

LESSON PLAN CIVIC DISCOURSE CATO INSTITUTE JULY 15, 2019

PURPOSE:

To engage students in a better understanding of basic ideology terms and how they align on a basic linear spectrum.

For students to self-identify (liberal v. conservative) and then take a political test to see where they would be plotted on a grid system based on answers to the test.

Gain a more nuanced understanding of political labels.

Compare/contrast student points.

PROCEDURE:

(1) create a basic linear political spectrum (degree of change): left v. right, radical v. reaction, liberal v. conservative

(2) students anonymously identify themselves as liberal or conservative (or however they want to identify themselves); use slips of paper

(3) collect slips of paper and record the results on a basic linear political spectrum written on the classroom board

(4) direct students to **politicalcompass.org**

(5) students take the test; record their results on a blank slip of paper

(6) student positions are plotted on a blank political compass grid projected on the classroom board

DEBRIEFING QUESTIONS:

(1) how much difference is there between the original alignment and the plotting generated from taking the political compass test?

(2) is the class closer together or more spread out than initially thought?

(3) where are the extremes? is the class extreme or moderate?

(4) what is the difference between economic issues v. social issues (examples from the test); how can you be “liberal” considering one type of issue and “conservative” considering another type of issue?

(5) how much better do you understand yourself? After taking the test were you where you thought you were?

submitted by David Kelly