Knowledge Assessment

1. Why do we amend the Constitution? What article of the Constitution allows this?
2. What actions were taking to limit voting to all U.S. citizens?
3. What amendments were made to extend voting rights? What were their function?

Voting Knowledge Assessment KEY

1. We amend the Constitution to fit/grow with the changing values of the citizens. Article 5 allows us to amend the Constitution.
2. The actions discussed in class that prevented the extension of voting rights was poll taxes and literacy tests.
3. The 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments were made to extend voting rights. The 13th Amendment forbids forced and involuntary slavery unless for a criminal offense. The 14th Amendment states that the states cannot take about the basic rights of citizens. The 15th Amendment states that all citizens have the right to vote regardless of their race, color, or previous servitude.