



SCHOOL VIOLENCE PREVENTION DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

THE POWER OF NONVIOLENCE: THE CHILDREN'S MARCH

Teacher's Guide

Lesson Overview

This lesson introduces students to the Children's March, also commonly referred to as the Children's Crusade, which took place in Birmingham, Alabama, in May 1963. Students will understand why children were involved in the march, how children were prepared for the march, and what made it a success. The lesson asks students to imagine themselves as someone involved in the march and consider their competing responsibilities, values, and interests.

A lesson adapted from *Foundations of Democracy* has been provided for teachers who do not currently use School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program (SVPDP) curricula. The lesson, titled "How Should One Choose among Competing Responsibilities, Values, and Interests?" was adapted from the Responsibility portion of the text, Unit 1, Lessons 1 and 2, and Unit 3, Lesson 6.

The lesson defines *responsibilities*, *values*, and *interests* and examines situations in which people must make a decision among competing responsibilities, values, and interests. It can be used by itself in any classroom and does not require prior knowledge of SVPDP materials. The lesson should be reviewed by the teacher prior to class. It can be taught prior to the lesson on the Children's March, or information from the lesson and can be used as appropriate.

Correlations to SVPDP curricula are found at the end of this lesson plan.

Suggested Grade Level

Middle school (grades 6–8)

Estimated Time to Complete

Approximately 50 minutes

Lesson Objectives

After completing this lesson, students will be able to

- describe the Children's March, its purpose, methods, and outcome;
- identify the responsibilities, values, and interests of those involved in the march;
- evaluate the decision to involve children in the march.

Materials Needed

- Student lesson: “How Should One Choose among Competing Responsibilities, Values, and Interests?”
- Teacher’s guide: “How Should One Choose among Competing Responsibilities, Values, and Interests?”
- Teacher resource: The Children’s Crusade of the Birmingham Civil Rights Campaign
- “Ballad of Birmingham,” by Dudley Randall, 1965:
<http://washingtonart.com/beltway/randall.html>
- The Children’s Crusade of the Birmingham Civil Rights Campaign (Handout 1)
- Video: *Janice Kelsey’s Story*
- Note-Taking Guide: Janice Kelsey’s Story (Handout 2)
- Responsibilities, Values, and Interests Chart (Handout 3)

Before the Lesson

Review or teach “How Should One Choose among Competing Responsibilities, Values, and Interests?”

Lesson Procedure

1. *Beginning the lesson.* Read Dudley Randall’s “**Ballad of Birmingham.**” Use the poem to pique students’ interest in the events behind the poem. Ask students whether the poem leaves them wondering about anything described or alluded to in the poem. Ask them if they can connect the poem to anything they have heard or learned about in the past.
2. *Reading about it.* As a class, read the **Children’s Crusade of the Birmingham Civil Rights Campaign (Handout 1)**. Ask students to make connections between Handout 1 and the poem, “Ballad of Birmingham.”
3. *Video viewing.* Introduce the video, *Janice Kelsey’s Story*, by telling students that Kelsey was a foot soldier in the Children’s Crusade. Have students watch and listen actively using the **Note-Taking Guide: Janice Kelsey’s Story (Handout 2)**.
 - Discuss students’ reactions to Kelsey’s story.
 - Discuss the outcome of the Children’s Crusade and what made this strategy successful in Birmingham.
4. *Group work.* Have students work in small groups to identify the responsibilities, values, and interests of the people listed below. Use the **Responsibilities, Values, and Interests Chart (Handout 3)**. Each group can select one of the bullet points below and present its findings to the class. As an alternative, each member of a group can pretend to be of one of the people listed below and act out their response with other members of their small group.

- A parent whose son or daughter wants to participate in the march
- A student who wants to participate in the march
- Martin Luther King Jr. and James Bevel, who organized the march
- A teacher whose students walked out of class to march
- A Birmingham store owner

Discuss students' findings and the decision to involve children in the civil rights movement.

5. *Concluding the lesson.* Discuss with the class the ways in which children today make a difference in their communities.

Correlations to the SVPDP Curricula

Foundations of Democracy, middle school level

Authority:	Unit 1, Lesson 3 Unit 2, Lessons 6 and 7
Privacy:	Unit 4, Lesson 9
Responsibility :	Unit 3, Lessons 6 and 7 Unit 4, Lesson 11
Justice:	Unit 1, Lesson 1 Unit 2, Lesson 2 Unit 3, Lessons 6 and 7 Unit 4, Lessons 11 and 12

Foundations of Democracy, high school level

Authority:	Unit 1, Lesson 2 Unit 3, Lessons 6 and 7
Privacy:	Unit 4, Lesson 9
Responsibility:	Unit 3, Lessons 6 and 7 Unit 4, Lesson 11
Justice:	Unit 1, Lesson 1 Unit 2, Lesson 3 Unit 3, Lessons 6 and 7 Unit 4, Lessons 10 and 11

We the People: The Citizen & the Constitution, Level 2 (middle school)

Unit 1, concepts from Lesson 3

Unit 5, Lessons 23, 25, 26

Unit 6, Lessons 29 and 30

We the People: The Citizen & the Constitution, Level 3 (high school)

Unit 1, Lesson 2

Unit 5, Lesson 27

Unit 6, Lessons 33, 34, and 35

Project Citizen, Level 1 (middle school)

What Is Public Policy and Who Makes It?

Project Citizen, Level 2 (high school)

Chapter 1: Introduction to Project Citizen

Chapter 2: An Introduction to Public Policy

Chapter 4: Why Is Citizen Participation Important to Democracy?

This lesson was developed under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. However, the contents do of this lesson do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the federal government.

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