

TITLE OF LESSON

American Government Unit 2 Lesson 36 – Field Trip Debrief and Thank You Cards  
*Does Democracy Work?*

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TIME ESTIMATE FOR THIS LESSON

One class period

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ALIGNMENT WITH STANDARDS

California – History 12.2

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MATERIALS

Thank you cards (at least two per student)

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LESSON OBJECTIVES

- To debrief and discuss the results of the lobbying field trip
  - To show appreciation to representatives
  - To demonstrate formal letter writing skills
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FOCUS AND MOTIVATE STUDENTS – WARM-UP ACTIVITY

- 1) Homework Check – Stamp/initial complete homework assignments. Pass back graded work (particularly the Field Trip Worksheet) and have students place in the appropriate section of their binders.
  - 2) **Agenda** – Have students copy the goal, agenda and homework onto the next clean page in a notebook
  - 3) **Journal 10** – Write a response to the following question in your notebook:  
1. What did you think was the most interesting thing about the field trip? 2. Did you think you were successful on the field trip? Why or why not? (one full page)
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ACTIVITIES – INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP

1. **Journal Read Around** – Have students complete a group (in groups of four) read aloud of their journal responses. When finished, instruct them to synthesize all of the groups responses into a couple of sentences that will be presented by one member of the group.
2. **Final Reflection** – When students develop and gather their photos from the field trip in order to prepare them for their portfolio, this journal entry could provide a reflective written piece to accompany their pictures.
3. Present Group Summaries – Call on a random member of each group to present the group’s summary and use these comments and concerns to connect their experience to the model congress and to the ideas of democracy and government. Do you think you had any effect? Why not? Does this mean democracy doesn’t work? How could we make it work better? What if you weren’t allowed to visit your representatives, would this be democratic? Why not? What is democracy? Is it working?
4. Model Thank You Card – Ask students to give you some reasons why a “thank you” card is a good thing. Using the overhead or the board, write a collective thank you card to the government official who helped organize the field trip by securing speakers and meeting places, etc. Have students contribute what they think a “good” thank you message contains and how to make it sound sincere and personal. Explain that this particular thank you card will be typed by the teacher formally and signed by everyone in the next lesson. However, the students will need to write handwritten thank you cards to each of the individuals they met with (representatives or staff members).

5. Thank You Cards – Have students move their desks so that they are sitting with their partner from the field trip and have them take out their index cards. Explain that they will write thank you cards to the people they met and lobbied in Lesson 35. First they need to decide who they are going to write to. Each pair needs to divide up the individuals that they met with so that they don't write to the same person and each person should write to two people (if a pair only met with two government officials, then they can choose to write the second thank you to the representative themselves – thanking them for their thoughtful staff – or write to another government official who helped the teacher organize the field trip. If a pair visited more than four representatives, then they will need to write more than two each to make sure that each representative receives at least one.).
  6. Homework – Students should complete their two thank you cards and two envelopes (correctly addressed) with stamps by the next lesson. Also, all service requirement work is due tomorrow.
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#### HOMEWORK

- 1) Write a minimum of two thank you cards to government officials and address two envelopes correctly with stamps.
  - 2) Bring all documents and materials relating to your service work.
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#### GROUP ROLES

None

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#### DOCUMENTATION FOR PORTFOLIO

##### **Unit 1**

Action Plan

Persuasive Essay or Flash Argument: Why should government care...?

American Government Unit 1 Final Exam

##### **Unit 2**

Political Beliefs Project

Ideological Plan

GIP Question Sheet

Service Requirement Check-Ins

Model Congress Bill on GIP Issue

Field Trip Worksheet