

LESSON FORMAT

Ideally, you should spend at least one hour in preparation for each 45-55 minute class session. This includes time spent coordinating and discussing teaching logistics with your Legal Team and with the Classroom Teacher. Recognizing that lengthy preparation is not always possible, the Teaching Guide is structured so that the first page of each lesson is in a “Class-at-a-Glance” format that can serve as a quick reference for conducting the lesson. This summary gives the topic and step-by-step instructions on leading a class through their lesson.

The “Class-at-a-Glance” also lists materials, such as primary sources, role-playing cards, or audio equipment, which will be needed for your class. Most importantly, the “Class-at-a-Glance” allots a particular amount of time to each part of the lesson so that you can effectively manage the limited duration of the lesson. We suggest that your Legal Team assigns a timekeeper for each session to help keep students on track.

We sincerely hope that you will take the time to thoroughly review more than just the “Class-at-a-Glance.” Each lesson also has supporting materials that will help you prepare for the class and will serve as a history refresher.

Each “Class-at-a-Glance” is comprised of the following sections:

- Title/topic: This is the overarching civics lesson to be taught.
- Framing question: This question encapsulates the central principles that should inform the students’ critical thinking exercise. It also ties your civics topic to the historical period of study. The framing question serves as the backbone of the lesson.
- Class activity and timing: This critical portion of the guide leads you through the steps needed to accomplish your interactive session, and gives time limits for each portion of the class activity. An optional activity is included for classes that have an extended bell schedule (meaning that you have an additional 10-15 minutes of class time).

Behind each “Class-at-a-Glance” there are detailed supporting materials as a reference guide to help you thoroughly prepare for the class. Those support materials include some of the following:

- Looking forward and back: Here, you can see how each lesson fits into the A.C.E. Program as a whole. A short summary describing how this enrichment session relates to past civics and world history topics is provided, and modern examples are given to help ground students in present-day topics that can trigger more engaged discussions.
- Historical abstract: The abstract gives a snapshot of the relationship between the historical period and the legal principles encompassed in the lesson.
- Historical/modern background (extended): For those who want a more in-depth summary of the historical period being studied by students in their classrooms (and modern trends related to that period), we have included a lengthier description for your review. Remember that you are not teaching history to the students – nor does a short class session permit you to do so – but rather this information is a backdrop for your enrichment/critical thinking activity. This section also may be useful in answering student questions.
- Resources (primary sources/teaching tools): Visual aids and primary sources not only instruct students in textual analysis, but also help capture their attention. We have referenced the tools you may use to conduct your lesson, and at times, directed you to additional optional materials.