

## **Structured Academic Controversy Student Learning Plan Assessment Checklist (UG 15, G 14 pts)**

### **Context:**

Overview: Throughout time political divisions have occurred due to many different tensions within societies cultures, economies, politics, and more. In order to understand political divisions and their tensions on a deeper and more personal level, students will address the controversy “Should English become the official language of the USA?” (unity v. diversity) through a Structured Academic controversy curriculum. Students will divide into two opposing groups, one representing Pro official language (unity) and the other representing against official language (diversity). Groups will then present their standpoint, recall the opposing standpoint, and come together in the final steps of this lesson to make a compromise on such division and tension. Students will be complete *WSI* and use it as a guide and data collection page throughout the activity. Teacher should be ready to answer any (probably many) questions concerning this new process that has never been tried in this class before.

Title: Should English become the official language of the USA?

Grade/Class: 10<sup>th</sup> grade/World Geography

Length: 90 minutes, 1 class period

Topic: Unity v Diversity : Language in the United States

Background Information: Student must have some cultural/living experience in the USA, knowledge and understanding of SOL Standard WG.10b essential understandings and knowledge.

Rationale: This lesson and Structured Academic Controversy Curriculum allows students to answer Sol Standard WG.10b's essential questions on a practical, relevant, and personal level. Students have an opportunity to practice SOL Standard WG.10b's essential skills through debate and reasoning exercises, adding a dimension to their learning experience and growth.

**Instructional Model:** Structured Academic Controversy allows students to explore a controversial issue in a safe learning environment, representing both sides and promotes collaboration and compromise between opposing views. This model is used in this lesson in order to explore SOL Standard WG.10b essential questions (OBJ 1a) in detail and context that is relevant and practical to students. SAC promotes debate, comprehension, analysis, collaboration, and synthesis skills as well as practicing problem solving and critical thinking. The SAC model will be useful in this lesson in order to personally understand a political division through reasoning and debating over one in a controlled situation. Introducing students to a relevant controversy, asking them to clearly understand both sides, and then finally make a compromise on the issue, gives participants the confidence to work through future controversies, as well as understanding them.

## Objectives:

### 1. SOL Standard WG.10b

#### a. Essential questions

- what are some examples of political divisions at the national and international level?
- what are some reasons for political divisions at the local, national, and international (regional) levels?
- how do political division generate conflict?
- how do political division cooperate to solve problems and settle disputes?

#### b. Essential skills

- compare maps and make inferences
  - identify regional patterns
  - gather, classify, and interpret information
  - explain cause-and-effect relationships
  - participate in problem solving
  - draw conclusion and make inferences about data
2. Students will be able to identify controversial issues and differing views concerning it.
  3. Students will be able to discuss practical and relevant issues to their own lives.
  4. Students will be able to demonstrate and dramatize a particular standpoint in a controversy; based on personal knowledge and analysis of qualitative and quantitative resource packet on their subject's argument.
  5. Students will be able to compare and contrast, as well as criticize, standpoints and arguments with opposing views, research, and debate.
  6. Students will be able to combine, reconstruct, and synthesis two separate stand points, on a controversial issue, into one.

## Assessment:

1. Collection and grading of student accurate completion of handout *WSI*. At least 2 notes/2 sentences in each block on accurate topic. (OBJ 1, OBJ 2, OBJ 5, OBJ 6)
  - Written feedback will be placed on the graded *WSI*, along with any notes that may have be taken during the individuals participation in the rest of the SAC. Students will save *WSI* in their notebook as a reminder of the current issue that may be questioned on future exams, or future in their practical life.
2. 1<sup>st</sup> presentation and Q/A participation (OBJ 1, OBJ 3, OBJ 4, OBJ 5)

### RUBRIC

**Group grade-** checklist: states whether they represent pro/con, lists at least two reasons why, backed from information found in the resource packet (if found in resource packet, group must present the document and project it on beforehand rented and set up document projector)/logical reasoning.

**Individual grade-** check for participation if speaks once

3. 2<sup>nd</sup> presentation and Q/A participation (OBJ 1, OBJ 3, OBJ 4, OBJ 5)
4. RUBRIC

**Group grade-** checklist: states whether they represent pro/con, accurately recalls opposing groups standpoint

**Individual grade-** check for participation if speaks once

5. Overall participation in single group and class discussions (OBJ 1, OBJ 3, OBJ 6) observed throughout class by teacher. Make notes for those participating a lot, and those participating not at all. Attempt to even these differences as lesson progresses.

## Content and Instructional Strategies

-Perennial Issue: Unity v. Diversity

--- The issue is clearly introduced and discussed in the hook; it is also reinforced in debrief with questions for the students to apply their new understandings to the issue unity v. diversity.

--- This issue is culturally responsive because these students live in a country in which unity v diversity is a tension that is very much active historically, and presently. Should the country celebrate diversity and individualism? Or should the country work to be a cohesive and efficient union? These students represent those in the controversy itself, the increase of diverse language and language speakers in the United States today that will influence future communication, and different policies surrounding communication. Discussing the controversial issue of recognizing English as the official language of the United States is a practical and relevant topic for this generation of students to begin intellectually grappling with. This lesson style allows for equal presentation of both view sides and even asks students to collaborate in its final processes; this creates a safe, equal, and structured environment in which students can question current views and their own understandings.

-Case Issue for SAC: Should English become the official language of the United States?

-The case issue is clearly discussed, represented, and students can ask any questions concerning the issue or the SAC process throughout the entire process.

-The question, "Should English become the official language of the USA?" is appropriate for SAC because it yields a yes or no answer that students can then use research to build upon. Once the two broad categories of pro/con have been explored and detailed in depth, students can then compare relevant, research backed, and personalized answers. (yes, because.... v. no, because....). The case also lends to understanding the value tension of unity v. diversity in a practical and relevant topic to USA High School Young Adults.

### Hook / Background of Controversy 10 minutes

1. Refresh students memory on previous lesson and introduce value tension unity v diversity in that context: "Yesterday we learned that political divisions can be caused by tension of unity or diversity (unity of religion, diversity of religion, unity of ethnicity, diversity of ethnicity, etc). Political divisions can cause conflict between those separate advocates, of unity, or diversity. For example, yesterday we learned about the ethnic tensions in India between Hindus and Muslims, as well as about the ethnic divisions and conflict in Rwanda. Today, we're going to look at a political tension concerning unity v. diversity in our own home, The USA.
2. Open powerpoint ([https://docs.google.com/a/email.wm.edu/presentation/d/106XvhO83BbIVbzBeX\\_ZwVNwiQS\\_r3lT30wuZP\\_PcL98/present#slide=id.p](https://docs.google.com/a/email.wm.edu/presentation/d/106XvhO83BbIVbzBeX_ZwVNwiQS_r3lT30wuZP_PcL98/present#slide=id.p))
3. Introduce students to SAC question: Should English become the official language of the USA?, give them basic overview on situation, outlining opposing views/standpoints. (powerpoint slides 1-3)
4. Show two videos ([http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihZ\\_eYMgNF8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihZ_eYMgNF8)) and (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kJDHjB2VI78>) in order to provide summary of overview/real life examples/popular culture reference/visual aid/differentiation in resources.
5. Divide class into groups of 3-4, (randomly); assign each group a pro or con status as evenly as possible

### Round 1 Present Positions 45 minutes

1. Pass out resource packet PRO to pro groups, and packet CON to con groups; handout *WSI* to every individual student
2. Display step one powerpoint slide on board.
3. Explain the broad scope of the project, as well as step one procedure: Students should use resource packet to formulate a presentation of their particular standpoint (for an official language, or against an official language). Fill in block **A** on *WSI* while discussing viewpoint with group. All students will stand at the front of the class to present, and all students should at least give one oral (out loud statement) while presenting. Remind students they will have an opportunity to ask opposing group questions about their standpoint, and the opposing group will have to answer these questions with information from their resource packet (this occurs at the end of their individual presentations in the Q/A session [see number 5]).
4. Allow students 30 minutes time to study resource packet and create argument; teacher should constantly be walking around the room in order observe participation and answer questions.
5. Students present: (5 min each) \*\*remind students to fill in block **B** on *WSI* take notes while other group is presenting, will be needed in next step
6. Q/A session for each separate group: (5 min total) After each groups presentation, pause, and allow up to ??? minutes (depends upon how many groups) for the non presenting group to question the presenting group. Presenting group must answer all questions with information from their resource packet or logical reasoning.

#### Round 2 Reverse Positions 15 minutes

1. Display step two powerpoint slide on board, and explain the next step/procedure in this project: Now, as a group, you should use your notes taken (in block **B**) during the opposing groups presentation and summarize them into a quick presentation. This is to allow the other group to see that you understand their standpoint, and correct any misunderstandings in their argument. Tell students they will be allowed time after each group's presentation to ask questions or clarify arguments (see number 4).
2. Allow students 5-6 minutes to prepare; teacher should constantly be walking around the room in order observe participation and answer an questions.
3. Students present (??? minutes each (depends upon how many groups) )

#### Group Discussion / Attempts to Reach Consensus 20 minutes

1. Display step three powerpoint slide and explain next step in the project: Now that we have displayed both viewpoints, and both groups understand/can recall the opposing groups standpoint, we are going to try to collaborate together in order to form a compromise.
2. Begin class wide collaboration on the topic. (write student answers/ideas on white board)
 

Guiding questions: “would it aid immigrants in the assimilation process and make it more likely for them to succeed? Can other languages be used in the country for certain official purposes, if English is the sole official language? Does official English offend the idea of American diversity? Does it discriminate against non-native speakers? Does an adequate incentive exist to learn English without it being official? Is there anything wrong with the status quo? Do most countries in the world have an official language? Is it important for any tangible and practical reasons? Do English only laws threaten or enhance public safety? Is official

English good public policy?" (Debate: english as us official language debatepedia. Retrieved from [http://debatepedia.idebate.org/en/index.php/Debate:\\_English\\_as\\_US\\_official\\_language](http://debatepedia.idebate.org/en/index.php/Debate:_English_as_US_official_language))

**DEBRIEF**- remind students of the tensions between *unity v diversity*; ask where they see finding a balance between the two, or if they believe one is better than the other (write student answers/ideas on white board)

3. Ask students to fill out block C of *WSI* with their own personal idea for a compromise on the issue.
4. Allow students to complete *WSI* and collect at the end of class. **\*\*\*note: if students can not complete WS1 in class, it can be taken home and completed for a homework assignment.**

## Resources

**Teacher Materials:** computer, internet connection, powerpoint, handouts, resource packets, white board markers, document projector, rubrics

**Student Materials:** pencil/pen

FOR *WSI*, see attachment *WS1\_\_keezel.doc*

## RESOURCE PACKETS

\*\*\*\*\*would be a printed out stapled packet for each group. Links are provided in order to keep this page simpler and not to lose information/formatting. Teacher would have to take extra time before class to print out each resource and organize packet. YOUR SIDE page printed on it's own page and included in packet.

**PRO:** <http://www.us-english.org/userdata/file/ImmigrantsSupportOE.pdf>

<http://www.us-english.org/userdata/file/CostofMultilingualBallots.pdf>

<http://www.proenglish.org/official-english/state-profiles.html>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/2001/mar/08/guardianweekly.guardianweekly11>

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/socdemo/language/data/acs/ACS-12.pdf> (table 5, pg14)

## Your Side: PRO

- [Official English aids American assimilation](#) President Theodore Roosevelt once said: "We

have one language here, and that is the English language, and we intend to see that the [assimilation] crucible turns our people out as Americans."

- **Official English unites Americans around a common language** US English, a US advocacy organization. "Why is official English necessary?": "Official English unites Americans, who speak more than 322 languages (2000, U.S. Census), by providing a common means of communication."
- **"Official English" does not mean "English only"** "Why official English?": "Official English doesn't mean 'English only.' None of the 30 states with official English laws prohibit government agencies from using another languages when there is a compelling public interest for doing so. These include: protecting public health and safety, assuring equality before the law, promoting tourism, teaching foreign languages, providing for national defense, and many other legitimate, common sense needs." The government can act to provide these services when necessary. But, it is another thing entirely for a citizen to demand these services as a right.
- **The United States of America, contrary to a large majority of all countries (92%), does not not have any official language at the federal level.**
- **Suggesting learning English is too hard for some is racist.** Suggesting that learning English is easy for some races and difficult for other races is, itself, racist. Anybody can learn English. It is not too high of a burden to ask them to do so in order to live in the United States.
- **Too many languages for right to govt services in own language.** There are over three hundred languages spoken in the United States. And, there are roughly 15 million American citizens (about 5% of the total population of 300 million) who do not speak English. Giving all of those individuals, in all of those different languages, the right to demand government services in their own language is preposterous. If we give Spanish speaking people this right, we would naturally have to extend the right to all the other 300 some-odd languages and those that speak them. This would unreasonably burden government services, adding a huge layer of bureaucracy and costs. Even then, inevitably, somebody with some obscure language will find that their "right" to have services provided to them in their own language will not be adequately fulfilled at some government facility. This is a bad combination in public policy; a right that cannot be provided adequately that nevertheless adds billions of dollars in extra costs for US government and taxpayers.
- **Thirty US states (a majority) have adopted Official English laws as of 2010.**

*Debate: english as us official language - debatepedia.* Retrieved from [http://debatepedia.idebate.org/en/index.php/Debate:\\_English\\_as\\_US\\_official\\_language](http://debatepedia.idebate.org/en/index.php/Debate:_English_as_US_official_language)

[http://www.advancingequality.org/files/fact\\_sheet\\_english\\_only\\_legislation.pdf](http://www.advancingequality.org/files/fact_sheet_english_only_legislation.pdf)

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/2001/mar/08/guardianweekly.guardianweekly11>

<http://www.us-english.org/userdata/file/LIH2000to2009.pdf>

<http://www.pbs.org/speak/seatosea/officialamerican/spanishthreat/#habla>

# Your Side: No

- **American unity never rested on unity of language** [Linguistic Society of America Resolution on English Only. July 1, 1987](#): "American unity has never rested primarily on unity of language, but rather on common political and social ideals."
- **Imposing official language often undermines national unity** [Linguistic Society of America Resolution on English Only. July 1, 1987](#): "History shows that a common language cannot be imposed by force of law, and that attempts to do so usually create divisiveness and disunity. This has been the effect, for example, of the efforts of the English to impose the English language in Ireland, of Soviet efforts to impose the Russian language on non-Russian nationalities, and of Franco's efforts to impose Spanish on the Basques and Catalans."
- **Some countries do very well with many official languages.** Switzerland has four official languages: French, German, Italian and Romansh. All four languages have equal status and children are educated in the language spoken in the region where they live. And, Switzerland is a country that has very strong unity and economic functionality.[\[3\]](#)
- **Official English is driven by anti-immigrant and racist sentiments** Individuals involved in the official english movement are very often driven by anti-immigrant feelings, or pure racism. For example, John Tanton, the founder of the main political lobbying organization in this movement called US English, had to resign in 1986 after making derogatory remarks about Hispanics.[\[4\]](#)
- **Official English offends idea of American diversity** America is a very diverse country that has been culturally enriched by immigrants from around the world. As a sign of respect to all these people it should not limit its citizens by introducing English as the only official language.
- **Official English degrades image of other languages** It gives the impression that English is more important than other languages, thereby devaluing them.

*Debate: english as us official language - debatepedia.* Retrieved from [http://debatepedia.idebate.org/en/index.php/Debate:\\_English\\_as\\_US\\_official\\_language](http://debatepedia.idebate.org/en/index.php/Debate:_English_as_US_official_language)



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- ACS-12.pdf Retrieved from: <http://www.census.gov/hhes/socdemo/language/data/acs/ACS-12.pdf>
- Debate: english as us official language - debatepedia*. Retrieved from [http://debatepedia.idebate.org/en/index.php/Debate:\\_English\\_as\\_US\\_official\\_language](http://debatepedia.idebate.org/en/index.php/Debate:_English_as_US_official_language)
- Do You Speak American. Sea to Shining Sea. Official American. Spanish Threat/PBS. Retrieved from: <http://www.pbs.org/speak/seatosea/officialamerican/spanishthreat/#habla>
- Kelseyshuan (Nov 23, 2007). *The West Wing - English Official Language* Retrieved Nov 16, 2012 from: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihZ\\_eYMgNF8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihZ_eYMgNF8)
- LIH2000to2009.pdf Retrieved from: <http://www.us-english.org/userdata/file/LIH2000to2009.pdf>
- National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium. fact\_sheet\_english\_only\_legislation.pdf Retrieved from: [http://www.advancingequality.org/files/fact\\_sheet\\_english\\_only\\_legislation.pdf](http://www.advancingequality.org/files/fact_sheet_english_only_legislation.pdf)
- Powerpoint by Rebecca Keezel (2012). "Should English become the official language of the United States?" [https://docs.google.com/a/email.wm.edu/presentation/d/106XvhO83BbIVbzBeX\\_ZwVNwiQS\\_r3IT30wuZP\\_PcL98/present#slide=id.p](https://docs.google.com/a/email.wm.edu/presentation/d/106XvhO83BbIVbzBeX_ZwVNwiQS_r3IT30wuZP_PcL98/present#slide=id.p)
- STL9Network (Aug 11, 2010). *Homeland- Your Voice - Should English Be the Official Language?* Retrieved Nov 16, 2012 from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kJDHjB2VI78>
- U.S. English/Making English the Official Language/U.S. English. Retrieved from: <http://www.us-english.org/>
- U.S. English/Making English the Official Language/Research and Statistics. Retrieved from: <http://www.us-english.org/view/24>

**Differentiation:** Have you taken steps to differentiate within this lesson to challenge and support the learners in your class? How does this lesson represent differentiation for your overall curriculum? How can you work to engage all students in the lesson (e.g., ELL, low reading level, quiet or disengaged).

Students will be introduced and able to use both written, visual, and audio sources in order to discuss, analyze, and synthesize the topic and case. Students will have both independent and group work, allowing both for personal reflection, socialization within groups, and exposure to different opinions/types of thinking through class wide discussion. Grades will be based on accuracy and completion, not trivia and specific procedure/instruction.

**Adaptations:** Are the necessary accommodations and modifications incorporated into your lesson per the students in your class with IEPs, 504 plans, and other needs?

Yes, and no. The students in my particular class have IEPs/504s that all deal with testing situations; because this lesson has no exams, quizzes, or tests, the accommodations do not apply to this lesson.

**Reflection:** Is it obvious that you have thought through possible issues with the implementation of the lesson prior to teaching it (e.g., management issues, prior knowledge issues, etc.)?

Yes, I have taken into account time by planning for overtime (more time can be given to presentations/discussions) and under time (students can complete WS1 for homework). I have taken time to think about and plan for students that need accommodations/disciplinary problems through differentiation, social group work, kinesthetic (presenting at the front of the class, moving into groups), and making the content relevant, practical, and personal for students. The lesson has been structured in a way to support background knowledge and previous SOL content. This plan has been actively practiced out to look for transition issues, as well as how to introduce/conclude topics. I have brainstormed possible controversial statements/questions that might be asked in class, and how I will respond/answer them.

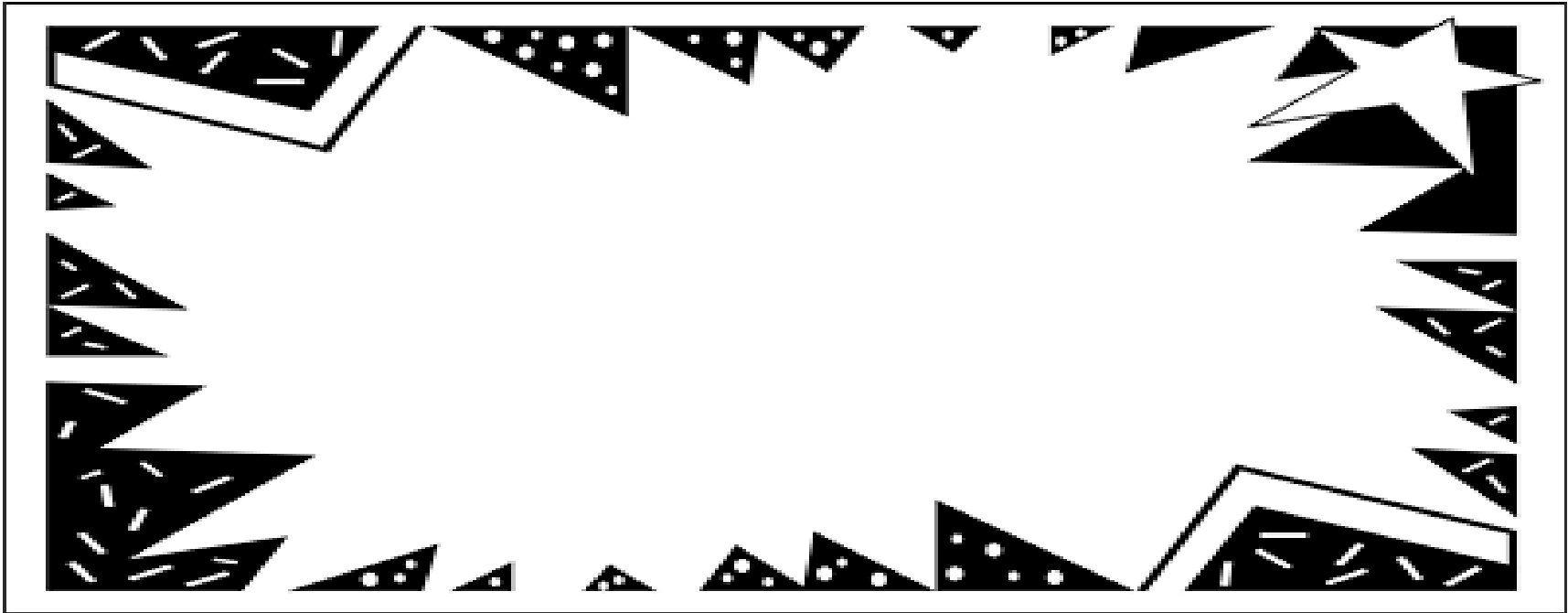
**Post-teaching** – Have you reflected on the lesson in a way that informs your use of inquiry in the future, did you use the PASS framework to analyze how you engaged students in authentic intellectual work? Have you effectively used data from observing the lesson and feedback from students (i.e., informal comments or assessment data) to evaluate the lesson and recommend future adaptations?

M = Missing  
I = Inadequate  
A = Adequate  
E = Exemplary

Name \_\_\_\_\_

A. Notes on your assigned standpoint

B. Notes on opposing groups standpoint



C. Write your own personal compromise between the two opposing views