

## Charity Checks *Giving Classrooms*

**Quote from the Teacher:** I welcomed this project as a meaningful and break-of-the routine end of the year activity. I was greatly impressed how seriously the students took their assignments (no senioritis!!) and how well they followed up on their responsibilities from research, to sharing, and final explanatory letter. The students made it truly their assignment.

### Charitable Literacy Program Objectives:

- To promote student knowledge of local/national/worldwide charities
- To encourage students to explore their own values through choosing a charity to receive their donation, and to experience the Joy of Giving
- To engage students in critical thinking and discussion

### Unit Plan

1. **Teacher Name: Peter Huybers**
2. **Class Subject/Grade: Grade 12 - Government**
3. **Number of Students: 31**

### National Social Science Standards, High School:

1. *I. Culture A:* Analyze and explain the way groups, society and cultures address human needs and concerns
2. *IV. Individual Development and Identity C:* Describe the way family, religion, ...and other group and cultural influences contribute to the development of a sense of self.

### California Content Standards:

## Principles of American Democracy Grade 12

**12.2 Students evaluate, take and defend positions on the scope and limits of rights and obligations as democratic citizens, the relationships among them, and how they are secured.**

1. Discuss the meaning and importance of each of the rights guaranteed under the Bill of Rights and how each is secured (e.g., freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, petition, privacy).

2. Explain how economic rights are secured and their importance to the individual and to society (e.g., the right to acquire, use, transfer, and dispose of property; right to choose one's work; right to join or not join labor unions; copyright and patent).
3. Understand the obligations of civic-mindedness, including voting, being informed on civic issues, volunteering and performing public service, and serving in the military or alternative service.

**12.3 Students evaluate, take and defend positions on the fundamental values and principles of civil society are (i.e., the autonomous sphere of voluntary personal, social, and economic relations that are not part of government), their interdependence, and the meaning and importance of those values and principles for a free society.**

1. Explain how civil society provides opportunities for individuals to associate for social, cultural, religious, economic, and political purposes.
2. Explain how civil society makes it possible for people, individually or in association with others, to bring their influence to bear on government in ways other than voting and elections.

**12.9 Students analyze the origins, characteristics, and development of different political systems across time, with emphasis on the quest for political democracy, its advances, and its obstacles.**

1. Explain how the different philosophies and structures of feudalism, mercantilism, socialism, fascism, communism, monarchies, parliamentary systems, and constitutional liberal democracies influence economic policies, social welfare policies, and human rights practices.

## Principles of Economics

**12.1 Students understand common economic terms and concepts and economic reasoning.**

1. Examine the causal relationship between scarcity and the need for choices.
2. Explain opportunity cost and marginal benefit and marginal cost.

## Reading (Grades 11 and 12)

**1.0 Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development**

Students apply their knowledge of word origins to determine the meaning of new words encountered in reading materials and use those words accurately.

*Vocabulary and Concept Development*

- 1.1 Trace the etymology of significant terms used in political science and history.
- 1.2 Apply knowledge of Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots and affixes to draw inferences concerning the meaning of scientific and mathematical terminology.
- 1.3 Discern the meaning of analogies encountered, analyzing specific comparisons as well as relationships and inferences.

**2.0 Reading Comprehension (Focus on Informational Materials)**

Students read and understand grade-level-appropriate material. They analyze the organizational patterns, arguments, and positions advanced. The selections in *Recommended*

*Readings in Literature, Grades Nine Through Twelve* illustrate the quality and complexity of the materials to be read by students. In addition, by grade twelve, students read two million words annually on their own, including a wide variety of classic and contemporary literature, magazines, newspapers, and online information.

#### *Structural Features of Informational Materials*

2.1 Analyze both the features and the rhetorical devices of different types of public documents (e.g., policy statements, speeches, debates, platforms) and the way in which authors use those features and devices.

#### *Comprehension and Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text*

2.3 Verify and clarify facts presented in other types of expository texts by using a variety of consumer, workplace, and public documents.

2.4. Make warranted and reasonable assertions about the author's arguments by using elements of the text to defend and clarify interpretations.

2.5 Analyze an author's implicit and explicit philosophical assumptions and beliefs about a subject.

#### *Expository Critique*

2.6 Critique the power, validity, and truthfulness of arguments set forth in public documents; their appeal to both friendly and hostile audiences; and the extent to which the arguments anticipate and address reader concerns and counterclaims (e.g., appeal to reason, to authority, to pathos and emotion).

## Writing

### **1.0 Writing Strategies**

Students write coherent and focused texts that convey a well-defined perspective and tightly reasoned argument. The writing demonstrates students' awareness of the audience and purpose and progression through the stages of the writing process.

#### *Research and Technology*

1.6 Develop presentations by using clear research questions and creative and critical research strategies (e.g., field studies, oral histories, interviews, experiments, electronic sources).

1.7 Use systematic strategies to organize and record information (e.g., anecdotal scripting, annotated bibliographies).

1.8 Integrate databases, graphics, and spreadsheets into word-processed documents.

## Listening and Speaking

### **1.0 Listening and Speaking Strategies**

Students formulate adroit judgments about oral communication. They deliver focused and coherent presentations that convey clear and distinct perspectives and demonstrate solid reasoning. They use gestures, tone, and vocabulary tailored to the audience and purpose.

### **2.0 Speaking Applications (Genres and Their Characteristics)**

Students deliver polished formal and extemporaneous presentations that combine traditional rhetorical strategies of narration, exposition, persuasion, and description. Student speaking demonstrates a command of standard American English and the organizational and delivery strategies outlined in Listening and Speaking Standard

<p><b><i>Classroom and Content Objectives:</i></b>  <b>The Students will (TSW)...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recognize the need for civic-mindedness: republican virtue of providing for the common good</li> <li>• understand the legitimate role for social, cultural, humanitarian and religious groups</li> <li>• understand the differences between how donated funds are used by different charities</li> <li>• read and analyze public documents</li> <li>• evaluate the relative merits of charity organizations applying specific criteria</li> <li>• write a short paper reporting information and evaluating researched organization</li> <li>• orally present findings and reasoning to the class.</li> <li>• select one charity to receive funds</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Specific Link to Curricular unit</i></b>  <b>The Students need (prerequisite)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to be able to complete internet research, access a website and navigate websites</li> <li>• to understand basic principles of economic organization in companies (this could be part of the instructional process, though not included here)</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Assessment Description:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• word-processed paper including criteria and evaluative conclusion</li> <li>• oral presentation explaining highlights of research and justifying choice of charity</li> <li>• participation in discussion of charity</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Assessment Rubric:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of academic paper which presents criteria logically and persuasively <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Introduction: Reason for initial interest in charity/personal motivation</li> <li>○ Research information – selected facts and statistics for each criteria</li> <li>○ Summary Conclusion</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Thoughtful and respectful participation in class discussion that demonstrates the use of five criteria</li> <li>• Demonstration of command of Standard Written English (grammar, mechanics, organization)</li> <li>• Demonstration of command of standard American oral spoken English (academic expression, diction, syntax, word choice)</li> </ul>

## **Procedure and Strategies /Timeline:**

[The following is the timeline and procedure I would recommend after my first experience. I did finish the whole cycle in four days but it was not enough time.]

### Day 1

- Present the topic of charities, asking students to brainstorm names of charitable organizations. Lecture/discuss the role of charities in American society. Students may quickwrite on the importance of personally contributing to or supporting charitable organizations. Students selected their cause of interest: leukemia, cancer, human rights, protection of animals, etc.
- Present five criteria for assessing the worthiness of various organizations, emphasizing the economic organization of corporations and how funds may be used. Show information from one or more charities as examples. e.g. Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Guide, <http://www.irs.gov/charities/charitable>
- Assign paper, explaining research process and final oral and written components. Explain the Charity Checks concept of protecting the individual donor's identity.

### Day 2

- Review research task. Model with students and present suggested websites ( [Guidestar](#), etc) Remind students to record the address of the charity of their choice.
- Homework: Draft of paper to share in class

### Day 3

- Mini-lecture/discussion of government and/or economics principles you choose to review.
- Students share papers in small groups, commenting on data, offering editing suggestions.
- Homework: Final polished draft of paper. Draft of letter to selected organization

### Day 4

- Oral presentations
- Mini-lecture on business letter components.
- Homework: Letter final drafts

### Day 5

- Charity Checks presentation, envelope addressing
- Shared final reflections and review of how the project links to standards.

**SANTA SUSANA HIGH SCHOOL**  
**American Government Class**  
**Countrywide/Charity Checks Project**

**Introduction:**

As citizens in a democratic republic, it is essential that we participate in our government by protecting our rights and meeting our responsibilities. The founding fathers called this the practice of republican virtues. One of these virtues is to provide for the common well-being.

**Assignment:**

In light of this you are asked to:

1. select a worthy cause,
2. research the suitability of an organization that supports your selected cause,
3. share information with your classmates in an oral presentation and with your teacher in a written report,
4. present your contribution to a charity that promotes a worthy cause.

**Specific Instructions:**

Go to: [www.charitychecks.us](http://www.charitychecks.us) or consult the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Guide. Select your worthy cause and decide on a charitable organization (there are many local, state, and national organizations, and many different organizations deal with the same worthy cause, e.g. cancer research)

Evaluate the organization according to the following criteria:

- A. Public Accountability: reports about well-defined goals, tax exempt status, annual financial reports
- B. Use of Funds: percentage of total money spent on charity, percentage spent on fund raising, celebrities, office staff, administrative costs
- C. Solicitations and Information Material: ease of accessibility, accuracy
- D. Fund Raising Practices: respect of privacy, obnoxious persistence, confidentiality.
- E. Governance: Who are the board members? How are they elected/ appointed? For how long? Is there independent oversight, auditors?

Write a two-page report, addressing these concerns, and be ready to share your findings with the class.

When you present your check you must write a letter explaining why you chose this cause and why you chose to support this organization as the one that best furthers the charitable cause.

For help and advice contact your teacher.