

## Why is a civic society important?

Can be taught in multiple disciplines

Age group: 16-19 but can be adapted for different age groups

Europe: Minimum 3 “lesson days”

USA: 5-7 Days not including extension activity

### Teachers:

**Andrzej G**, Poland, Krakow, III Liceum Ogólnokształcące, history & civic education teacher, coordinator of Polish-Izraela project “Understanding the Past”

**Ana L** Croatia, Zagreb, 18th gymnasium (high school), psychology teacher and teacher of Methodology of teaching psychology in University. Using RWCT method in teaching.

**Lazar N.**, Serbia; Belgrade, Nikola Tesla High School, Religious Education and Ethics. He works as a teacher for the past 10 years.

**Shalini Sarkar**, USA; Houston, TX, Alief Hastings High School. Holocaust & Genocide Studies & World History

*Why is a civic society important* is a lesson to encourage high school students to become active citizens in their community. Students will be analyzing photographs of human rights violations in ex-communist countries and present day and comparing to their current community. Students will be watching *Survival in Sarajevo* to understand how those facing adversity can organize to build and maintain a civic society. The goal of this lesson is for students to learn how to become active citizens in order to build and maintain a civic society.

### Objectives:

1. Name & explain human rights by analyzing the Declaration of Human Rights
2. Explore & present examples of violating the human rights in ex-communist countries and present day by analyzing photographs, videos and other primary sources
3. Describe how people can organize and help others by creating a public service announcement
4. Explore & present NGO's in their own community/country/city by using research methodologies
5. Explain why civic society is important and how can they can participate in creating a civic is a society by creating a public service announcement.

**Essential skills and knowledge:**

**(1) Social studies skills. The student uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others, in a variety of settings. The student is expected to:**

(A) apply social studies methodologies encompassing a variety of research and analytical tools to explore questions or issues thoroughly and fairly to include multiple perspectives;

(B) evaluate effects of major political, economic, and social conditions on a selected social studies topic;

(D) examine the role of diverse communities in the context of the selected topic;

(E) analyze ethical issues raised by the selected topic in historic, cultural, and social contexts;

(F) depending on the topic, use a problem-solving process to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution; and

(G) depending on the topic, use a decision-making process to identify a situation that requires a decision, gather information, identify options, predict consequences, and take action to implement a decision.

**(2) Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology. The student is expected to:**

(A) locate, analyze, organize, synthesize, evaluate, and apply information about the selected topic, identifying, describing, and evaluating multiple points of view.

### Step 1.

**Time:**

- **Europe: 20 minutes**
- **USA: Day 1**

Students will examine their own society in groups with the following questions:

What are my rights in society?	What are my struggles?	What are my responsibilities in society?
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Summarize group answers during class discussion and create a large class list.

### Step 2.

**Time:**

- **Europe: 20-25 minutes**
- **USA: Day 2-3**

Students will receive 5-10 photos that display economic, social, religious and political struggles in communist countries, post-communist countries, and present day democracies. Teachers will reveal information about photograph after analyzing.

In groups analyze photographs of human violations from ex-communist countries and USA:

- Where is this picture taken?
- When was this picture taken?
- What do you think is happening in this picture?
- Who do you think is struggling in the picture?
- Why did this event happen?

Students will be given simplified version of Declaration of Human Rights. Students will match photos to the human right that is being violated.

Groups will share their findings.

### Step 3.

**Time:**

- **Europe: 45 Minutes**
- **USA: Day 4**

Watch the Centropa film “*Survival in Sarajevo*”.

Students will answer guided questions individually during watching the film.

After the film, students will discuss in groups thoughts about Survival in Sarajevo.

Students will come up with a list of how citizens organized during time of hardship.

Groups will present their findings to the class.

#### **Step 4.**

##### **Time:**

- **Europe: Research NGO for homework. Presentation in class (45 minutes)**
- **USA: Day 5-8**

Students will look back at Step 1 activity and reflect on their society. In their small groups students will choose two “Struggles” they face.

Students will choose two struggles in their small groups and begin researching NGO-s and local organizations that address that problem. Once they find organizations that meet their needs, students will use the following guiding questions to research. These questions can also be used for class discussion.

- What is the name of the NGO?
- When was the NGO established?
- What problems does the NGO address?
- Why was this NGO established?
- What are some activities the NGO hosts in your community?
- How can you get involved in this NGO?
- How can I participate in a civic society?

Using these guiding questions, students will prepare a short presentation for class.

#### **Closing activity**

##### *Option 1:*

Class will choose **two** civil society issues and NGOs that address those issues to share with students from Poland, Serbia and Croatia.

Options for sharing: Schoology / Twitter / Students create podcasts

*Option 2:*

Students will create posters describing current civil society problems and NGOs that address problems to display around school.

*Option 3:*

Students can create digital display such as an infographic or video to be broadcasted.

**Optional Photographs**



Poland in 1982, march of workers from Steel Factory in Nowa Huta, district of Krakow to Arka Pana, main church of Nowa Huta and fight with police forces.



Food lines in USSR, representing economic struggle.



Police Brutality in the United States



Communists destroy places of worship