



Can 4th graders inspire change in public policy?

Students hold great potential for change. Yet, public policy decisions are hardly (if ever) influenced by the creativity, interest, and experience of our smallest citizens. In this project, students will take a stand in support of a public policy issue that matters to them. They will learn about all sides of several topics like education and the environment. Through respectful discourse, they will construct and articulate well-researched positions on a topic of their choice with an inspirational podcast!

Imagine if all our students could make their voices heard and become the changemakers our world needs. What a way to make a difference in the world!

 Start with why

Lesson 1: Agree to Disagree

Students learn to tolerate different views by exploring phenomena where people with different perspectives can see or hear the world in very different ways. **SCIENCE SOCIAL STUDIES SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING**

Lesson 2: Flex Your Thinking

Help students understand that a smart mind is willing to change when given good reason. Present students with information on both sides of an issue, and watch as they learn to think more flexibly.

 Think it through

Lesson 3: Introduce Issues and Create Debate

Guide students as they explore several public policy issues. Present them with both sides of hot topics in the news, and help them understand that there's more than one way to view the world.

Lesson 4: Debate the Issues

Once students understand the value of tolerance, help them take a respectful stand for their beliefs through constructive debate. **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

 Work it out

Lesson 5: Plan Your Podcast

Help students prepare to produce a podcast by listening to several outstanding examples. Use what they have learned to create a script for an inspirational podcast of their own.

Lesson 6: Make Your Voice Heard

Use technology to amplify your students' voices by having them record and listen to their podcasts.

 Fix it up

Lesson 7: Revise Your Podcast

Get techy as your students polish their podcasts by making audio edits, adding music, and creating a powerful piece of work. **MATH**

 Share your awesome

Take a Stand

Make your voice heard by publishing your students' podcasts, spreading their passion to others, and storming your state capitol to meet with your elected representatives!

Suggested project time: **8 hours**





Math

DECIMAL NOTATION

As your students edit their podcasts, help them understand the relative value of decimals by drawing a connection to audio timestamps.

[CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.4.NF.C.7](#)

English Language Arts

REASONS AND EVIDENCE

Dive into the concepts of reason and evidence in an authentic way by having students debate the issues on which they will eventually take a stand.

[CSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.9](#)

Science

INFORMATION PROCESSING

Is the dress blue or white? Use our most puzzling illusions to help students understand how the brain works to make sense of the world around us. [NGSS 4-PS4-3](#)

Social Studies

CORE CIVIC VIRTUES

Public discourse is filled with so much vitriol and animosity. Help students practice the civic art of respectful discourse as they study and debate issues relevant to today's society. [NCSS D2.His.5.3-5](#)

Social Emotional Learning

SELF-AWARENESS AND SELF-MANAGEMENT

Sometimes, our judgment is clouded when we become overly defensive. Help students recognize and overcome this tendency by teaching them to think like scouts, not soldiers.

CASEL CORE COMPETENCIES

Not teaching these standards?

Blue Apple projects include content connections for kindergarten through eighth grade. Go to [BlueAppleTeacher.org](#) to learn more!



Kit Supplies

- *Round Trip* by Ann Jonas
- Debate Graph
- Pop Microphones
- Fluorescent Cardstock
- Sticker Sheets

Online Resources

- "Two Sides to Every Issue" Resource Links
- Elements of Good Storytelling
- Tips and Tricks for Creating a Podcast
- Why you think you're right—even if you're wrong **(YouTube 11:37)**
- Podcaster's Checklist
- And so much more!



Bring the World to Your Students

- Connect with a Civil Discourse Professor
- Channel Your Inner Politician
- The Podcast Pro

Bring Your Students to the World

- 'Ello, Guv'nor
- Be Talk-Show Worthy!
- Meet the Press



Take it to the Capitol!

Help your students understand that there is power in numbers by having them coordinate with students around the state to visit your elected representatives in the capitol!



Timely and Actionable Feedback

What are some ways I can provide timely and actionable feedback for my students?

Standards-Based Grading

What is standards-based grading and how can I try it?

This is just the beginning!

Go online to access the complete project.



- Clear **learning targets** and **step-by-step instructions**
- Dozens of links to **supporting resources**
- **Mini-lessons** aligned to content standards
- **Videos and contact information** from industry experts
- **Ideas to collaborate** with other classrooms
 - Practical, point-of-use **instructional strategies**
 - Access to a grade-specific **Project Coach**

