Voter ID Laws Lesson Narrative

**Task – Students will participate in a class discussion on the justification of Voter ID laws.**

**Unit:** Civil Rights/Civil Liberties

**Persistent Issue:** What should society do to promote fairness and justice for people who live within its jurisdiction?

**Central Question:** Is it justified to have voter ID laws?

**LESSON PURPOSES:**

1. Students identify the pros and cons of voter ID laws.
2. Students assume different perspectives on voter ID laws.
3. Students analyze political cartoons, charts, and primary sources of voter ID laws.
4. Students deliberate on the justification of voter ID laws.

Lesson 1: POTUS Yes/No ID Questionnaire

Lesson 2: Voter ID Gallery Walk

Lesson 3: Perspective Analysis on Voter ID

Lesson 4: Four Corners Class Discussion

Lesson 1: POTUS Yes/No ID Questionnaire

Teachers will present the students with ten scenarios in which they get to decide if they will need IDs to complete certain tasks. The students will work in pairs/groups to decide whether or not each scenario warrants using an ID to complete the task in the scenario. They will be using [this scaffold](https://tigermailauburn-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/kohlmjl_auburn_edu/ES6JR9aXL7JNhUenQtaJPX0BXhxKCtUuJ1JFeDVNxb2uog?e=ADsn9C) to record their answers during the activity.

Teachers should show [this video from the Washington Post](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rljZXzb4_98) that introduces the complicated nature of voter ID laws. The teacher might review the election process and how voting plays a crucial part in political participation.

After the video, the teacher should ask the following questions:

1. Why has voter ID become such a contentious issue for voters?
2. There are very few cases of voter fraud in the United States. Why do you think states and some voters have made this a priority issue?
3. What type of ID, if any, should be acceptable for voting?

Teachers will explain that the Persistent Issue for the unit is "What should society do to promote fairness and justice for people who live within its jurisdiction?” The Central Question is: " Is it justified to have voter ID laws? " Over the next few lessons, the students will learn about show different states are implementing voter ID laws or rejecting the use of voter ID. Students will become experts on one perspective of the issue and create an argument for why their perspective should be taken. In the culminating activity, students will present their original perspective to a new group with conflicting opinions and attempt to persuade the other students to take their viewpoint. They will then decide on one perspective and create a short “elevator speech” that reflects their group perspective that will be shared in a full class discussion of the issue.

Lesson 2: Voter ID Gallery Walk

Lesson Focus Question: What do voter ID laws look like in the United States?

The teacher will guide students through 8 stations that each include a graphic and guiding question on voter ID laws in the United States. These gallery walk stations should be posted around the classroom and students will be answering the See Think Wonder questions on chart paper around the classroom. If a scaffold is needed for individual work, [here is a scaffold](https://tigermailauburn-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/personal/kohlmjl_auburn_edu/Documents/Kohlmeier%20Files/Outreach%20and%20Research/CLEAR%20Thinking%20Project/CLEAR%20Thinking%20Lesson%20Study%20Lesson%20Design%20Products/CTG02_Andrews/2024%20-%202025/Gallery%20Walk%20Scaffold.docx?d=w59d6472a117249369a0a8df9442c924f&csf=1&web=1&e=bQtCnY) to allow students to use individually as they participate in the gallery walk.

Lesson 3: Analyzing Perspectives on Voter ID

Lesson Focus Question: What are the pros (or cons) of voter ID laws?

The teacher will divide the class into groups for an activity that explores different perspectives on voter ID laws. Students (or the teacher) will choose different perspectives on voter ID. Each student will fill out [this scaffold](https://tigermailauburn-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/kohlmjl_auburn_edu/EWGV_krLxWJMj4Sjiq3qJFoBLmANKzor0CRk6v0IPpzoQQ?e=iAkqKX) to help them frame their argument in the next step of the lesson. Each expert group will receive [their perspective on voter ID laws](https://tigermailauburn-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/kohlmjl_auburn_edu/ESD2ySxgJm5ChFXnvzPlGdkBGSOJMVRqfuM7POTB7iuwDA?e=vNST1F) (listed below):

* Brennan Center
* League of Women Voters
* Cato Institute
* Political Scientist
* Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX)
* Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA)

Once each student has researched their perspective and completed the scaffold on their perspective, the students will talk in their small groups about the perspective they read. Groups can use the questions at the end of each perspective sheet to direct the discussion. The groups should share their information on their assigned perspective.

Lesson 4: Four Corners Class Discussion

Lesson Focus question: Should legislators create voter ID laws?

In this lesson, students will use their opinion on voter ID laws and participate in a four corners activity that will spawn a class discussion about voter ID laws and if they should exist. The teacher will pose the central question: Is it justified to have voter ID laws?

Each corner of the classroom will be labeled with one of the following markers:

* Strongly Agree
* Agree
* Disagree
* Strongly Disagree

Students will go to the corner that best aligns with their answer to the central question. Once students file into their corners, the teacher will pose the questions from the perspective sheets or open the floor for discussion.

Questions:

1. Do voter ID laws disproportionately affect marginalized communities, such as people of color, the elderly, students, and low-income individuals?
2. Are voter ID laws necessary for preventing voter fraud?
3. Can alternative measures advocate for increased voter participation and ensure election integrity?

Teachers can focus on these three questions to guide the conversation or use student questions and comments to steer the discussion. As students answer and converse, the teacher should continue to bring opinions and answers back to the central question and persistent issue around which this lesson is centered.

Culminating Activity

Students will write a four paragraph essay on the topic of voter ID. This essay will feature evidence from the different perspectives, pros and cons of implementing voter ID laws, and their opinion on if voter ID laws are justified. They should answer the central question (Is it justified to have voter ID laws). While writing the essay, they should keep in mind the persistent issue for the mini unit (What should society do to promote fairness and justice for people who live within its jurisdiction?).

Teachers will show [this model](https://tigermailauburn-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/mza0283_auburn_edu/EYQgc8Jr2R9Im3cg-h0M1tEBWa0EiHdXBSvjYAHULvtEpQ?e=XYDJmN) of the essay to guide students in how they should be organizing their thoughts. The teacher will explain that the first paragraph should introduce the idea of voter ID laws, the controversy surrounding the topic, and the central question. The second paragraph should discuss one perspective of the argument, either for or against voter ID laws, and evidence that they learned from their small group discussion, full class discussion, and their own readings. The third paragraph will do the same as the second, but from the opposite perspective. The last paragraph should feature their opinion and answer whether voter ID laws are justified.

[The directions for this culminating activity](https://tigermailauburn-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/mza0283_auburn_edu/EcAQf9oByfNArTYOElNaESoBbmDa0yMwXrArWrK6gnn4JA?e=WelfPc) will be the same for this essay as they were for the pre-test given earlier in the school year. Students can use [this scaffold](https://tigermailauburn-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/mza0283_auburn_edu/EcLnEcmJ9-FFu5iBfecVgzoBXGMweV108qknkfgDCjSi2g?e=tld1hQ) to help organize their ideas for the essay.