



Lesson Plan

Mayor Moe and the Important Personage

Subject(s): Language Arts, Social Studies/Humanities

Grade Level: 3-6

Specific Student Learning Objectives:

- Students will explore their right to gather for a peaceful purpose.
- Students will use The Acorn Test to examine limits to freedom of peaceful assembly
- Students will think critically about ways in which rights can conflict with one another in democracies.

Enduring Understanding(s) + Big Ideas

- Peaceful assemblies are one way groups can draw attention to their complaints.
- Not everyone will be happy when peaceful protesters gather.
- It is important to balance everyone's rights when deciding whether and where to allow a peaceful public protest.

Essential Questions

- What reasons do people have for getting together in public places?
- When might it be fair to stop an assembly?
- What kinds of messages may need to be delivered by groups rather than by individuals?

Context: This lesson would be most effective if students have already been introduced to the "Acorn test" that will be reinforced in this lesson plan. If students are not familiar with the Acorn test, an interactive presentation explaining this three-question critical-thinking test is accessible via this link: www.ccla.org/acornstest. This lesson is supported by web resources.

PREAMBLE:

In order for this lesson – or any critical-thinking lesson – to be effective, students must be given clear permission to disagree. Divergent points of view must be encouraged throughout the lesson, so that the issues raised can be fully and meaningfully explored. There are no right answers to these questions, and part of the lesson is to help students understand how challenging and interesting issues of fairness, citizenship and justice can be. Quite aside from adding to the debate, encouraging diversity of opinion and point of view is vital to fostering democratic habits and active citizenship.

Is there a Connection for Students? This lesson deals with the challenges created by differences of opinion on how public space should be used and how people should be allowed to express themselves in public. Students may be familiar with a variety of public gatherings, such as a parade, a big family picnic in a park, a picket line outside a government office or place of business, or a street festival. Some students may know of recent high profile protests from the news or from family or personal experience, such as the G20 and Occupy protests, teachers' strikes, student and teacher strikes and 'casserole marches'. While there are many ways to get a message across, students may not know that the right to gather together peacefully is a right under Canada's *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and is generally guaranteed to people living in democracies – including students themselves.

<p>PART 1: Minds On: Activating Prior Knowledge [10 – 15 mins]</p> <p>Topics that will be introduced</p> <p>1. The Acorn Test for reasonableness of a limit to freedom</p> <p>2. People use public spaces for many purposes!</p> <p><i>Ask the students the following question and give them thinking time:</i> If you and your family and friends wanted to have a picnic in the park, should you be allowed to do so? What if you had 200 friends? What if your friends wanted to sing loudly during your picnic? What if you wanted to have your picnic in the middle of the night? What if everyone at the picnic was there to protest against your city cutting down trees or closing the playground?</p> <p><i>Use the Acorn Test to help students think about the fair usage of public spaces:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why might people want to stop your picnic? What might be the purpose of telling you to leave? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Prompt (if necessary): Do other people use the park? Do they think you're in the way?</i> b. <i>Do they think you are too noisy?</i> 2. Will asking you to leave work for their purpose? Will it be quieter if your group can't use the park? 3. What else will happen if your picnic were not allowed? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> c. <i>Prompt (if necessary): Who else might not be allowed to use the park? Who might not learn that the playground was closing or the trees were being cut down if your group isn't there?</i> 	<p>Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor Moe and the IP Word-Wall Words: http://thatsnotfair.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/TNF-Word-Wall-IP.pdf • Acorn Test anchor chart http://thatsnotfair.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Acorn_Test_Anchor_Chart.pdf
<p>PART 2: Action [15 - 20 mins]</p> <p>Introduce and watch the video</p> <p>“In this video, the council makes rules for the city. Sometimes, the rules work, but sometimes the rules have unintended results. While you're watching, try to decide if you think the rule is reasonable. Why don't some creatures think the new rule is fair?”</p> <p>*Play the video (4 minutes).</p> <p>Using a Character Hot Seat activity, explore whether the ‘no protests in the city’ bylaw was fair:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Introduce the activity:</i> “Students, you are all City Councillors and you have to decide whether the ‘No Protests in the City’ bylaw was fair. You will have to invite people from the City to answer your questions and help you decide.” • <i>Ask the class:</i> <i>Who should we invite?”</i> • <i>Make a list of 3-5 characters and write their names on the board. Ensure that the list includes some of the characters who want to keep the bylaw and also some who have had their freedom to gather for a peaceful purpose limited. The list may include: Barry Bullmastiff, the newsman; a protester; Mayor Moe; Councillor Feather; The IP of Kleeples; a citizen of Kleeples; Councillor Bug etc.</i> • <i>Next, select two students at a time to come up to the front of the class and both take on the role of the same character from the list. These students are “in the hot seat”.</i> • <i>The class will ask the students in the hot seat about how the bylaw affected their character. Students should try to stay in their role.</i> • <i>Repeat hot-seating procedure for each character on the list, as time permits.</i> 	<p>Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chalk or white board or flip chart. • AV equipment • Mayor Moe and the Important Personage video http://thatsnotfair.ca/mayor-moe-and-the-important-personage/

<p>PART 2: Action (continued)</p> <p>Prompt questions for hot-seated characters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think the purpose of the bylaw was in the first place? (<i>Acorn Test Q1</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Prompt: To make a good impression on the IP of Kleeple?</i> ○ <i>Prompt: To sell hovercars? To keep the City peaceful?</i> • Do you think the limit worked? Did it achieve its purpose? (<i>Acorn Test Q2</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Prompt: What reason or purpose did the class choose?</i> ○ <i>Prompt: Who did it work for? Who didn't it work for? Was everyone treated fairly?</i> • What <i>side-effects</i> did the bylaw have for <i>you</i> (i.e. your character)? For others? (<i>Acorn Test Q3</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Prompt: Did your character get what he/she wanted?</i> ○ <i>Prompt: Did you get to use public space the way you wanted to?</i> <p>City Council Vote</p> <p>All the students, as Councillors, will vote on whether to withdraw the bylaw. Announce the vote. Optional: Students may use their Fair/Not Fair voting paddles (see Materials) if they wish.</p>	<p>Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acorn Test anchor chart http://thatsnotfair.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Acorn_Test_Anchor_Chart.pdf • Optional: Fair/Not Fair voting paddles printouts (one for each student). Download paddle template here: http://thatsnotfair.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/TNF_voting_paddle.pdf
<p>PART 3: Consolidation and Debrief [5 - 10 min] Illustrated Journaling activity or Group Discussion Question: What else could the City Council have done when the IP of Kleeple arrived? Why might your way of doing things be more fair? Question: What are some different ways people in democracies can complain about things that aren't fair? (Some examples might include petitions, letters to the newspaper, boycotting, speaking to City Council etc.)</p>	<p>Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • individual journals & pencils/coloured pencils (optional)
<p>Next Steps – Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit http://thatsnotfair.ca/mayor-moe-and-the-important-personage-game/ to play the Mayor Moe and the IP video game. • Continue exploring issues of fairness in your classroom using the rest of the videos, teacher resources and games • Next time you hear students say, "That's not fair," see if they can apply the Acorn Test to help resolve conflicting viewpoints. 	