

DECLARING THE CLASSROOM A SOVEREIGN NATION

Students work together to declare the classroom a sovereign nation. Divide the classroom into small groups. Assign each group to a particular task below. Begin the lesson with a discussion about the reasons why they want to be a sovereign nation. Create one guiding written statement for the students to refer to when working together.

1. Students discuss what form of government they want. Students will write down the reasons for choosing this form of government and present to the class. The choices for now:

Majority rule/representative democracy - they will have to elect or choose representatives

Consensus democracy - they can choose a speaker but all have to agree

Authoritarian rule - one leader is selected their wishes are carried out

2. Students discuss what kind of flag they want to represent the classroom. Within this lesson students are asked to create a flag that represents their new nation. It would be helpful to examine and discuss the symbolism of flags by comparing the United States flag with one from a Tribal Nation.

(Show students the Red Lake flag) What do they want on their flag to represent them?

Students create a flag for their sovereign nation.

Students should be prepared to discuss the symbols on the flag and explain what they represent.

Example: The flag of the United States has 13 stripes that represent the original colonies. There are 50 stars that represent each state in the union. Why do you think the flag is red, white and blue?

Example: The flag of the Red Lake Nation includes a picture of Upper and Lower Red Lake, draped by two eagle feathers. Eagle feathers are sacred to many American Indian people. On the top are the major clans (symbolized by animals) of the Red Lake people - Bear, Turtle, Bullhead, Marten, Eagle, Mink, and Kingfisher. (Each Ojibwe person has a clan that is represented by an animal ancestor that helps guide that person through life. The clans are passed down from the male line.)

3. Students decide who can be members of their classroom nation. Students will create an identification card for each of its members. Guiding questions:

What do you have to do to be a member?

Will it be just the students in your classroom?

4. Students name two rights they would like to have. They name two responsibilities they need to have. Students discuss how these rights and responsibilities could be written into laws. Who is going to enforce these laws? Choices: police, society of warriors, mediator. Students will present the rights to the classroom.

5. Students discuss the basic needs of their classroom nation-food, clothing, lodging, health, safety issues. What services can they provide? What contracts do they need to make with the school and parents to meet these needs? Create a simple contract(s) and share with the classroom.

6. Students discuss what kind of income (money) they need to provide for the needs of their classroom citizens. Do they want to tax classroom members (pass around the tax container)? What if this is not enough? What kind of business could they start? Who can they borrow money from to start their business? Create an advertisement for a business that could make money for your sovereign nation and present it to the class.

In Conclusion: students come together at the end of the simulation and present what they have learned.

