

United States History and Citizenship: Founding Documents

PO.8, EO. 1

Introduction

Begin the lesson by introducing the category of United States History and Citizenship. A part of the Young Marines program is grooming Young Marines to become respectful and responsible citizens. Part of this is understanding some of the feelings and ideas that began when our country was founded which is why they will start by learning more about the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem. Explain that even though they probably know or have heard both the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem, it is important to also know the history behind them and understand the meaning of the words in both.

Direct Instruction

The instruction for this lesson will take place in two parts, first for the Pledge of Allegiance and then for the National Anthem, but the process will be the same for both documents.

1. Give a brief history of the document using the PowerPoint and notes provided.
2. Have the recruits recite the pledge/anthem or play a motivational version. The videos are embedded in the PowerPoint after the slides with the text of both documents.
3. Finally, using the measured slide, go through each document phrase by phrase with the recruits asking them what they think each phrase means. Be sure to ask them follow up questions in order to clarify their answers. Ask multiple recruits their opinions on each line to get a variety of ideas and try to come to a consensus on the meaning of the lines. Avoid leading questions and offering your own answers. It is ok to add to a recruit's answer or clarify their response, but you want to avoid giving them answers before they can think of their own responses and interpretations.

Independent/Group Practice

This portion of the lesson can be done one of two ways depending on the time you have/personal preference. The recruits will be creating their own interpretations of the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem. You can either have all of the recruits do both, or you can split the recruits in half and assign each half a different document to work with. If you choose the first option of having everyone do both, be sure to split up your direct instruction time so that you discuss the document and then have recruits create their interpretation before moving on to the next one.

Split your recruits into their teams or small groups and give each a copy of the document they are to work with, paper, a piece of poster paper, and writing and coloring utensils of some kind. Have the recruits write their interpretation of each line or phrase of their document on the copy you've given them first before making their poster. Once they are finished, instruct them to have an adult or instructor check their work. This is a good time to ensure that all of the recruits understand the documents they are working with. Make sure to clear up any misconceptions before giving them clearance to create their poster. When the teams' interpretations have been checked, they can write their interpretation on their poster and display it in the training room.

Evaluation

After the recruits have finished their posters, ask for a few volunteers to share their work. Wrap up the lesson by breaking the recruits into groups to recite both the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem. Assign an instructor or adult to each group to check the recitations of each recruit.

Re-teaching opportunity: If any of the recruits are struggling to remember the words to either document, have them create flashcards with words or phrases from the pledge or the anthem, whichever they are struggling with, on each card. They can mix up the cards and put the words or phrases in the correct order to practice.

Reflection

At the end of the lesson, after everyone has completed their recitations, ask the recruits to reflect on what they learned about the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem. Ask them once again why it is important for them to know about both documents and about how they feel about them now that they know the history and meaning behind the words.