University of Virginia Center for Politics

YLi

YOUTH LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

Democracy Corps Lesson Plan 12: Research and Monitor Target Issue

Purpose:
This lesson is a part of YLI's Democracy Corps service learning program. Students monitor developments related to their target issue through the media, internet and traditional research methods in order to stay informed.

Central Questions:
Are there significant developments at the national, state and/or local level surrounding my target issue?

Materials:
- Student Guide 1: *Monitor Your Target Issue*
- *Computer lab or library*

Procedure:
1. Warm Up: Read the introduction and ask students to visit the websites below. Answer the questions that follow.

On Memorial Day 2004, the National World War II Memorial was dedicated with much celebration and national media attention. What many Americans didn't realize was that the history of this memorial is filled with controversy.

2. Go to **www.savethemall.org/media/travesty.html**
3. Read the first five paragraphs of "Ideas and Trends: Turning Memory into Travesty," by Michael Kimmelman (NY Times, March 4, 2001) for background information.
4. Go to **www.savethemall.org/wwii/history.html**
5. Read the events on each date:

March 2, 1995	July 27, 1995	September 19, 1995
October 2, 2001	May 3, 2001	June 14, 2001

6. Discuss the answers to these questions
   - Based on timeline information, why did activists on both sides of the issue need to stay informed?
   - What happens if activists choose to be uninformed?
7. Distribute Student Guide 1 and ask students to complete.
8. Deliberate - After students complete Student Guide 1, bring them together as a class and discuss the following questions. (These questions may be assigned for homework.)
   - What was the most surprising change you found?
   - Which issue had the most changes? What were the changes?
   - Which issue had the least changes? Why?
   - How can you continue to monitor changes in your target issue?
   - As an activist, is it important to monitor changes frequently? Why?

Differentiate : AP and honors level students may prefer to collect information in a portfolio over a longer period of time.

Monitor Your Target Issue

Democracy Corps target issue: _____

Step One: List the internet and media sources used to monitor changes in your issue.

Internet sources:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Media sources:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What changes have occurred that impact your target issue?

Local Level   _____

                 _____

                 _____

State Level   _____

                 _____

                 _____

National Level _____

                 _____