



ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

Who is Listening?

I HAVE:

Two Days

TYPES OF ACTIVITIES:

- ✓ Reflective writing
- ✓ Group work
- ✓ Out of their seat
- ✓ Smartboard or projector and laptop for video

MATERIALS:

- 2 Placards for BLUE STATE LEGISLATOR
- 2 placards for RED STATE LEGISLATOR
- 1 placard for STATE SUPREME COURT JUSTICE
- enough BLUE and RED dots for each student in the class
- roll of string
- masking tape
- Worksheets for: **Three rounds of Maps, Groupings Exercise, Crash Course Questions**

STEP-BY-STEP:

DAY ONE:

Select four students to be state legislators and give them the *STATE LEGISLATOR* placards, assign two students to be member of the BLUE party, and the other two students members of the RED party.

Select one student to be a member of the *Supreme Court*, and they will also be a scribe for the chart on the board. This student will also be creating a map of districts that they think is the most fair.

Explain to the class that the state legislators and judge will be dividing the class into districts, and the citizens in the same district will be voting in elections together.

Distribute large BLUE and RED dot placards to entire class, make sure there is a density of blue dots in one area, and more blue dots overall by a small margin.

Write the following charts on the board (Judge will transcribe results of map #1 & 2 and teacher will be scribe for map #3)

Give the BLUE legislators two large pieces of string and a roll of tape, and allow them to walk around the room and decide how they want to divide up the class into four districts. **The districts must be the same number of students and contiguous.** Once they decide, assist them in taping the string to the ground or desk corners acting as boundary lines. Once they've completed their districts introduce everyone in the same district to each other, and count up the number of BLUE and RED dots in each of the three districts. Have the Supreme Court justice record the totals of BLUE and RED voters in each district in your chart on the board

At the end of Round 1 ask the Blue Legislators to assign themselves a district and the two RED legislators districts that they have to win during the next election.

Complete the same round with the RED legislators.

At the end of Rounds 1 and 2, ask the legislators to sit to the side and take the string and tape down.

Give the string to the judge and ask the class to give the judge input on what would be the fairest way to come up with the districts. This may take a few minutes, as you want to get input from as many students as you can. Look over the results from all three rounds and ask students:



KEEP IN MIND:

- The rounds might take some time so be prepared to be engaging the class constructively while the legislators decide.
- During the last round, the class may decide it would be better if the judge didn't even know if people were members of the BLUE and RED party and want to turn their placards over.
- The Crash Course host talks SUPER fast so it's recommended teachers slow down the video or stop it at intervals to ask comprehension questions and start video at .58 (he uses too many big words prior to this that will makes kids feel dumb and stop listening.
- You may want to review vocabulary before this lesson (see 'Let's Talk About It')

- a) What effect did giving the legislators control over map-making have?
- b) (Select a BLUE legislators district from Round 1) What will happen when one of our BLUE legislators runs for election in district _____?
- c) (Select a RED legislators district from Round 2) What has happened to the "voting power" of BLUE voters in district _____?
- d) Do you agree with the Judge's map or would you have gone about it differently? Explain fully.

Homework: Complete worksheet on Groupings

DAY TWO--

Journal: Based on yesterday's activity, what do you think happens when politicians in Pennsylvania's legislature are allowed to draw the districts of their voters? What role did the member of the Judicial Branch play? Based on their role, do you think judges they should be elected by voters or appointed by state representatives?

Discuss journal and review any aspects of the activity yesterday that are pertinent to journal answers.

Distribute **video questions** and either play through and have students answer, or stop at intervals and ask for answers aloud:

Crash Course Government and Politics: Gerrymandering
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MnhFm5QVVTo>

IT WENT WELL! EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

Try *Sharing My Info* lesson in *Do I Count?*

More video options can be found at:

Playlist-- https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLB7FI_GiGMAZVW-OqPKTGRnCvW-hHpYJC

Gerrymandering in PA: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B_1TChFSOjU

How Gerrymandering Works: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mky11UJb9AY>

Data mining use in gerrymandering: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=54&v=kBlz6SB_JLc

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YcUDBgYodIE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bGLRJ12uqmk>

This clip clearly takes a position on gerrymandering but uses pop culture kids will know: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JF4jvJNvCqY>