

Unit 6, Lesson 6: What Was All the Fuss About Representation?

Lesson Overview

This lesson aims to develop an understanding of what representation is and how it became such a divisive issue in the growing conflict between the English colonists and their “mother country.”

Guest Speaker Suggestion: the context for this lesson is one that lends itself nicely to having local elected officials visit your class and help students understand what they do, how they got their jobs, how they represent the people who elected them, and perhaps learn more about the wishes of 4th grade students as their constituents.

Delaware Standard(s)

- **History Standard 2a, 4-5 [Analysis]:** Students will draw historical conclusions and construct historical accounts from primary and secondary source materials
- **History Standard 3, 4-5 [Interpretation]:** Students will explain why historical accounts of the same event sometimes differ and relate this explanation to the evidence presented or the point-of-view of the author.

Big Ideas: representation, representative government, structure of government, point of view

Essential Questions

- Why did the topic of representation help create conflict between the colonists and their “mother country”?
- What did the colonists mean when they said, “taxation without representation is tyranny”?

Enduring Understandings

- Students will understand that (a) the colonists and their mother country had conflicting points of view about what representation involved, (b) colonists did not accept Britain’s definition of representation, and (c) colonists concluded that Britain was denying them their “rights as Englishmen” by taking away their property without their consent.

Resources

- [Google Slides](#)
- [Resource 1: Warm-up](#)
- [Resource 2: Good Representatives](#)
- [Resource 3: UnderResource 1: Warm-Upstanding the “Taxation Without Representation” Argument](#)
- [Resource 4: Checks for Understanding](#)

Procedures

1. **Warm-Up:** distribute copies of [Resource 1: Warm-up](#). Students will identify things that adults and 4th grades do and enjoy that are different. This lays a foundation for getting them to think

about whether adults can represent the interests of kids well and understanding the differences between the concepts of “real” and “virtual representation.”

- a. When students finish, compile a master list of differences for all to see. Then survey the students asking - are 4th graders and adults mostly alike or different?
2. **Whole Class Discussion:** Pose the following scenario to students: Suppose that a decision had to be made. The decision involved what you would do during your free time. Given your responses to the warm-up brainstorming, do you think that an adult would be a good person to make the decision for you? Explain why or why not.
3. **Introduce the Lesson:** Tell students that they are going to explore the concept of representation in this lesson - thinking mostly about what it means to represent someone and what is required to be considered represented. They cannot understand why the colonists go so upset with their mother country unless they have developed an understanding of representation.
4. **Drawing Conclusions about Characteristics of Good Representation:** distribute copies of [Resource 2: Good Representatives](#). Read the directions aloud as students follow along. Invite students to complete Task 1 then Task 2 then open the floor to discussion about each prompt.
5. **Reading for Understanding:** distribute copies of [Resource 3: Understanding the “Taxation Without Representation” Argument](#). Options - read aloud as students follow along pausing the “Pause Buttons” for interim checks for understanding. Alternatively, students can read independently with pause points to discuss with partners or in small groups.
6. **Debrief:** Revisit the following essential questions for the lesson:
 - a. Why did the topic of representation help create conflict between the colonists and their “mother country”?
 - b. What did the colonists mean when they said, “taxation without representation is tyranny”?
7. **Checks for Understanding:** Distribute copies of [Resource 4: Checks for Understanding](#) and have students complete the checks for understanding.