



Middle School Lesson 2: What Does Civility Look Like?

This lesson uses the Common Core State Standard (CCSS) English Language Arts (ELA) standards and the National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) C3 Framework standards to challenge middle school students to explore the concept of civility from the lenses of civics, history, geography, and economics. Students will collaborate in small groups through a Gallery Walk experience, challenging them to deeply consider the meaning of civility. The experience will help students form their own understanding of what civility means and its implications in our everyday lives. Students will practice abiding by class norms as they practice their civil discourse skills throughout the lesson.

Time Required: 4 Class Periods (40–45 minutes each)

- Class Period 1: “How Civil Are YOU?” quiz—feedback, direct instruction, and intro to Gallery Walk
- Class Period 2: Gallery Walk two station rotations (15–20 minutes per rotation)
- Class Period 3: Gallery Walk two station rotations (15–20 minutes per rotation)
- Class Period 4: Complete summative task and class discussion

Standards

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARD

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL 5.1, 6.1, 7.1, 8.1 (GRADES 5–8)

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, group, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade-level topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL 5.1.D, 6.1.D, 7.1.D, 8.1.D

Review the key ideas expressed and draw conclusions in light of information and knowledge gained from the discussions.

D2.Civ.7.5-8. Apply civic virtues and democratic principles in school settings.

Learning Objectives

- Introduce and deliberate on questions surrounding the concept of civility using the four supporting questions in the Gallery Walk.
- Students work in groups to research answers to questions regarding civility.
- Students self-reflect on their perspectives surrounding civility.

Essential Questions

- What does civility look like?
- How can we view civility from different perspectives?

Preparation

Classroom setup for this lesson: Before class, hang one poster for each of the four Gallery Walk questions. These should be hung in different areas in the classroom. These papers will hold the instructions to lead student inquiry into the questions.

Strategy

- “11 Civil Discourse Strategies to Try in Your Classroom”
- No. 7—Gallery Walk

Materials Needed

- [Activity Instructions for “How Civil Are YOU?” Quiz](#)
 - [Google Form](#)
 - [Document](#)
- [Class Google Slides presentation: What Does Civility Look Like?](#)
- [Student Gallery Walk worksheet](#)
- [Civics Station: student instructions, primary sources, and materials](#)
- [History Station: instructions, materials, and links](#)
- [Geography Station: instructions and links](#)
- [Economic Station and links](#)

- Large paper, markers, and materials to make posters for Class Period 4

Directions should be posted on the walls for each of the stations. Students should carry their devices with them to access the Gallery Walk worksheet, which has links to audio and video clips at the history and geography stations. The worksheet can be sent and accessed virtually through the school learning management system (Canvas, Schoology, D2L, Google, etc.).

Alternatively, if you prefer to use paper instructions and student worksheets, they can be printed, but links to the audio and video clips should be accessible on computers at the history and geography stations.

Class Period 1

PART 1: WARM-UP: HOW CIVIL ARE YOU QUIZ (20 MINUTES)

Begin the lesson by displaying the class Google Slides presentation: Gallery Walk—Civility. As you proceed through the presentation, slide 2 asks students to take the “How Civil Are YOU?” quiz on either Google Forms or a paper copy. Allow students 5–7 minutes to take the quiz. It will not count for a grade, but it is a helpful tool to reveal the level of civil discourse skills students are entering your classroom with, and it allows students to connect to prior experiences. After finishing the quiz, review the answers and feedback with the students as a teaching tool.

PART 2: DIRECT INSTRUCTION TO THE CLASS (10 MINUTES)

Discuss slides 3, 4, and 5, then ask the class to do the following:

- silently reflect on their level of civil discourse
- consider that we can think about civility from different perspectives
- introduce the civics, history, geography, and economics supporting questions

PART 3: PREVIEW THE GALLERY WALK ACTIVITY

The Gallery Walk (10 minutes) begins the following class period. Explain the procedures today so that students know what they will be doing when they walk in the door. Also designate student work groups in advance.

GALLERY WALL CIVILITY INQUIRY

Divide the class into four inquiry work groups. Students work in these groups, sharing ideas and responding to the questions and media that are posted on walls around the classroom.

HOW TO USE THIS STRATEGY

Groups rotate around the room to each of the 4 stations on the teacher's command. Each station rotation for this activity may take 15–20 minutes. Groups should discuss the questions and

resources at each station as they work to fill out their worksheets. During this activity, monitor the student groups and provide help as needed.

At the end of all the rotations, ask the students to work as a group to complete the summative task. The summative task requires each group to make a poster with words and pictures to illustrate their understanding of what civility looks like while considering the frames of civics, history, geography, and economics. Finally, the class will come together, and each group member will share their conclusions from the activity. Have students rotate through two stations the following day and two stations the day after. The summative task will be completed on the final day.

Class Periods 2 and 3

Students will move through two of the Gallery Walk station rotations (15–20 minutes each).

Station directions should be posted on the walls for each of the stations. Students should carry their devices with them to access the Gallery Walk worksheet, which has links to audio and video at the history and geography stations. The worksheet can be sent and accessed virtually through the school learning management system (Canvas, Schoology, D2L, Google, etc.).

Alternatively, if you prefer to use paper instructions and student worksheets, they can be printed, but links to the audio and video clips should be accessible on computers at the history and geography stations.

The class presentation slides 7–11 can be used as a guide to direct students to move to each station. Set a timer for 15–20 minutes for each rotation.

Class Period 4

STUDENT GROUPS COMPLETE SUMMATIVE TASK (15–20 MINUTES)

Students will work together in their groups to complete this task. The instructions can be found on the last page of the student Gallery Walk/summative task worksheet, as well as on slide 12 of the class presentation.

SUMMATIVE WHOLE CLASS DISCUSSION (20 MINUTES)

During the final group discussion, if you would like to keep track of student participation and encourage all students to participate, you can use a tally chart to keep track of which students have talked and which ones have not. The tally chart can be used privately for the teacher to monitor student progress, or it can be publicly shared with the students to incentivize student sharing by offering extra credit points for participation. In this discussion, all group members are asked to add something to the discussion (30 seconds or less to allow all voices to be heard).

The goals of the discussion are

- to allow students to share the posters they created on the topic of what civility looks like;
- to remind students to share the reasons why they created elements on their posters as they did; and
- to encourage students to respond and build on each other's ideas in a civil way.