

ART OF DISSSENT



Model Lesson The Art of Dissent – Civics, Grade 10, Open (CHV20)

The mandatory Ontario Civics course is organized into the following three strands:

- Informed Citizenship
- Purposeful Citizenship
- Active Citizenship

These two lessons meet the following curricular expectations.

Overall Expectations

- Demonstrate an understanding of the need for democratic decision making;
- Explain the legal rights and responsibilities associated with Canadian citizenship;
- Explain what it means to be a “global citizen” and why it is important to be one.

Specific Expectations

Democratic Decision Making

By the end of these lessons, students will:

- Compare the benefits and drawbacks of democratic and authoritarian forms of decision making;
- Identify similarities and differences in the ways power are distributed in groups, institutions, and communities to meet human needs and resolve conflicts.

Rights and Responsibilities of Canadian Citizenship

- Explain why it is essential in a democracy for governments to be open and accountable to their citizens ...
- Analyze cases that have upheld or restricted a citizen’s right and responsibilities, outlining the concerns and actions of involved citizens and the reasons for the eventual outcome.

Citizenship Within the Global Context

- Analyze contemporary crises or issues of international significance
- Evaluate civic actions of individuals and non-government organizations that have made a difference in global affairs

The Fit between Civics and The Art of Dissent

The Ontario Ministry of Education Civics program has Canadian and global, past and a present emphases in order to build good Canadian citizens for the future. By looking at the issues raised by the exhibition *The Art of Dissent*, and its contextual materials, the past provides a cautionary model that underscores for young Canadians the importance of protecting democratic rights.

The shadow that National Socialism cast upon a German democratic society up to 1933 became the darkness of authoritarian government with such unbelievable speed that it brings a sense of urgency to the issue of understanding how governments function and the role the individual plays in sustaining democracies.

The authoritarian, later tyrannical, German government of Nazi Germany redistributed power, restricted citizens’ rights and lacked responsibility to individuals and groups. Cologne artist Willy Fick (1893-1967) captured the emotional impact that this type of government has on the individual.

Although most of Fick’s works were destroyed by bombing and fire in 1944, archival photographs remain to tell the dark tales of what happens when citizens don’t take it upon themselves to understand and protect democracy.

Time – Two 80 minute periods

Materials available at www.angielittlefield.com

The Art of Dissent Fact Sheet 1933 and Fact Sheet 1935

Willy Fick art works *Nude, Street, Grotesque* and *Morceau* and lessons for these works

KWL chart and Past, Present and Future Chart

Outline Lesson One

1. Students in four “Fact-Finding Groups” have a photocopy of one of Fick’s images *Nude, Street, Grotesque* or *Morceau*. Each group appoints a recorder who is the designated “Fact-Finder” who will move from group to group.

Assuming that the human-like form in the Fick work represents a citizen in Nazi Germany, students have five minutes to fill in the Know and Want to Know sections of the KWL chart to state and question what the human-like form indicates about democracy and the lack thereof.

2. The Fact-Finder moves clockwise with the KWL chart and has five minutes to add additional Know and Want to Know information to his or her KWL chart in each of the subsequent groups. The rotations are done after 20 minutes.

3. The student Fact-Finders report to the group as a whole creating a full list about what the students derived from Fick’s works about citizenship in Nazi Germany. The group as a whole prioritizes the top three questions for Want to Know. This process of prioritization should model democratic decision making. 20 minutes

4. Students regroup to their starting four groups. They read the 1933 Fact Sheet out loud with the pre-reading question: Do any of the facts of the 1933 Fact Sheet answer your Want to Know Fick questions?

5. The teacher gathers the Fact-Finder reports to focus lesson two.

6. In whatever time remains, the teacher uses the Prompts on the 1933 Fact Sheet to stimulate discussion and interest in relating the past to the present.

Outline Lesson Two

1. Teacher reviews Fick’s art works in the light of the students remaining questions about Fick so that they become more familiar with Fick’s visual metaphors that deal with the emotional impact of tyranny.

2. In four groups the students read pastor Niemoller’s poem on Fact Sheet 1935. On their past and present and future chart, they list those individuals and groups who were persecuted in Nazi Germany in the past column. (Consider the methods the Nazi government used to disempower and make groups and individuals vulnerable—media, legislation, intimidation)

3. Students in groups brainstorm three vulnerable groups in Canadian democratic society and three vulnerable groups in the global context whose rights need vigilant protection—providing reasons why—in the present column.

4. The group as a whole creates a master list of the persecuted in Nazi Germany.

5. The group as a whole creates a master list of the vulnerable today in Canadian society and in the global context. The top three vulnerable groups in Canada and in the world are prioritized by the group as a whole. The process of prioritization should model democratic decision making.

6. Using Internet research students find and list non-governmental organizations or civic-minded individuals who do work in support of the top three identified vulnerable groups in Canadian society and in the global context.

7. Making yourself WHOLE. The *humans* in Fick’s world are PARTS, often human shells. They have no power because they allowed an authoritarian state to take control and to strip citizens selectively of their rights. In the future column list the ways that you, as an active Canadian citizen in a global context may protect the most vulnerable elements in society and thereby protect yourself. List civic actions you might undertake or non-governmental organizations you might support to demonstrate the responsibilities of Canadian Citizenship in a global context.

8. Reflection: After these two lessons, how am I a more informed citizen? How may I be a more purposeful and active citizen?
9. KWL – fill in the L – What I learned on the KWL chart and hand in.

Resources

- *Genocide: Humankind's Perpetual Failure*
www.fswc.ca
- Herzogenrath, W. and D. Teuber. *Willy Fick: A Cologne Artist of the 20*. Cologne: Wienand, 1986
- *Life Lessons: Bringing Holocaust History to your Classroom* www.yadvashem.org
- Littlefield, A. and C. Phillips. *The Art of Dissent*. Toronto: Holocaust Centre of Toronto, UJA Federation, 2008
- *Resources and Materials for Teachers at the United States Holocaust Museum*
www.ushmm.org/education/foreducators
- *Teachers' Centre at Canadian Virtual Museum*
www.virtualmuseum.ca/English/Teacher/index.html
www.virtualmuseum.ca/Exhibitions/orphans/english/