Eugenics and Euthanasia: Ethical Responses to the Demands of Society?

A lesson plan for grade 8
History, Government and Civics
21st Century Interdisciplinary Theme: Global Awareness
By: Cameron Braxton of Darden Middle School

This lesson utilizes documents from the North Carolina State Government Publications Collection.
Ensuring Democracy through Digital Access, a NC LSTA-funded grant project.

Learning Outcome

Students are asked to solve the demands of an unstable future by utilizing voices of the past. Students will work in groups to collaboratively determine if the actions of North Carolina, and Nazi Germany were ethical in nature. Students will conclude with their research by creating an essay that explains the issue and solves the problem.

Time Required:

Type of Activity: Problem Based Learning (21st Century Skills)

Materials/Resources Needed

1. N.C Public laws & resolutions passed by the General Assembly at its session of 1933 pg.445 URL: http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u/?p249901coll22,241749
4. Access to library, digital library, internet
5. Notebook/Pencil

Activity Sequence

To the teacher- problem based learning is a collaborative learning experience designed to reinforce the kinds of problem solving students should be able to demonstrate in the 21st Century workplace. You will need to divide your class into groups of three or five. Unlike a project, students in this situation will need to organize themselves and define the problem. Time per step will vary from group to group. Provide a timeline of step completion and or deadline for total completion.
Step One- Exploring the issue

A. Read the following historical document: N.C Public law & resolutions passed by the General Assembly at its session of 1933 pg. 445 82 URL: [digital.ncdcr.gov/u?/p249901coll22,241749], The Health Bulletin January, 1944 pg. 7 (13 of 228) URL: [digital.ncdcr.gov/u/?p249901coll22,257403], and Wikipedia’s article on T-4 Euthanasia Program URL: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T-4_Euthanasia_Program]

B. The Eugenics Board of North Carolina was created in 1933. What was the justification of the (EBNC) in sterilizing mental patients in the prisons and institutions? Is it ethical for the North Carolina’s state legislature and the NAZI Germany to sterilize and euthanize people in hopes of creating “superior” people? Are these solutions ethical and if not, what can be done that would help alleviate genetic diseases for future generations.

C. As a group, discuss the problem statement and list its significant parts. You will have to gather information and learn new concepts, principles, and skills as you tackle the issues of Euthanasia and Eugenics.

Step Two- Creating Thinking Maps in order to list your actual knowledge

A. What do you know to solve the problem? Students will individually create a Bubble Map to identify known information.

B. List the strengths and capabilities of each of your team members. Students will work together in order to create a Tree Map that identifies the qualities of individuals in the group.

Step Three- Writing a NEW problem statement: Include the following criteria.

A. A written statement
B. The agreement of your group on the statement
C. Feedback from your instructor on the quality of your statement
D. This problem statement will be revisited and edited by your group as new information is discovered, or “old” information is discarded.

Step Four-Possible solutions

A. Create four possible solutions for the problem statement
B. Order them from strongest to weakest

Step Five- Create a timeline in which the problem is solved

A. What do we have to know and do to solve the problem?
B. How do we rank these possibilities?
C. How do these relate to our list of solutions?
D. Do we agree?
Step Six- List “What do we need to know?”

A. As a group, you will research the knowledge and data that will support your solution. You will need to gather information to fill in the missing gaps in your understanding of the problem and the solution.
B. Discuss possible resources like experts, books, web sites, etc...
C. Locate as many relevant examples to demonstrate the validity of your solutions!
D. Assign and schedule research tasks, especially DEADLINES.

Assessment

Step Seven- Write up your solution with its supporting documentation, and submit it.

A. Individually, students will write an essay that presents the findings of your group and the recommendations of how to solve the problem.
B. The essay must include the problem statement, and support for the provided solutions or recommendations based on the data analysis.

Step Eight- Review your performance.

A. Reflect upon how well you as an individual contributed to the success of your group’s work.
B. Reflect upon how well you were able to express your solutions in your essay.
C. Could you have done better and if so, how can you perform at a higher level next time?

Author’s Notes

For the critical thinking response, I have included a rubric that will help students stay focused and present their findings. Their responses will determine how knowledgeable they are with the content.

As a follow up, this activity can be converted into a current event topic.

The following URL:
This article gives a personal touch to the issue of eugenics. This is Elaine Riddick’s story.

The digital page is different from that of the physical page. Students will have to find the correct page based on the digital number and not that listed in the actual document.

North Carolina Essential Standards

North Carolina History 8th Grade

NC.C&G .6
Describe the significance of major events and military engagements associated with World War II and evaluate the impact of the war on North Carolina.
**Research Report: Eugenics and Euthanasia, are they Ethical Responses to the Demands of Society?**

Teacher Name: _______________________________

Student Name: _______________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Information is very organized with well-constructed paragraphs and subheadings.</td>
<td>Information is organized with well-constructed paragraphs.</td>
<td>Information is organized, but paragraphs are not well-constructed.</td>
<td>The information appears to be disorganized. 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of Information</td>
<td>All topics are addressed and all questions answered with at least 2 sentences about each.</td>
<td>All topics are addressed and most questions answered with at least 2 sentences about each.</td>
<td>All topics are addressed, and most questions answered with 1 sentence about each.</td>
<td>One or more topics were not addressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Information</td>
<td>Information clearly relates to the main topic. It includes several supporting details and/or examples.</td>
<td>Information clearly relates to the main topic. It provides 1-2 supporting details and/or examples.</td>
<td>Information clearly relates to the main topic. No details and/or examples are given.</td>
<td>Information has little or nothing to do with the main topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph Construction</td>
<td>All paragraphs include introductory sentence, explanations or details, and concluding sentence.</td>
<td>Most paragraphs include introductory sentence, explanations or details, and concluding sentence.</td>
<td>Paragraphs included related information but were typically not constructed well.</td>
<td>Paragraphing structure was not clear and sentences were not typically related within the paragraphs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Created with Rubistar URL:**
http://rubistar.4teachers.org
Sample Bubble Map
**Created with PowerPoint