Laws and Rights: From Code of Hammurabi to U.S. Constitution
6th grade

Developed for
Library of Congress Midwest Region
“It’s Elementary: Teaching with Primary Sources” 2011

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Midland Trail Elementary, Turner USD 202

Overview:
Students will view two pictures (one primary and one secondary) and have two reading passages that relate to the formation of laws and rights of people who reside in a given civilization. Students will be given information on the formation and purpose of the U.S. Constitution, and information on the Code of Hammurabi. As a primary source, they will be given transcripts of these actual artifacts. Students will then be asked to compare and contrast the U.S. Constitution and Code of Hammurabi. After completing a graphic organizer, students will be asked to develop a set of laws and rights as if they were developing a new civilization. They will also provide justification of why they chose these laws and rights.

Standards:
Civics and Government:
Benchmark 1: The student understands the rule of law as it applies to individuals; family; school; local, state and national governments.
  • Indicator 1: (K) The student recognizes that every civilization has a form of law or order.

Common Core Reading:
• RI.6.6: The student will determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.
• RI.6.7: The student will integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g. visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.

Objectives:
Content:
• The students will be able to analyze primary and secondary sources to compare and contrast pieces of art and documents from ancient civilizations and U.S. government.
• The student will be able to make an inference and then draw a conclusion about creation of laws and what is an effective way to do that.
• The student will make a determination of a preferred way of making and enforcing laws.
Skills:
- The student will be able to read, interrupt, analyze, and draw conclusions based upon a variety of sources.

Essential Question:
- Why do different civilizations develop a varying system of laws and methods of enforcing those laws?

Resource Table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Citation</th>
<th>URL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Stele with Law Code of Hammurabi" /></td>
<td>This basalt stele was erected by King Hammurabi of Babylon (1792–1750 BC) probably at Sippar, city of the sun god Shamash, god of justice.</td>
<td>Law Code of Hammurabi, king of Babylon 1792–1750 BC Susa, Iran Basalt H. 2.25 m; W. 0.65 m Excavations led by Jacques de Morgan, 1901–1902 Sb 8 Near Eastern Antiquities</td>
<td><a href="http://www.louvre.fr/llv/oeuvres/detail_notice.jsp?CONTENT%3C%3Ecnt_id=10134198673226487&amp;CURREN_T_LLV_NOTICE%3C%3Ecnt_id=10134198673226487&amp;OLDER%3C%3Efolder_id=9852723696500800&amp;bmLocale=en">http://www.louvre.fr/llv/oeuvres/detail_notice.jsp?CONTENT%3C%3Ecnt_id=10134198673226487&amp;CURREN_T_LLV_NOTICE%3C%3Ecnt_id=10134198673226487&amp;OLDER%3C%3Efolder_id=9852723696500800&amp;bmLocale=en</a></td>
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<td>George Washington presiding at the signing of the Constitution of the United States in Philadelphia on Sept. 17, 1787. This is a secondary source not primary.</td>
<td>PRES FILE - Washington, George, 1732-1799--Activities</td>
<td><a href="http://loc.gov/pictures/item/98501334/item">http://loc.gov/pictures/item/98501334/item</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Benjamin Franklin. Plan for a Confederation, July 21, 1775. Printed document annotated by Thomas Jefferson.</td>
<td>Thomas Jefferson Papers, Manuscript Division. Library of Congress (46.01.01) [Digital ID# us0046a_2; other pages: us0046a – us0046a_2]</td>
<td><a href="http://myloc.gov/Exhibitions/creatingtheus/Constitution/RoadtotheConstitution/ExhibitObjects/BenjaminFranklinsproposedplanofconfederation1775.aspx?Enlarge=true&amp;ImageId=374b98bf-a276-4fa6-bf01-65c8513dc47a%3a1c227fb-d87a-4c19-923c-4d7a6cd3ca00%3a307&amp;PersistentId=1%3a374b98bf-a276-4fa6-bf01-65c8513dc47a%3a12&amp;ReturnUrl=%2fExhibitions%2fcreatingtheus%2fConstitution%2fRoadtotheConstitution%2fExhibitObjects%2fBenjaminFranklinsproposedplanofconfederation1775.aspx">http://myloc.gov/Exhibitions/creatingtheus/Constitution/RoadtotheConstitution/ExhibitObjects/BenjaminFranklinsproposedplanofconfederation1775.aspx?Enlarge=true&amp;ImageId=374b98bf-a276-4fa6-bf01-65c8513dc47a%3a1c227fb-d87a-4c19-923c-4d7a6cd3ca00%3a307&amp;PersistentId=1%3a374b98bf-a276-4fa6-bf01-65c8513dc47a%3a12&amp;ReturnUrl=%2fExhibitions%2fcreatingtheus%2fConstitution%2fRoadtotheConstitution%2fExhibitObjects%2fBenjaminFranklinsproposedplanofconfederation1775.aspx</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| The Constitution of the United States: A Transcription  
Note: The text is a transcription of the Constitution in its original form. Items that are hyperlinked have since been amended or superseded. | A typed transcript of the U.S. Constitution.  
|---|---|---|
| First discovered in 1901, these laws are currently the earliest known complete set of codified laws. Once thought to be the earliest laws until the discovery of a portion of the Code of Lipit-Ishtar (circa 1868 B.C.) in the 1930’s. These laws are originally scripted on an eight meter monolith stone tablet in the Akkadian language. The monolith is currently part of the Near Eastern Antiquities Collection at the Lourve Museum in Paris, France. Hammurabi was the King of Babylon from about 1792 B.C. to 1750 B.C. | A summary of the history of the code and who developed it. It also contains information on the code (laws) itself.  
Website: GaveltoGavel.com. Code of Hammurabi. | [http://www.request.net/g2g/historical/laws/hammurabi/](http://www.request.net/g2g/historical/laws/hammurabi/) |
Day 1:

1. Discuss the need for rules and laws. Explain that Ancient Civilizations also knew of this need and developed the Code of Hammurabi. Laws were made differently then, but some of the needs for laws were the same.

2. Explain that the image of the Hammurabi stele is a primary source. The “Signing of the Constitution” by Howard Chandler Christy is the artist’s interpretation and was painted in 1940. [See For the Teacher]

3. Divide the class into two groups. Give one group a copy of the Hammurabi stele (as large as can be) and a description of what it is. Give the other group a copy of the Signing of the Constitution. Have each group list as many facts about their print as they can.

4. Exchange primary sources following the same procedure.

5. Each group should complete a Venn diagram comparing the two prints.

Day 2 and 3:


2. Explain that both of the documents are written in a way that may be difficult to read either by the wording used or by the actual handwriting. Make certain the students understand that a transcription of the item is still considered a primary source because it is not an interpretation of the document, but a transcription.

3. Divide the class into small groups. Give each group copies of Hammurabi’s Code and of the U.S. Constitution (for some students you might need to include a summary of each of these and explain it is no longer a primary source).

4. As the students are reviewing these documents have them make some observations about each, such as the Code of Hammurabi is very specific with the law and the punishment, whereas the Constitution sets out rights of individuals.

5. Lead a discussion about the differences in the documents. Students should be taking notes during this discussion.

Day 4--Assessment:

1. After the students have had a chance to analyze both documents, have them determine which document would be preferred by a community today. Then have them develop their own document for a fictitious civilization of their own. This document should include laws and rights for the citizens of the civilization to follow. Have students justify what they are doing by referencing what document they found it in and why it was important to the fictitious civilization. The presentation of the end product can be left up to the students with guidelines set forth by the teacher.
Suggestions include: a poster, a handwritten document, a brochure, or even a power point.

2. The teacher will need to develop a rubric that fits the needs of their students. Given the focus is on making their own set of laws, it would be important for them to write a law, and then justify why it was written based upon the information that was given. A sample rubric is attached. It may need to be modified based upon the product the teacher assigns.

Answer Key:

Venn Diagram for Day One

Some things to look for when completing the Venn Diagram are:
- A small select group or one person vs. a representation of the whole community
- Laws vs. rights
- Specific consequences given
- Set in stone vs. amendable
- Who has the most power
- Set up of government

For the Teacher
This is a lesson for 6th grade. Since the curriculum for 6th grade is Ancient Civilizations, a discussion between primary and secondary sources would be vital to have at the beginning of the school year. This will help as you go through the school year and are looking at pictures, documents, and artifacts for each civilization. Teachers can have students go through the book, (or you can do a sorting activity where students are given a variety of things they may see in their book and have them classify them as either a primary or secondary source.)
### Hammurabi and the US Constitution

**Teacher Name:** _________________________________________________________________

**Student Name:** _______________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of Class Time</strong></td>
<td>Used time well during each class period. Focused on getting the project done. Never distracted others.</td>
<td>Used time well during each class period. Usually focused on getting the project done and seldom distracted others.</td>
<td>Used some of the time well during each class period. There was some focus on getting the project done but occasionally distracted others.</td>
<td>Did not use class time to focus on the project OR often distracted others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge Gained</strong></td>
<td>Student can accurately answer all questions related to facts in the product and processes used to create the product.</td>
<td>Student can accurately answer most questions related to facts in the product and processes used to create the product.</td>
<td>Student can accurately answer about 75% of questions related to facts in the product and processes used to create the product.</td>
<td>Student appears to have insufficient knowledge about the facts or processes used in the product.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content - Accuracy</strong></td>
<td>At least seven laws or rights are displayed within the product with justification based upon analysis of primary sources.</td>
<td>Five or six laws or rights are displayed in the product with justification based upon analysis of primary sources.</td>
<td>Three or four laws or rights are displayed in the product with justification based upon analysis of primary sources.</td>
<td>Less than three laws or rights are displayed in the product with justification based upon analysis of primary sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attractiveness</strong></td>
<td>The product is exceptionally attractive in terms of design, layout, and neatness.</td>
<td>The product is attractively in terms of design, layout and neatness.</td>
<td>The product is acceptably attractive though it may be a bit messy.</td>
<td>The product is distractingly messy or very poorly designed. It is not attractive.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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