

HOW CAN CITIZENS WORK TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES FACING OUR STATE TODAY?



Protestors march across Spring Street demonstrating opposition to freeway construction, Seattle, June 1961 [Courtesy Museum of History & Industry](#).

What challenges face the people of Washington State today?

How can citizens work to address those challenges?

How will the growth of Seattle and Bellevue influence the need for additional or more updated ways to cross the lake in the future?

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PRIMARY OBJECTIVES OF THIS UNIT

To provide non-fiction materials, educational resources, and primary and secondary resources that will assist students to:

- understand that people from different cultures have diverse ideas and different ways of life, much like the students who make up their classroom and school.
- learn how individuals can influence decisions that will have long term consequences for their state, city, neighborhood, or school and, potentially, a permanent impact on their lives.
- be informed about current issues and understand that taking part in decision-making processes is both a right and responsibility of all citizens.
- identify several of the issues that have impacted the lives of those who live in the Lake Washington area or those who travel on the roadways or bridges that serve it.
- conduct research on the pros and cons of these issues and examine different perspectives.
- make informed decisions in preparation for voting for or against these issues.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

- Students will read recommended HistoryLink.org essays, examine and analyze suggested primary and secondary sources, participate in directed class discussions, and prepare a cohesive paper or presentation.

- Students will conduct research on several current issues facing those who live or work near Lake Washington, (i.e. bridge placement, expecting taxpayers to foot cost of constant maintenance, enforcing tolls on those using the bridge(s)/roadways, etc.).
- Students will write a research paper and prepare an accurate bibliography with credible sources.

MATERIALS INCLUDED

- Links to primary/secondary resources (DOCUMENTS #2: NEWSPAPER ARTICLES).
- Worksheet/graphic organizer (WORKSHEET #9)

MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT NEEDED

- Computer, Internet access, and overhead projector, or copies of sets of primary sources.
- Copy of worksheet for each student or small groups of students

TIME MANAGEMENT

- 3-5 class periods

RECOMMENDED GRADE LEVELS

- Grades 7 and 8

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Throughout the years, the leaders of Washington State have made laws that protect our personal rights, the environment, and public safety. Many of the laws that govern us today were written and enacted over 100 years ago. With changing times, it is important for people to review the laws that are currently in effect and take an active role in supporting or challenging new laws or decisions that are being proposed.

People have always had the right to respond to the government's decisions and cast their votes, but it was not always easy because of difficulties in communicating effectively. There were language barriers and delays in getting information about government rulings. There was no Internet and postal service was limited until more recently.

Several environmental protection laws were passed at the federal and state levels in the early 1970s, including the National Environmental Policy Act and the State Environmental Policy Act, which required the consideration of public input about government-funded projects. This made it easier for people to get involved and have their voices heard.

Although they cannot vote, young adults also must be responsible citizens by helping keep their schools and neighborhoods clean, respecting others' property, and listening to adults and teachers when they discuss issues that will affect their homes, schools, or neighborhoods. They should be aware that it will soon be their responsibility to guide the government by staying informed and electing officials who will continue to make wise choices for the citizens and environment of Washington State. They can start by learning to negotiate problems by researching and weighing the alternatives, using good judgment, thinking about what is best for everyone who will be affected by the decision, and looking into ways of letting government officials know how they feel about the issue.



Dredging the site of the west approach bridge structure (1961) Photo courtesy of MOHAI, Seattle P-I Collection, image no., image no. 1986.5.7575.2

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Commuter: person who travels in a vehicle to and from work and home

Constitution: the basic principles and laws of a nation, state, or social group that determine the powers and duties of the government and guarantee certain rights to the people in it

Impose: to establish or apply by authority

Maintain: to keep in an existing state

Toll: a fee that is paid to travel over certain roadways or bridges



Looking east along the SR 520 corridor. The WSDOT Peninsula is in the foreground, and the "Ramps to Nowhere" can be seen extending southbound. Photo courtesy of Jet Lowe, NPS

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SUGGESTED CLASSROOM BASED ASSESSMENT (CBA)

Constitutional Issues: Citizens in a democracy have the right and responsibility to make informed decisions. After researching and discussing different perspectives on this issue, students will make an informed decision on a public issue.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- Have students read the recommended 520History.org web pages and HistoryLink.org essays (SEE ABOVE).
- As a class, review the rights and responsibilities guaranteed to citizens of Washington State. Have these always been the case for people who lived in this area? Discuss the difference between “individual rights” and the “common good.” Does the government allow citizens to have input into decisions that affect their neighborhoods? Provide information to students about when Washington’s state laws and constitution were written and enacted – and when that was in relationship to the time periods studied in this unit.
- Ask your students to select one of the issues suggested on WORKSHEET #9 and conduct research on several current issues facing those who live or work near Lake Washington.
- Provide the set of primary sources (DOCUMENTS #2: NEWSPAPER ARTICLES) that they can use as a start for research on bridge issues in the SR520 Project region. Have students go to HistoryLink.org Education page, then to Primary and Secondary Sources under the menu labeled “For Students.” They will find dozens of additional online resources listed there, including

The Seattle Times Historical Archive and Historic Newspapers in Washington State Online Project. These resources will allow them to find additional relevant newspaper articles to help with their research.

- Using information from their research, students will either prepare a research paper supporting personal views on the issue or participate in a town-hall meeting with classmates to discuss different perspectives on the issue(s). Each will cite resources in their paper presentation and state why they were credible resources. If participating in the town-hall meeting, students will cite their resources and why they determined they were credible in helping make their decision. Students in the town-hall meeting will conduct a vote on the issue after presentations and discussions of all different perspectives have been completed.

HOW TO CITE HISTORYLINK AS A SOURCE IN YOUR WRITTEN PAPER:

For most purposes, we recommend using the following format (shown with a sample essay) to cite HistoryLink.org: *Formal name of the encyclopedia*, “Name of the essay” (author’s name), link to encyclopedia (date accessed).

Example: *HistoryLink.org Online Encyclopedia of Washington State History*, “President Franklin Roosevelt tours the Olympic Peninsula on October 1, 1937” (by Kit Oldham), <http://www.historylink.org/> (accessed November 3, 2004).

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PRIMARY SOURCES

DOCUMENTS

- set of newspaper article that are directly related to the building of bridges over Lake Washington, environmental issues concerning the lake's resources and accessibility, and how people have been involved in voicing their opinions about these matters (DOCUMENTS #2: NEWSPAPER ARTICLES).

ORAL HISTORIES

- interviews/transcripts of interviews with people whose culture, business, or property has been affected by building bridges and the use of water or lake resources

MAPS

- Map of transportation corridors (MAP #4).

SECONDARY SOURCES

WASHINGTON: A STATE OF CONTRASTS

- Chapter 13 – Power to the People

RELEVANT HISTORYLINK.ORG ESSAYS

8860 Bridges of Washington State: A Slide-show Primer of Technology Through Time

682 Lake Washington Floating Bridge is dedicated on July 2, 1940

4168 Washington establishes an office for designing the route of the Seattle Freeway (Interstate 5) on April 1, 1957

689 Evergreen Point Floating Bridge construction starts during August 1960

4167 First Hill neighborhood objects to Seattle freeway route at public hearing on September 13, 1961

3312 Lake Washington Ship Canal (Interstate 5) opens for traffic in December 1962

690 Evergreen Point Floating Bridge opens on August 8, 1963

690 Evergreen Point Floating Bridge opens on August 8, 1963

7783 Puget Sound Regional Transportation Study releases its final report on September 30, 1967

1229 Thousands protest planned freeway through Seattle Arboretum on May 4, 1969

9393 Interstate 5 is completed in Washington state on May 14, 1969

3156 Seattle City Council approves Bay Freeway plans in November, 1970

2271 Freeway protests in Seattle on May 5, 1970: A Policeman's View

3911 Vashon Island residents opposed proposed bridge at public meeting on March 9, 1992

7367 Legislature approves \$8.5 billion on transportation tax package which will survive a ballot challenge on April 24, 2005

RELEVANT 520HISTORY.ORG PAGES

- Cuts and Crossings
- Community Development and Suburbanization
- Eastside Communities
- Looking Toward the Future: 1956-Present
- The Evergreen Point Floating Bridge
- Planning & Development
- Engineering & Construction

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ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES

- **iCivics:** iCivics.org prepares young Americans to become knowledgeable, engaged 21st century citizens by creating free and innovative educational materials
- **League of Women Voters:** Find your state, and national representatives
- **Seattle Municipal Archives:** Seattle’s city archives has a number of online resources relating to city government
- **Seattle Times Historical Archive** is now accessible free through the Seattle Public Library (SPL) website. Digitized copies of the Seattle Times from 1900 to 1984 are found under the reference category “Magazines & Newspapers.” You must have a valid **Seattle Library Card** or go to a library in order to access this SPL resource.
- **Historic Newspapers in Washington State Online** Project is part of the Washington State Library’s program to make its rare, historical resources more accessible to students, teachers, and citizens across the state. Search the Digital Collections at The Seattle Times Newspapers in Education offers educational materials for students and curricula for teachers. <http://services.nwsources.com/nie/times/>
- Washington State Legislature: Civics Education, includes how a Bill Becomes a Law and Tribal Sovereignty
 - **Civics Education - Teachers**
 - **Civics Education - Grades K-5**
 - **Civics Education - Grades 6-12**
- **Let’s Cross That Bridge When We Come to It:** Curriculum developed by HistoryLink.org that explores the history of bridges in Washington.

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SOCIAL STUDIES EALR 1: CIVICS

- **1.1.2** Analyzes the relationship between the actions of people in Washington State and the ideals outlined in the State Constitution
- **1.2.3** Understands various forms of government and their effects on the lives of people in the past or present.
- **1.4.1** Understands that effective civic participation involves being informed about public issues and voting in elections and understands the effectiveness of different forms of civic involvement.

SOCIAL STUDIES EALR 2: ECONOMICS

- **2.4.1** Understands how geography, natural resources, climate, and available labor contribute to the sustainability of the economy of regions in Washington State. (Grade 4)

SOCIAL STUDIES EALR 3: GEOGRAPHY

- **3.1.1** Understands how the environment affects cultural groups and how cultural groups affect the environment.
- **3.1.1** Understands how technology and ideas have affected the way people have affected the way people lived and changed their values, beliefs, and attitudes. (Grade 4)
- **3.2.1** Understands and analyzes how the environment has affected people and how people have affected the environment in Washington State in the past or present. (Grade 7)

SOCIAL STUDIES EALR 4: HISTORY

- **4.2.1** Understands and analyzes the causal factors that have shaped events in history.
- **4.2.3** Understands how technology and ideas have affected the way people lived and changed their values, beliefs, and attitudes.

SOCIAL STUDIES EALR 5: SOCIAL STUDIES SKILLS

- **5.1** Uses critical reasoning skills to analyze and evaluate positions
- **5.2** Uses inquiry-based research.
 - **5.2.1** Creates and uses research questions to guide inquiry on an issue or event. (Grade 7)
 - **5.2.1** Creates and uses research questions that are tied to an essential question or focus inquiry on an issue. (Grade 8)
- **5.3.1** Analyzes and responds to multiple viewpoints on public issues brought forth in the context of a discussion.
- **5.4.1** Analyzes multiple factors, makes generalizations, and interprets primary sources to formulate a thesis in a paper or presentation.
- **5.4.2** Creates annotated bibliography or works cited page using an appropriate format.

READING EALRS

- **1.3.2** Understand and apply content/academic vocabulary critical to the meaning of the text. Use new vocabulary in oral and written communication and content/academic text.
- **2.1.3** State the main idea of an informational/expository text passage and provide three or more text-based details that support it.
- **2.1.5** Apply comprehension monitoring strategies for informational and technical materials, complex narratives, and expositions: synthesize ideas from selections to make predictions and inferences.
- **2.4.1** Analyze informational/expository text and literary narrative text for similarities and differences and cause and effect relationships. (Grade 7)
- **2.4.3** Analyze and evaluate text for validity and accuracy. (Grade 8)