

Concept Formation Lesson Plan

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Context

Overview (Title, Grade/Class, Length, Topic)

This is a Concept Formation Lesson Plan designed for a 60-minute regular seventh-grade US History Part II class. In a Concept Formation Lesson Plan, students learn about the critical attributes of a specific, unidentified historical concept through the examination of different examples. Specifically, students will develop an understanding of the concept of discrimination through the examination and analysis of three selected examples. By the end of the lesson, students will be asked to distinguish between examples and non-examples of discrimination. The final homework assignment requires that students apply their new conceptual knowledge to find examples of discrimination throughout history.

Background Information

Students will have just finished learning about Reconstruction and the Civil War. This lesson will serve as a segue into the class unit on the late 19th century, in which students learn about immigration, industrialization, westward expansion, and progressivism. At the conclusion of this lesson, I will challenge students to think about ways in which this concept can be seen beyond this immediate unit, and throughout history.

Rationale

Discrimination is a theme that unfortunately runs throughout the history of the United States, particularly following the end of the Civil War and Reconstruction, and into the 20th century, with the arrival of new immigrants, the women's suffrage movement, and the Civil Rights Era of the 1960s. It is important students develop a clear understanding of discrimination to deepen their education about the history of the United States. Additionally, it is important that students understand why discrimination is wrong. In this lesson, I hope that students develop an empathetic understanding of how discrimination negatively affects citizens and society as a whole.

Standards

This lesson integrates several different central learning objectives and state standards. Virginia State Standard USII.4 requires students to demonstrate knowledge of racial segregation, Jim Crow laws, and other forms of discrimination faced by African-Americans (VA SOL USII.4c); the impact of the women's suffrage movement (VA SOL USII.4e), and the increase in immigration to the United States (VA SOL USII.4b).

Additionally, later on in the year, students can apply their understanding of the concept as they learn about 20th and 21st century US history. Specifically, the concept can be applied to the following Virginia Standards of Learning:

- USII.7c: Impact of the Pearl Harbor bombing and World War II on the home front, especially for Japanese Americans
- USII.8d: The student will demonstrate knowledge of the economic, social, and political transformation of the United States and the world between the end of World War II and the

present by describing the changing patterns of society, including expanded educational and economic opportunities for military veterans, women, and minorities

- USII.9a: The student will demonstrate knowledge of the key domestic and international issues during the second half of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries by describing the Civil Rights Movement and the changing role of women.

This lesson also aligns with several NCSS Standards. Era 6 Standard 2, for example, outlines that students should “understand the new social patterns, conflicts, and ideas of nationalism that emerged amid growing cultural diversity from 1870 to 1900,” specifically paying attention to racial and ethnic discrimination (Era 6, Standards 2A-C). Furthermore, NCSS outlines that students should understand ethnic discrimination against Japanese Americans during World War II (Era 8, Standard 3C), the struggle for equal civil rights for minorities in the 1960s (Era 9, Standards 4A-C), and the discriminatory challenges faced by new immigrants coming to America in the 21st century (Era 10, 2B). It is important students have clear understanding of the concept of discrimination so that they recognize cases of discrimination throughout history.

Objectives

- Students will develop a concrete understanding of the concept of discrimination.
- Students will examine three separate “anonymous” examples of discrimination, and complete a guided activity worksheet.
- Students will identify the critical attributes of the concept of discrimination.
- Students will differentiate between examples and non-examples of discrimination.
- Students will identify a historical example of discrimination, and write a paragraph explaining it as a concept example.

Assessment

Students will be assessed both formally and informally in this lesson. The lesson involves a lot of discussion, both in smaller groups and as an entire class. As the teacher, I must monitor student participation in these discussion forums. Students will be informally assessed when they are asked to differentiate between examples and non-examples of discrimination, and explain their reasoning and conclusions. I will assess students based on their understanding of the concept, and their ability to articulate their reasoning.

The students’ understanding of the concept and writing and reasoning skills will be assessed formally through the lesson’s homework assignment. For the homework assignments, students will be asked to come up with their own example of discrimination in history and write a short paragraph explaining why it is a concept example. Students will be assessed based on the validity and reasoning behind their historical example, and the overall structure of their paragraph. Though this homework will be officially graded for completion, I will use the following rubric to evaluate the effectiveness of the lesson and my teaching of the concept.

Homework Assignment Evaluation

	Yes	“Sort of” – explain	No
Did the student come up with a valid historical example of discrimination?			
Did the student include an explanation for the example?			
Does the student mention each attribute in their explanation?			
Is the student’s writing structured in a paragraph form, with little to no mistakes?			

Content and Instructional Strategies

I. Concept Definition

Discrimination is a different, unfavorable action directed toward a particular person because of a specific characteristic or category that leads to inequality and disadvantage.

Critical Attributes:

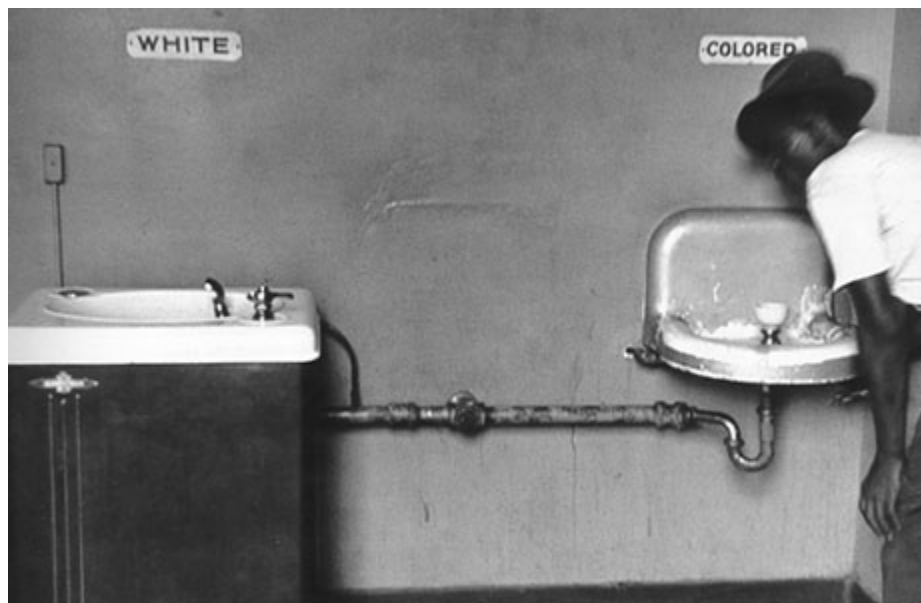
1. Differential, unfavorable action
2. Results in inequality and disadvantage
3. Treatment based on a specific characteristic of person – religion, race, ethnicity, etc.

II. Hook (6 minutes)

Prior to class, I will prepare print out all the necessary materials for this lesson, including the Data-Retrieval Chart and Analysis, and the lesson PowerPoint. When students first enter the class, they will be expected to pick up the Data-Retrieval Chart and Analysis worksheet from the front desk when they walk in.

I will begin this lesson by having students examine a photograph depicting discrimination. When students enter the classroom, I will have the following photograph displayed on the projector. I will then instruct students to sit at their desks and simply look at the photograph quietly. Once all students are seated, I will instruct students to respond to the following prompt about the picture. After three minutes of individual reflection, we will then spend another three minutes discussing the photograph as a class. The goal of this activity is to get students thinking about the concept of discrimination, without explicitly introducing the concept yet. The goal of this activity is for students to recognize eventual attributes of the main concept lesson of discrimination.

Hook Photograph and Warm-Up Prompt



In three to four sentences, describe this photograph to someone who has not seen it before. Write down everything you see. Be descriptive about the objects, the setting, and people in the photo.

III. Data-Retrieval Chart and Example Analysis (12 minutes)

After the warm-up activity, students will then work in their assigned seating groups of two or three students to complete the Data-Retrieval Chart and Example Analysis. I will explain to students that they will complete this worksheet based on examples displayed on projector screen, and that they will each work with their respective groups to do so.

The following examples, which will each be slides in the lesson PowerPoint, will be displayed for four minutes at a time. Students will be expected to read the examples and complete the respective column on the Data-Retrieval Chart for each example in this given amount of time. However, I will explain to students that we will complete the first example as a class, so that students understand what is expected of their answers. Once we complete the first example as a class, I will have each student work with their groups to complete chart.

Examples

Example #1

On March 25, 1854, a family placed a wanted ad in the New York Times, announcing they were hiring a young girl to take care of their two small children. The ad described the ideal candidate for the position, and at the end listed that any applicants of Irish ancestry would not be hired, and should not even apply for the position.

Example #2

On December 5, 1955, in Montgomery, Alabama, white bus driver James F. Blake ordered Rosa Parks, an African-American woman, to give up her seat for a white passenger. Blake was acting in accordance with Alabama's law that bus seating must be segregated by race into separate sections, and African-American passengers must give up their seats for white passengers.

Example #3

After the United States declared War against Japan in response to the attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on December 7, 1941, President Franklin Roosevelt issued an executive order excluding all American citizens of Japanese descent from the Pacific Coast. As part of this order, Japanese Americans were sent to designated, government-run internment camps during the War.

Data Retrieval Chart

Concept Example	What action took place?	Where did this action happen?	Who carried out the action?	Who did the action affect?	Why did the action happen?	How was the person affected?
#1						
#2						
#3						

IV. Defining and Labeling the Concept (20 minutes)

After students have completed the chart, I will then instruct them to discuss and answer the following questions about the examples. First, students will discuss the differences between the examples with their

group, and will be expected to come up with three differences. Students will spend roughly four minutes completing this activity. After this time, I will spend another four minutes having students share their responses with the class, and record their responses on the board under the title “Differences.” Students should respond with answers such as different time, different place, different action, etc.

Next, I will ask students to complete the same activity, but this time they must come up with similarities instead of differences. Because this assignment is a bit harder, I will instruct students to refer back to their charts, reflecting on what action took place, the reason behind the action, and whom the action affected. Students will spend roughly five minutes discussing this prompt with their group, and again will be expected to come up with three similarities. After the students discuss in groups, I will again have students discuss as a class for four minutes, and record their responses on the board. Students should say that all examples (1) were some type of differential, unfavorable action, (2) were directed toward a person or group of people with a specific attribute or characteristic, such as race, ethnicity, etc., and (3) resulted in inequality or disadvantage.

After this class exercise, I will then circle these ideas, and write “Concept Characteristics” on the board. I will direct students to their Example Analysis worksheets, where they will complete a section that asks them to list three characteristics of the concept.

Example Analysis

Differences: Take 5 minutes to discuss with your group the differences you see between the examples. List 3 differences between the examples below.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Similarities: Take 5 minutes to discuss with your group the similarities you see between the examples. List 3 similarities between the examples below.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Concept Characteristics: As a class, we discussed similar characteristics of each example. Take 5 minutes to list these 3 common characteristics you see among the examples below.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Once students have completed the concept characteristics section, I will then ask them to create their own definition of the concept using all three of the given characteristics. Students will spend three minutes completing this activity with their group, and write their final definition in space provided on the Example Analysis worksheet. I will then ask students to share their definitions with the entire class. Using their responses, I will write the following definition on the whiteboard: *A different, unfavorable action directed toward a particular person because of a specific characteristic or category that leads to inequality and disadvantage.* I will ask students to copy this definition to their worksheets.

After writing this definition on the board, I will then ask students to brainstorm what concept they think this definition describes. If no student can respond with the correct answer, I will write the word “discrimination” on the board, and ask students to write this word on their worksheets.

V. Classifying (22 minutes)

Distinguishing Examples and Non-Examples (10 minutes)

Now that students know what the concept is, I will then have them demonstrate their understanding of the concept by applying their newfound knowledge to other examples. Using Parker’s Type I form of classification, I will have students decide whether a given item is an example or not, and explain why. I will type up these example and non-example descriptions on another worksheet, which I will distribute to each student. I will then read these examples aloud to the class, one at a time. After reading each example, I will ask the students whether they think it is an example or a non-example. I will ask students who think it is a non-example to raise their hands, and then ask students who think it is an example to raise their hands. I will call on students to explain their position. I will repeat this process for each of the items.

Additional Examples

Mega Financial is hiring a new bank manager. Two applicants of different ethnicities apply, and the job goes to the applicant who has more years of banking experience.

Tara is a Muslim American, and wears a scarf covering her hair because of her religious beliefs. At school, students pick on her and make fun of her headscarf.

The American with Disabilities Act of 1990 states that people with disabilities must be provided with similar opportunities as people without disabilities.

Jack and Jill have worked together at Frosty’s, an ice cream shop, for three years. Both are good, hard workers. The manager, Mr. Frosty, has given Jack a pay raise each year, while Jill is paid the same amount as when she started working.

Conclusion and Homework (12 minutes)

Once we finish going over these examples, I will display the initial hook photograph again. I will ask students how they think the man in the photograph feels as a result of this act of the discrimination. The goal of this activity is to have students reach the conclusion that discrimination is wrong, and something that is unacceptable in our society.

I will then assign students their homework for the class. The homework prompt will be typed on the back of the examples/non-examples worksheet. I will explain that students are to reflect on examples of discrimination that they have seen in history. For the homework assignment, each student must come up with one example of discrimination in United States history, and write two to three sentences on why this is an example of discrimination. As the class continues to learn about Jim Crow laws, immigration, and women's rights, students should be able to recognize and understand instances of discrimination throughout history.

Homework Assignment

In class today, we learned about the concept of discrimination. As a class, we determined that discrimination has three attributes:

1. Discrimination is type of differential, unfavorable action.
2. Discrimination is directed toward a person or group of people because of a specific attribute or characteristic, such as race, ethnicity, etc.
3. Discrimination results in inequality or unfair disadvantage.

For this homework assignment, I want you think about possible examples of discrimination in history. Choose one historical example of discrimination, and write a brief explanation (3-4 sentences) on why you think this is discrimination. Be sure address each of the three attributes in your explanation.

Resources

- 25 printed copies of the Data Retrieval Chart and Example Analysis
- 25 printed copies of Example/Non-Example worksheet
- 25 printed copies of homework assignment
- PowerPoint Presentation with photograph and example slides
- Working computer projector and projector screen
- Whiteboard and whiteboard markers

Differentiation

During this lesson, students will work in three different mediums: individually, in small groups, and as an entire class. By having students work by themselves for the hook section of the lesson, I hope to get students thinking on their own about the concept. These initial thoughts can then be later applied to both the small group and larger discussion. By then instructing that students work in their small groups, I hope that students who might struggle with the activity will receive help from their classmates, and those students who quickly understand the concept will be able to share their ideas with the entire class.

The type of lesson requires a level of higher thinking and analysis, so that all students must be actively engaged throughout throughout the entire class period. By breaking the activities into individual, small group, and entire class work, I hope to appeal to all students.

Adaptations

Although this lesson is initially designed for a regular seventh grade class, it can be further adapted to fit different types of learners. If students have trouble with reading comprehension, all examples can be read aloud by the teacher, instead of having the students read the “anonymous” examples on their own. Similarly, if students really struggle with reading, I can find video clips or visual images depicting discrimination, to minimize the amount of reading. The final homework assignment could also be condensed or adapted for students with writing disabilities. Perhaps instead of writing a paragraph, students will simply share in class their examples.

On the other hand, this assignment can also be adapted for both higher-level seventh grade learners and high school students. The examples included in this lesson plan are relatively brief descriptions, designed specifically for middle schoolers. If I wanted to teach this lesson to high schoolers, I could lengthen these example descriptions, adding more detail and context. Furthermore, if provided enough time, I could plan a discussion where students deliberate the causes and effects of discrimination on the individual and society, or assign a longer writing assignment in the form of a short essay.

Post-Teaching Reflection

I taught this lesson this past October to all four of my seventh grade US History II sections. It was the first lesson I taught to my students, and I was initially a bit concerned about time constraints, but the lesson went smoothly and fit perfectly within the 60-minute class period. Throughout the lesson, I was careful to stick to the time parameters I previously allotted for each activity, which kept the students actively engaged and prevented any “lag time” that might have distracted from the lesson.

I was also worried about the level of participation among students prior to teaching, but the collaborative nature and question-and-answer format of the lesson was a good and effective way to encourage all students to participate. Since many of the questions of this lesson revolved around simple observations, instead of conclusions or opinions, many students felt more comfortable sharing, and the majority of students were eager to do so. I had to remind certain classes to raise their hands before speaking a few times, but overall I was very pleased with the level of engagement and active participation among the students.

The students responded well to this type of lesson, and although some students were able to figure out the concept before its big reveal, they still seemed to enjoy learning in this particular format. My cooperating teacher had students rate the lesson through an online survey, and he said that the majority of the students gave the lesson positive feedback.

In regards to academic quality and rigor, this lesson exemplified many of the PASS Standards. In the lesson, the students analyzed historical examples and reached new understanding about a concept (Higher Order Thinking, Connections Beyond the Classroom, and Deep Knowledge), and did so in an extended conversational exchange with their peers in a small group and as a class (Substantive Conversation). I

read and graded all of the students' homework responses, and nearly all students were able to come up with their own historical example of discrimination, though a few seemed confused about the prompt – in the future, I will be more thorough in my explanation for the assignment. Roughly two-thirds of the class addressed all attributes of the concept, and some students went above and beyond the assignment by explaining why they thought discrimination was wrong. In general, these homework responses served as a good way to assess the effectiveness of the class, but also helped to develop students' critical thinking and writing skills.

Although the topic of the lesson revolved around an undemocratic value, I asked students why discrimination was wrong at the end of lesson, and students were quick to share their opinions (Ethical Valuing). Further lesson adaptation could help students get to the root of why this concept is wholly undemocratic, and could deepen students' understanding of democracy as well. Finally, the lesson encompassed the standard of Integration by having students examine examples from different times and places in history. In the future, I could adapt this lesson for different units or classes by including different examples aligned with a specific time period. Furthermore, this lesson could integrate more technological options – for example, instead of using written examples, I could have students view video clips using the school's set of iPads, or instead of having students respond to the homework in class, assign a blog post assignment through Edline. These simple modifications would achieve the same knowledge and skills objectives of the original lesson, but would also help students develop fluency with technology.

Overall, I enjoyed writing and teaching this type of lesson. When thoughtfully designed and implemented, I think Concept Formation Lessons effectively teach understanding and identification of a new concept that can be utilized throughout the entire school year, and help students develop valuable examination and analysis skills.

Data Retrieval Chart (side 1 of worksheet 1)

On the board, you will see three different example descriptions. For each example, fill out the following chart. Be specific when you answer these questions!

Concept Example	What action took place?	Where did this action happen?	Who carried out the action?	Who did the action affect?	How was the person affected?
#1					
#2					
#3					

Example Analysis (side 2 of worksheet 1)

We will now think about the three examples. With your group, please complete the following worksheet.

Differences: Take 5 minutes to discuss with your group the differences you see between the examples. List 3 differences between the examples below.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Similarities: Take 5 minutes to discuss with your group the similarities you see between the examples. List 3 similarities between the examples below.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Concept Attributes: As a class, we discussed similar characteristics of each example. Take 5 minutes to list these 3 common characteristics you see among the examples below.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

[Please note: Students should write the concept name and definition in this space]

Examples and Non-Examples (side 1 of worksheet 2)

Now that we have identified the concept of discrimination and established its definition and attributes, please use what you have learned to determine whether the following descriptions are examples or non-examples of discrimination. Refer back to worksheet 1, and use the concept attributes and definitions to complete this activity.

1. Mega Financial is hiring a new bank manager. Two applicants of different ethnicities apply, and the job goes to the applicant who has more years of banking experience. Is this an example or a non-example of discrimination?
2. Tara is a Muslim American, and wears a scarf covering her hair because of her religious beliefs. At school, students pick on her and make fun of her headscarf. Is this an example or a non-example of discrimination?
3. The American with Disabilities Act of 1990 states that people with disabilities must be provided with similar opportunities as people without disabilities. Is this an example or a non-example of discrimination?
4. Jack and Jill have worked together at Frosty's, an ice cream shop, for three years. Both are good, hard workers. The manager, Mr. Frosty, has given Jack a pay raise each year, while Jill is paid the same amount as when she started working. Is this an example or a non-example of discrimination?

Homework Assignment (side 2 of worksheet 2)

In class today, we learned about the concept of discrimination. As a class, we determined that discrimination has three attributes:

1. Discrimination is type of differential, unfavorable action.
2. Discrimination is directed toward a person or group of people because of a specific attribute or characteristic, such as race, ethnicity, etc.
3. Discrimination results in inequality or unfair disadvantage.

For this homework assignment, I want you think about possible examples of discrimination in history. Choose one historical example of discrimination, and write a brief explanation (3-4 sentences) on why you think this is discrimination. Be sure address each of the three attributes in your explanation.