

STEP TWO: DEFINE

Students define and explore multiple viewpoints

In this section, student will be introduced to a topic and distinguish the points of difference between viewpoints on the topic. These viewpoints will be explored during subsequent related activities.

Time needed

45 – 60 minutes

Classroom setup

Desks arranged for small group work

Materials needed

- Various thought-provoking materials – brief literature excerpts, political cartoons, short video clips, songs, speeches, poems, quotes, etc. – that reflect 3 to 5 different perspectives on the identified topic, or a related Choices curriculum unit with such materials included (see www.choices.edu/resources/individual.php)
- Chalkboard or whiteboard
- Guidelines for Developing a Presentation on Your Viewpoint Worksheet (one per student)
- Multiple Viewpoints Presentations Worksheet (one per student)
- Clarifying Questions Handout (one per student)

Goals

To ignite student interest in the topic.

To have students define the issue and distinguish the points of difference between the viewpoints.

Objectives

Students will thoughtfully explore a multi-faceted topic with international implications.

Students will recognize and articulate the multiple viewpoints (perspectives, positions) regarding the topic.

ACTIVITY:

Introduction

1. Introduce the topic to the class and check for basic understanding (e.g., immigration is the act of entering and settling in a country of which one is not native. People in the U.S. disagree about what the right policy should be regarding immigration).
2. Explain that in this activity, students will explore multiple viewpoints on the topic.

Tasks

1. As a class, have students analyze for meaning a few materials (brief literature excerpts, political cartoons, short video clips, songs, speeches, poems, quotes, etc.) that represent different viewpoints on the topic. The idea here is to ignite interest in the topic and identify/define the different viewpoints related to it.

Note: *Depending on the complexity of the topic and the amount of background knowledge and understanding the students have or do not have about it, the teacher may want to assign basic informational reading as homework for the night before.*

2. Next, have students weigh the pros and cons of the various viewpoints expressed in the materials.
3. Arrange students in small groups and assign each group **ONE** of the multiple viewpoints on the topic.
4. Working in their groups, have students analyze the viewpoint they were assigned. As they do this, they should take notes on the “Guidelines for Developing a Presentation on Your Viewpoint Worksheet” to prepare for presenting this viewpoint to the class. This worksheet guides students to focus on the following criteria:
 - A. Compose a positive summary of the viewpoint.
 - B. Identify two values (those discussed in *Step One: Identify*) that are embraced by the viewpoint.
 - C. Address the questions: Why would this viewpoint be the best choice? Who or what would benefit?
 - D. Explain how the viewpoint might look in operation, if it would be adopted.

Extension: *Have students include a visual or interactive piece in their presentations. This exercise helps students capsule the main idea of their assigned viewpoint, as well as helping the other students remember this viewpoint as compared to others.*

5. Ask a spokesperson from each group to advocate for the position of the group, using the “Guidelines for Developing a Presentation on Your Viewpoint Worksheet.”

6. As each spokesperson presents the viewpoint of her/his group, the other students should fill out the “Multiple Viewpoints Presentations Worksheet.”

Extension: *If students have created visual representations, post them on the walls throughout the rest of the deliberation process.*

7. After each presentation, give students in the audience a chance to formulate and then ask questions to the presenting group. The presenting group should answer these questions to clarify and enlighten students about their viewpoint. Even during this question-and-answer period, the presenters must advocate for the position they were assigned, whether they believe in it or not. The idea here is to explore multiple perspectives on the topic.

Note: *Before the first question-and-answer period, the teacher should introduce the concepts of **clarifying and probing questions** and encourage students to use them rather than questions that challenge or critique. See the “Clarifying and Probing Questions Handout” below.*

8. After all the viewpoints have been presented, the teacher should lead a discussion in which students share their initial thoughts on the multiple viewpoints. This way, they can voice how they truly feel about the topic.

Assessment

1. Determine student understanding of clarifying and probing questions by asking them to formulate some of their own about the deliberation topic.
2. Collect and grade “Guidelines for Developing a Presentation on Your Viewpoint Worksheets”; be sure to provide detailed feedback.
3. Collect and grade “Multiple Viewpoints Presentations Worksheets”; be sure to provide detailed feedback.

Conclusion

Explain that these viewpoints will be explored in more detail during subsequent related activities and that, in those activities, they will be asked to collect data to support each of the viewpoints so that they can begin to formulate a more complete **personal** position on the topic.

Handouts (reproducible master copy)

Guidelines for Developing a Presentation on Your Viewpoint Worksheet (1 per student)

Multiple Viewpoints Presentations Worksheet (1 per student)

Clarifying and Probing Questions Handout (1 per student)

Role of the Teacher

It is important for the teacher to choose a fairly complex, multi-faceted topic in which there are a variety of obvious perspectives that students can identify (e.g., U.S. immigration policy; U.S. dropping atomic bombs on Japan; individual countries over-harvesting threatened ocean fish species).

The teacher needs to provide a variety of thought-provoking materials—brief literature excerpts, political cartoons, short video clips, songs, speeches, poems, quotes—that reflect 3 to 5 different perspectives on the identified topic. These can be collected by the teacher, or they may be found in a related Choices curriculum unit. S/he needs to present the materials in a neutral and balanced manner, regardless of her/his position, encouraging and assisting the students in developing objective descriptions, including supporting points, for their group's assigned perspective. Remember, each group must advocate for its perspective, regardless of the way individual group members may feel about the topic.

It is important for the students to understand there are multiple perspectives on the topic. Through the materials, students should be able to appreciate all the viewpoints as viable options, which will help them establish an informed personal position later on in *Step Five: Reflect* of the process. The goal is that each perspective will appear so appealing that students will struggle in their choice of which perspective to support.

WORKSHEET: GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING A PRESENTATION ON YOUR VIEWPOINT

Name: _____

Topic: _____ Viewpoint: _____

1. Provide a positive summary of your viewpoint.

2. Explain the two values that underlie your viewpoint. Pick from the following list:

Freedom

Justice

Self-reliance

Equality

Cooperation

Stability

Democracy

Competition

Security

Other

3. Why would this viewpoint be the best choice? Who or what would benefit?

Extension: Include a visual or interactive piece in your presentation.

WORKSHEET: MULTIPLE VIEWPOINTS PRESENTATIONS

Name: _____

Multiple Viewpoints Presentations	
Summary Viewpoint 1:	
Positive Elements:	Concerns:
Questions:	

Multiple Viewpoints Presentations	
Summary Viewpoint 2:	
Positive Elements:	Concerns:
Questions:	

Multiple Viewpoints Presentations	
Summary Viewpoint 3:	
Positive Elements:	Concerns:
Questions:	

Multiple Viewpoints Presentations	
Summary Viewpoint 4:	
Positive Elements:	Concerns:
Questions:	

HANDOUT: CLARIFYING AND PROBING QUESTIONS

Name: _____

“Asking a good question can be valuable in and of itself, irrespective of the answer. It communicates your respect for the other person.”

- Adapted from the Iowa Peace Institute Message

Clarifying Questions are simple questions of fact. They clarify the dilemma and provide the nuts and bolts so that the participants can ask good probing questions and provide useful feedback.

Examples of Clarifying Questions:

- Is this what you said...?
- What resources were used for the project?
- Did I hear you say...?
- Did I understand you when you said...?
- What criteria did you use to...?
- What’s another way you might...?
- Did I hear you correctly when you said...?
- Did I paraphrase what you said correctly?

Probing Questions are intended to help the presenter think more deeply about the issue at hand.

Examples of Probing Questions:

- Why do you think this is the case?
- What do you think would happen if...?
- What sort of impact do you think...?
- How did you decide...?
- How did you determine...?
- How did you conclude...?
- What is the connection between... and...?
- What if the opposite were true? Then what?

Using both clarifying and probing questions facilitates effective deliberation. It is helpful for the teacher to model using these types of questions since students may not have experience with them.

Optional Practice Activity: Form two lines (A and B) of students facing each other so that everyone has another person standing directly across from her/him to partner with. Make a statement such as: *Cell phones are better than land phones*. Allow a short amount of time for the student pairs to “huddle” and come up with one related clarifying question and one related probing question. Pick one of the pairs to share their questions. If their questions were truly clarifying and probing in nature, congratulate them and allow them to return to their seats. If they were not, recognize that more practice is needed and have them remain in the line. Proceed in this way, offering additional statements to which clarifying and probing questions can be formed, until all (pairs of) students are successfully returned to their seats.