



Teaches students to think critically and apply historical knowledge to their decision making through discussion and debate of current and historical international issues.

Results



Students who experienced the Choices curriculum:

- *learned factual information about the history and issues presented as well as or better than students in a traditional read-and-discuss curriculum.*
- *developed the ability to understand multiple perspectives, apply their analytic skills to new situations, and articulate and analyze the strengths and weaknesses of a reasoned opinion to a significantly greater extent than did students in more traditional programs addressing the same content matter.*

The Program

Choices for the 21st Century offers an ongoing series of supplemental curriculum units for U.S. history, world history and a range of social studies electives. Materials are designed to place special emphasis on preparing students to be participatory citizens. Choices units provide classroom teachers with the tools to raise foreign policy issues in the social studies classroom using a pedagogy that encourages critical thinking and student-centered learning, and lends itself to a variety of authentic assessments.

Choices units focused on historical turning points recreate the drama of an historical era drawing students into an exploration of the options available to decision makers at a critical moment in time. By examining the options that were considered, the decisions that were made, and the consequences of those decisions, students come to understand that history is not inevitable but the manifestation of real decisions, made by real people, at a particular moment in time, with ramifications for the present. Using Choices historical units, students are challenged to apply their understandings of history to current national and international affairs.

Choices units focused on a current topic, draw students into consideration of the historical context. In addition to background readings and lesson plans, each unit provides a well-crafted framework of policy options on an issue, illustrating fundamentally different and feasible paths which U.S. policy makers could pursue. Each path contains its own distinctive pros and cons, risks and tradeoffs. Students must consider each option in the context of the history leading up to the issue and then articulate their own judgment about the direction they feel U.S. policy should take.

Professional Development

Training is desirable for those with limited comfort or experience with interactive, student-centered learning. The Choices program has a network of experienced classroom teachers nationwide who use Choices extensively in their own classrooms, have received training from Choices, are qualified to lead workshops, and can provide professional leadership to others. Curriculum materials, training, and follow-up consultation are available.

Costs & Funding Options

Choices curriculum units are available as reproducible material (a reproducible student text and a Teacher's Resource Book, complete with lesson plans, student handouts, and other references) for \$15. Classroom sets (15 or more student texts and a Teacher's Resource Book) can be purchased for \$7/text. The Choices program currently charges a fee for training: \$350/half day or \$600/full day plus travel. There is a charge of \$25 per participant for training materials which include two complete Choices units.

Learning Standards

Social Studies: 1) use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States and New York; 2) use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in world history and examine the broad sweep of history from a variety of perspectives.

Contact

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