

**Deliberation Topic:** *What should the United States do to address issues along the U.S.-Mexico border?*

**TEACHER NOTE:** to use this resource in your classroom - click 'file' and then click 'make a copy' to create your own Google Doc version to edit as needed and share with your students.

## Introduction

The United States-Mexico border stretches over 1,900 miles from the Pacific Ocean in California to the Gulf of Mexico in Texas. With recent calls for a border wall, trends relating to migrants coming to the border, and new policies affecting these migrants, the question of how to address issues along the United States-Mexico border has been a significant topic of debate around the country. This deliberation examines the differences in how people interpret the issues at the border and has students deliberate possible solutions to these issues.

## Objectives and Outcomes

- Students will identify the key issues occurring at the United States-Mexico border and how different people interpret those issues.
- Students will develop a proposal to address these issues and support their proposal with arguments from the video clips.

## Lesson Plan

Pick and choose from the following strategies to engage your students in the issue.

1. **Warm-Up Activity.** Choose from one of the following strategies to activate prior knowledge and engage your students.
  - a. **A/B writing.** Write the following four statements on the board. Instruct students to choose the statement with which they most agree and then free write for two minutes explaining why they support that statement. Allow several students, at least one for each statement, to share their thinking with the class.
    - i. The government should add additional barriers along the U.S.-Mexico border to address issues at the border.
    - ii. The government should add additional resources at ports of entry along the U.S.-Mexico border to address issues at the border.
    - iii. The government should work with other countries to address issues along the U.S.-Mexico border.
    - iv. The government should develop better policies to help migrants arriving at the U.S.-Mexico border.
  - b. **Think-Pair-Share.** Write the prompt on the board: **"What should the United States do to address issues along the U.S.-Mexico border?"** Have students

silently write down their thoughts and then discuss them with a partner. Give several pairs an opportunity to share their examples.

- c. **Take a Stand.** Ask the students: “**Current policies and efforts successfully address immigration issues along the U.S.-Mexico border.**” Have students line up on a continuum based on their opinion from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree.” Ask several students from different points on the line to share their reasoning and defend their position.
2. **Vocabulary Preview.** Before watching the videos, reading the background articles, and using the additional resources, have students define the terms on the [Vocabulary Preview Chart](#). This could be done as a jigsaw or individually, and depending on available time it may be completed for homework or in class.
3. **Background Knowledge.** Have students read the [background articles](#), watch the [background videos](#), and complete the accompanying background questions and/or use the note-taking chart. Depending on available time, this may be done in class or for homework. Additionally, students should look for references to the vocabulary terms, and write quotes of the terms being used on the Vocabulary Preview Chart. Before deliberating, students should identify what they believe are the most important concerns and issues occurring at the U.S.-Mexico border.
4. **Deliberate.** Have students watch the videos relating to the U.S.-Mexico border. While watching the videos, students should complete the [note-taking chart](#) for each position. Then, choose one of the activities from the [Deliberations website](#) to engage your students.
5. **Assess.** In addition to engaging in the Deliberation activity above, you may choose to have students complete an independent assignment to assess their mastery of the topic.
  - a. Write a policy memo on how to address issues along the U.S.-Mexico border as if they were legislative aides for a member of Congress.
  - b. Write a paper explaining what the issues are along the U.S.-Mexico border and specific solutions to these issues.
6. **Extension.**
  - a. Write letters to their elected officials in support of or in opposition to current border policies or the issue as a whole.
  - b. Interview friends/family/community members on their view on how to address the issues along the U.S.-Mexico border.
  - c. Research immigration and border policies in other nations and compare/contrast them with U.S. laws.