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Current Event: Capitol Riots

Introduction

One of the most essential parts of being an activist is being aware of the current events happening in the area around you. After all, you can't take action if you don't know what's happening. In addition, you need to be able to formulate an opinion after identifying the event, and be able to confidently state that opinion. This module is the first of four modules tackling the current events happening in our country, and how you can be a part of tackling them.

Objectives

1. Students will be able to understand current events and types of activism associated with them
2. Students will be able to build and develop their public speaking skills and abilities.
3. Students will be able to have mature discussions regarding politically charged events.

Agenda

1. Research
2. Current Event
3. Debate Style/Discussion Style Activity/Public Speaking
4. Wrap Up

Content

Research-Time (10 mins)

Purpose:

Give students 10 minutes to research the current-event, as well as policies directly related to it.

Materials:

Tell students to bring their laptop to this classroom in order to do this activity

Directions:

Give students a link or something lol to a current event they will be discussing in the chat roulette

Facilitator Notes:

- Encourage the students to collect information and build their own opinions
- Show students how to gather information from reliable and credible sources
- Encourage students to use different mediums of media
 - Videos, Articles, Online stuff

Sources

- **The Washington Post** “Six hours of paralysis: Inside Trump’s failure to act after a mob stormed the Capitol”
 - https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-mob-failure/2021/01/11/36a46e2e-542e-11eb-a817-e5e7f8a406d6_story.html
- **Telegraph Article** “Proud Boys and neo-Nazis: Who are the protesters who stormed the US Capitol?”
 - <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/01/12/proud-boys-neo-nazis-protesters-stormed-us-capitol/>
- **Associated Press** “Riot? Insurrection? Words matter in describing Capitol siege”:
 - <https://apnews.com/article/donald-trump-capitol-siege-riots-media-8000ce7db2b176c1be386d945be5fd6a>
- **The New York Times** “Today’s Rampage on the Capitol, as it happened”:
 - <https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/01/06/us/washington-dc-protests>
- **ABC News** “Rep Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez: 'We came close to half of the House nearly dying' during riots”
 - <https://abc7ny.com/9529495/>
- **CNBC** “The Capitol Riots: An Hour-By-Hour Timeline”
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jXAv2cDkWAA>
 - <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/06/us/politics/trump-riot-dc-capitol-photos.html>
- **ABC News** “A visual timeline on how the attack on Capitol Hill unfolded”
 - <https://abcnews.go.com/US/visual-timeline-attack-capitol-hill-unfolded/story?id=75112066>

Current Event

Purpose:

To understand the Capitol Riots and its implications.

Sources:

1. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-55640437>
2. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/12/us/capitol-mob-timeline.html>

Lecture Notes:

- Try to avoid comparisons between the Black Lives Matter movement and the Capitol Riots
 - However, if students bring it up and want to discuss it in that light, facilitate accordingly and make sure the conversation remains civil.
- Background info:
 - 12:15: Trump tells supporters at the rally to walk down to the Capitol
 - 12:30: Supporters arrive at the Capitol, there is minimal security around the building
 - 12:50: A pipe bomb is reported at the Republican National Committee building, soon

- after a pipe bomb is reported at the Democratic National Committee headquarters
- 12:53: about 20 minutes before Trump's speech ends, the Trump supporters harass police officers and eventually overwhelm them, breaching the Capitol's outer perimeter
- 1:03: the House being to certify the Electoral College
- 1:48: Request from the Chief of Police for the DC National Guard
- In defiance of the election results, a group of Trump supporters breached the Capitol leading to clashes with the police, the deaths of multiple people, and destruction to the building
- Was incited by Trump's inflammatory language? <- most people say yes
- Led to Trump's impeachment by the House

Discussion Questions:

1. Did Trump's speech and rhetoric on twitter beforehand incite the riots?
2. How did the media portray this event? How could the media have portrayed the event in a less politically biased manner?
3. How do you feel about the police's treatment of the Trump supporters?
 - a. Facilitator note: if possible, steer towards irony of blue lives matter flags because of rioters attacking police, facilitator discretion of course ;)
4. Do you think the people at the Capitol represent the Republican party? Why or why not?

Activities

Chat-Roulette (20 mins)

Purpose:

To allow students to build on their public speaking abilities in a fun and interactive way

Materials: Current Event, Online Wheel with all of the students names on the wheel.

Directions: Spin the online wheel with the names of the students on them. Whoever the wheel lands on needs to speak on the event and their opinion on what occurred and their thoughts/future steps. Give them a 1.5 minutes requirement and urge them to take up all two minutes.

Facilitator Notes:

- Encourage the students to think independently
- Encourage the student to not only discuss the current event but also discuss where they think the activism should go and what should be done.
- Push students to leave their comfort zones and speak publicly.
- Make sure students have an idea on the current event and are somewhat informed on information surrounding it
 - This can be done using videos, presentations, etc;

Discussion Questions:

1. What is your opinion on the current event?
2. If you had complete control over the activism of this current event, what would you do differently? Would you change anything about it?

Activities

Debate!

Purpose:

To allow students to build on their public speaking abilities in a fun and interactive way

Materials: Current Event, your top-tier debate abilities.

Directions: Divide (by any means) students into two groups. Each different group will represent one take on their opinion on the current event.

Facilitator Notes:

- Encourage the students to think independently
- Encourage the student to not only discuss the current event but also discuss where they think the activism should go and what should be done.
- Push students to leave their comfort zones and speak publicly.
- Make sure students have an idea on the current event and are somewhat informed on information surrounding it

Discussion Questions:

1. What is your opinion on the current event?
2. If you had complete control over the activism of this current event, what would you do differently? Would you change anything about it?

Wrap Up

Purpose: To summarize and wrap up what students have learned and discussed through this module.

Sources:

Lecture Notes:

- To recap, protests at the Capitol led by Trump supporters resulted in destruction of the building, deaths of civilians and a law enforcement officer, and uproar on social media following the event.
- As a result, the following events occurred:
 - many Cabinet members of the Trump Administration resigned (Betsy Devos, Elaine Chao, etc.) as well as Capitol security officers
 - Trump's second impeachment
 - Trump's Twitter (and other social media platforms) ban
 - higher security measures around the US Capitol
- The event sparked a conversation regarding biases in handling certain events, such as the scarce policing surrounding the Capitol event compared to the Black Lives Matter protests in June 2020
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Discussion Questions:

1. What did you think of this module? Would you prefer trying something new or continuing these types of discussions?
2. What other current events do you want to discuss in class?