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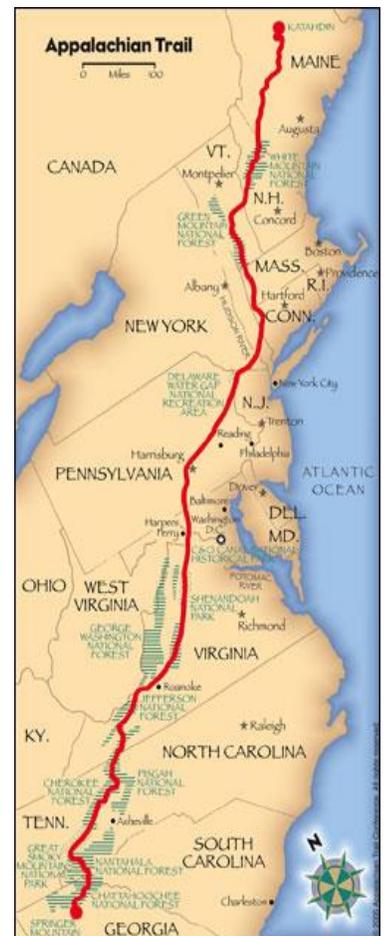


Trailing Your Representatives

A Week of Online Research Lessons in
Citizenship, Stewardship, and Responsible Government
For U.S. Government and Civics, Grades 9-12

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Unit Title: Trailing Your Representatives
School: Daniel Boone High School
Grade Levels: 9-12 (10 th)
Discipline: Social Studies (U.S. Government and Civics)
Unit Designer: Roland Tester
Stage 1 – Desired Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do we want students to know, understand, and be able to do? • How can we use students’ place (home, classroom, school and schoolyard, neighborhood, community) to help them learn this? • What real community needs and opportunities are we trying to address?
A. Big Ideas:
<p>The high-level ideas, concepts, principles, or processes for my TTEC unit include the fact that government is ourselves, and not an alien power set over us; that our government is of the People, by the People, and for the People; that the principles of the social contract, in which governments derive their powers from the consent of the governed, require us as the People to be knowledgeable and involved participants in the making of public policy; and that the growth, betterment, and continuance of our Country, Nation, and the People and Resources within require Invested Citizenship and Stewardship from All of Us.</p>
B. Enduring Understandings:
<p>Students WILL gain and retain a great understanding of the policy-making process and understand their power and responsibility to help shape and guide that process.</p> <p>Students WILL be involved in that decision-making process</p> <p>Students WILL be Stewards of their Country and their Government</p>
C. Essential Question(s): Students will keep considering:
<p><i>CUI BONO?</i></p> <p><i>Should this be done?</i></p> <p><i>Is this worth doing?</i></p> <p><i>Why is this being done?</i></p> <p><i>Why isn't this being done?</i></p> <p><i>What can we do to solve this?</i></p> <p><i>What can we do to prevent this?</i></p> <p><i>Where is the money to do this?</i></p> <p><i>Why isn't there money to do this?</i></p> <p><i>Where is the money coming from?</i></p>
D. Content Standard(s)
<p>This unit meets the following Tennessee Standards for U.S. Government and Civics:</p> <p>GC.38: Connect insights gained from appropriate informational text to describe the obligations of civic-mindedness, including voting, being informed on civic issues, volunteering and performing public service, and serving in the military or alternative service</p>

GC.60: Describe how citizens can monitor and influence local and state government as individuals and members of interest groups;

GC.61: Write an opinion piece with supporting details regarding the specific ways individuals can best serve their communities and participate responsibly in civil society and the political process at local, state, and national levels of government

GC.62: Identify current representatives (per the student’s respective district) in the Tennessee General Assembly and research their past and current proposed legislation that has significantly impacted the lives of Tennesseans

GC.63: Identify the current governor of Tennessee and examine his/her platform for improving the quality of life in Tennessee.

Selection and Exploration of this Topic will satisfy TDOE directive for inclusion of a major problem-solving student project in U.S. Government and Civics:

GC.64: Working with other students, identify a significant public policy issue in your community, gather information about that issue, fairly evaluate the various points of view of competing interests, examine ways of participating in the decision making process about the issue, and write a position paper or make a presentation on how the issue should be resolved.

Continued Interest and Involvement in this Topic could possibly fulfill the Community Service component for the “Tennessee Promise”; a newly implemented program by the State of Tennessee to provide up to 5 semesters of paid tuition at a community college or technical science school for qualifying Tennessee high seniors (Completion of 8 hours of approved community service prior to beginning the program, and 8 hours of service per semester afterwards is required for eligibility).

E. Place-based Service Learning Lens

To insure that the unit is **Grounded in Place**, students from this community will be able to identify all of their representatives and also identify where those representatives stand on given issues. Students will understand how these officeholders (and the legislation that they pass) affect **Real** problems and issues that affect the students and their community on a daily basis. Getting the students informed and involved with these problems and issues is **Empowering** not only to the students themselves, but to all stakeholders in the community: **Collaborative** relationships with our partners and other allied groups are mutually beneficial for all; as the students can share information and resources with local trail and hiking clubs, the ATC, regional towns and counties, and area Chambers of Commerce.

F. Acquisition (of Understanding):

Students will be able to identify their direct representatives at the local, state, and national level; and will be able to contact those representatives through a variety of means.

Students will be able to locate and identify legislation at the local, state, and national level concerning environmental issues in general, and the Appalachian Trail in particular.

Students will be able to understand the legislative/executive process which makes law and policy concerning environment issues in general, and the Appalachian Trail in particular; furthermore, the students will be able to identify the departments, committees, and individuals that are directly involved in the creation of such public policy.

Stage 2 – Acceptable Evidence

Performance Task(s): Learners will show that they really understand by:

- Successfully tracking the progress of particular bills, proposals, and initiatives; and reporting on the final status of said legislation
- Successfully locating professional and personal information on legislators and other officeholders involved in key government actions, and if necessary, contacting those persons to question their support or opposition to public policy concerning the Appalachian Trail, Regional/State/Local trails and recreational areas, or environmental issues in general.

Other Evidence: Students will show they have achieved Stage 1 goals by displaying enhanced comprehension of governmental processes in general, as well as a keen grasp of skills needed for problem-solving in multiple situations.

Stage 3 – Learning Plan

Learning Activities: Webquests, other research, and discussion of relevant legislation, government officials, and organizations (see attached lessons)

Progress monitoring: Questions and suggestions by the instructor during the research and report construction process.

Adaptations

Learner-centered and context-sensitive adaptations for our TTEC unit include necessary accommodations as stated in IEPs, and gathered from personal proactive observation of the learners by the instructor.

Reflections

Post-instruction reflections by TTEC unit designer(s)/ instructor(s) include observations (some perhaps several years after) of the extended impact of the lessons/unit/project on the learners; and how could the lessons/unit/project be amended to maximize the desired goals of encouraging students to become life-long stewards and learners.

Attachments:

WebQuest 01 Officeholder (this can be done at the local, state, or federal level and may be adjusted accordingly; we have done this at various times as a simple fill-in-the-blank search, as a detailed, complex report, and as a Powerpoint presentation with multiple photos, charts, and graphs)

- Officeholders Name
- District/State
- Contact Information: Addresses/Email/Telephone/Websites
- Years in office
- Prior offices/positions held
- Previous/current occupation/ownership

- Committee Assignments
- Leadership Assignments
- Bills Sponsored/Co-Sponsored
- Legislation Votes
- Campaign Warchest
- Campaign Contributors
- PAC interactions
- SuperPac interactions
- Notable Political/Personal Incidents

WebQuest 02 Legislation (this can also be done at the local, state, or federal level and may be adjusted accordingly; we have done this as well at various times as a simple fill-in-the-blank search, as a detailed, complex report, and as a Powerpoint presentation with multiple photos, charts, and graphs)

- Legislation Title
- Level of Legislation:
(Local Ordinance/Measure, General Assembly Bill, H.O.R. Bill, Senate Bill)
- Brief Summary-Key Points of Legislation
- Sponsors/Co-Sponsors
- Committee Assignment
- Legislation Status:
(Proposed, In Committee, Pending, Tabled, Transition, Passed one house/both houses, executive decision?)
- Yeas/Nays
- Who is For this Bill? Why?
- Who is Against this Bill? Why?

WebQuest 03 Organization (this can be tailored to apply specifically to the focus of this unit by examining organizations dealing with the Appalachian Trail specifically, or issues concerning the environment in general; this can also be done at the local, state, or federal level, and may be adjusted accordingly; organizations to be researched could include partners, related groups, corporations, SuperPacs, and government agencies. This may also be done as a simple fill-in-the-blank search, as a detailed, complex report, or as a Powerpoint presentation with multiple photos, charts, and graphs)

- Organization Name
- Organization Type
- Year Established
- Mission Statement/Purpose
- Leadership Type and Officeholders
- Membership Size and Type
- Assets/Holdings
- Lobbying? Influence?
- Contributions (Candidate/Party)
- PAC contributions/connections
- SuperPAC contributions/connections
- Past Actions/Accomplishments/History

- Partners contact list

Tennessee Eastman Hiking & Canoeing Club www.tehcc.org

Unicoi County Chamber of Commerce www.unicoicounty.org

Town of Erwin www.erwintn.org

The Tweetsie Trail www.tweetsietrail.com

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy www.railstotrails.org

- Online Resources

www.tn.gov Every State Representative and State Senator has a webpage with relevant vita and information listed, a list of all current legislative action is available, extensive entries for the Governor and all Executive Departments are included; links to all county and city governments are included; links to the Tennessee Constitution and the Tennessee Code Annotated are provided.

www.usa.gov Every Congressman and Senator has a personal webpage, easily reached (for example roe.house.gov for Representative Phil Roe); executive agencies are listed as well

www.nndb.com Outstanding biographical database, all members of Congress and prominent government officials are listed and up to date

www.opensecrets.org and www.followthemoney.org A fascinating and eye-opening resource about the movers and shakers behind the creation of public policy

www.sunlightfoundation.com The Sunlight Foundation provides numerous links, blogs, and phone apps dedicated to making government at all levels transparent and accountable; the smartphone applications *Congress* and *Open States* are standouts.