

Module 3: 1989

Activity 3: Return to Democracy

Compelling question: In what ways should morality play a role in civic engagement?

Overview: Teachers might use and adapt this activity as a standalone exercise or in conjunction with other Module 3 activities. Also, we encourage you to explore Modules 1, 2, and 4 to design a comprehensive exploration of the 68, 77, 89 project.

As you design your students' learning experiences we suggest:

- Utilize the background resources for Module 3
- Previewing the selected primary and secondary resources
- Explore the instructional supports and selected vocabulary
- Adapt the lesson plans and performance assessments we provided for this activity

Focus: In this activity, students will explore Vaclav Havel's rise to the presidency.

Primary and Secondary Resources for this Activity

Oral History:

1. [Madeleine Albright](#) - In this 2.5 minute clip titled “Velvet Revolution”, Madeleine Albright recalls her response to the Velvet Revolution in 1989.
2. [Luboš Brieda](#) - This 1 minute clip titled “Velvet Revolution” features Luboš relating his experience of the Velvet Revolution in November, 1989.

Primary Source Speech:

3. [Havel’s 1990 New Year Speech](#) - One outcome of the Velvet Revolution, is that, in late December, 1989, Havel was elected president of his country. On New Year’s Day, 1990, he gave his first “state-of-the-nation” address to the country on national television.

Support Resources

[Graphic Organizers](#): Create free, custom made graphic organizers including T-Charts, Venn Diagrams, Frayer Models and much more.

[Historical Thinking Prompts](#): The chart helps demonstrate historical thinking and has sentence frames to support the development of these skills.

[Document Analysis Organizers](#): Use these worksheets — for photos, written documents, artifacts, posters, maps, cartoons, videos, and sound recordings — to teach your students the process of document analysis.

[Harvard’s Project Zero Thinking Routines](#): A routine can be thought of as any procedure, process, or pattern of action that is used facilitate the accomplishment of specific goals or tasks. Explore this collection and use them with the activities.

[Socratic Seminar/Discussion Stems](#): A handout of prompts and scaffolds for students.

[Rubric Maker](#): Easy to use, quick and free rubric tool maker.

Key Vocabulary for this activity:

1. **Administration**: The function of a political state in exercising its governmental duties.
2. **Demonstration**: A public meeting or march to protest against something or express views on a political issue.

3. **Contaminate:** To make impure or unsuitable by contact or mixture with something unclean, bad, etc.
4. **Morality:** A particular system of values and principles of conduct, especially one held by a specified person or society.
5. **Pragmatic:** Relating to matters of fact or practical affairs often to the exclusion of intellectual or artistic matters.

Suggested strategies and assessments for this activity.

Compelling question: In what ways should morality play a role in civic engagement?

Instructional Strategy A: Town Hall Circle

This teaching strategy mimics the process of a town hall meeting, where community members take the floor to share their perspective on a topic of concern. Using this format, students have the opportunity to share their different perspectives by tapping into and out of the group conversation. Students often come away from this experience with a greater appreciation for how our perspective can limit the facts we have at our disposal and the opinions we hold. By listening to others' ideas, students broaden their understanding of the world in which they live. [\(Full details can be found here\).](#)

Class 1: Preparation - Students engage with the 3 resources provided in this activity (as well as the background resources). Utilize the questions and commentary provided with the resources as well as the support items provided. As students engage with the resources, remind them that they should be looking for evidence to answer the compelling question.

Class 2: Town Hall Square - The teacher facilitates the activity described above. We suggest the teacher or students utilize a twitter # (that you design for the class) to tweet highlights of the discussion. This allows students to review the exchange in the future. [\(How to use a twitter # hashtag\)](#)

Be sure to remind them that they should be looking for evidence to answer the compelling question.

Instructional Strategy B: Four Corners

A Four Corners debate requires students to show their position on a specific statement by standing in a particular corner of the room. This activity elicits the participation of all students by requiring everyone to take a position. It can be an effective activity by asking students to apply what they have learned when framing their argument. [\(Full details can be found here\).](#)

Class 1: Preparation - Students read/watch the 3 resources provided in this activity. Utilize the questions and commentary provided with the resources as well as the support items provided. As students engage with the resources, remind them that they should develop their understanding of the events and perspectives of 1968 and the compelling question. Finish the class [with an exit ticket](#) describing something similar they know about or experienced in their lives that the resources reminded them of.

Class 2: Four Corners - Arrange your room and label four areas of the room with signs reading “Strongly Agree,” “Agree,” “Disagree,” and “Strongly Disagree.” Generate a list of debatable statements related to the material being studied. A starting list of statements are below. Consider having students generate their own as well.

- Morality should play no part in civic engagement.
- Morality should have a minor role in matters of civic engagement.
- Civic engagement should be guided by morality in conjunction with political and economic perspectives too.
- Civic engagement should be directed and guided by morality as the primary motivator.

When students are providing their reasons for their positioning, they should provide evidence/reference a resource from this activity.

Suggested Performance Assessments: Now that students have engaged with the documents and have shared their insights with their classmates, it is time for them to collect their thoughts and answer the compelling question. It is important to connect the historical content to the present. In this sense, the historical content informs students about the past and apply that knowledge to the present.

Your decision on what students should produce will relate to the skills you think they should develop to succeed in the future.

- 1) Author a “This I believe...” statement, website, recording etc. In the piece students should reference Havel and the resources in this activity.
- 2) Write an essay that answers the compelling question.

Create a “Wall of Fame” in their classroom, library, or elsewhere to commemorate Havel’s career and civic character. Students nominate local, national, and international figures (past and present) to be added to the wall. This can also be done digitally using Google Sites or Padlet.