

Lesson plan

Author: Mária Rišková

Lesson title: The European Union and its values

Lesson brief description:

This lesson introduces students to European values, inclusion, multiculturalism, and the history of the EU. Through activities like timeline creation, role-play discussions and reflective writing, students can explore how shared values and diversity strengthen Europe. The lesson integrates history and social studies with English language skills, fostering critical thinking, collaboration, and cultural awareness.

Time (Lesson duration):
90 minutes

Methodology: (group, individual, peer assessment, brainstorming, etc...):

The lesson uses a mix of methods to help students learn by doing and thinking. They work in groups to discuss ideas, solve tasks like creating a timeline, and role-play real-world scenarios. Videos and visuals make it easier to understand, and writing tasks help them reflect. It combines learning about European values and history with practicing English, making the lesson interactive and practical.

Materials needed:

PowerPoint presentation or visuals for EU values and history, a short video (3–5 minutes) on the EU's formation and values, handouts with vocabulary and key points, worksheet for creating a timeline, group discussion prompts and sheets of paper

Students' age: 14 – 15 years

Aims/Goals or SWBATs (Students will be able to.....)

- Students will be able to explain the core values of the EU
- Students will be able to create a timeline of EU milestones
- Students will be able to discuss how inclusion and multiculturalism shape Europe today

Lead-in *What's going to happen here to introduce your students to the topic?* Time 10 min

Students work in small groups to brainstorm values or things that unite European countries. This activity sparks curiosity and activates prior knowledge. Then, as a class, we share ideas and connect them to the EU's core values, setting the stage for the lesson.

What key-concepts could teachers focus on? What needs to be pre-taught? Time 25 min

Teachers should focus on European values such as dignity, freedom, democracy, and equality. They should also highlight the importance of multiculturalism, including inclusion, diversity, and cooperation. Key vocabulary like inclusion, treaty, and diversity should be introduced before the lesson. Students should also have a brief overview of what the EU is and its geography.

List of activities with brief description of each one and time for each one:

- Warm-up brainstorming "What do we have in common?": 10 minutes. I divide students into small groups and ask them to list values or aspects that unite European countries. We share ideas as a class and introduce the EU's core values.
- Preteaching European values and multiculturalism: 10 minutes. I show students a short video explaining the EU's values and the importance of inclusion. I introduce key vocabulary (dignity, equality, inclusion, diversity). We can discuss how multiculturalism strengthens Europe.
- Preteaching history of the EU: 15 minutes. I am going to present major events in the EU history (e.g. founding in 1957, Maastricht Treaty, expansion phases). I am going to emphasize cooperation, peace-building, and shared goals.
- Activity 1 - Timeline Creation: 15 min. Students work in pairs to arrange event cards into a correct sequence, forming a timeline. We share and review the timeline as a class.
- Activity 2 - Role-Play Discussion: 15 min. I divide students into groups as before. I assign roles (e.g. EU official, university student, immigrant, entrepreneur, a member of the church). Groups discuss scenarios related to inclusion and multiculturalism (e.g. creating policies to integrate immigrants, celebrating diversity in schools, implementing a new law concerning same-sex marriages) – each member of the group should state their opinion on the scenario.
- Group Discussion: 5 min. I ask students how can inclusion and multiculturalism help build a stronger Europe. Groups share ideas and connect them to EU values.
- Group Reflection: 15 min. Every group gets a sheet of paper to write down their points on the topic importance of inclusion in a multicultural Europe. Groups briefly present their ideas.

What are other follow up (or homework) activities that can be included?

Homework: Research and present one current EU initiative that promotes inclusion or diversity.

What methodology / activities are used for assessment?

Students can get the plus points for participation in group activities and discussions, accuracy and creativity in the timeline activity, quality of written reflection.

Other thoughts about this lesson plan:

- Another interdisciplinary connections for CLIL approach: the lesson can be also connected with geography (mapping EU countries) or citizenship education (rights and responsibilities in the EU).
- Adaptability: Activities can be adjusted for different English proficiency levels or to accommodate larger/smaller classes.
- Extension opportunities: Students could research specific EU programs promoting inclusion, like Erasmus+ or asylum policies. They could also explore current challenges facing the EU (e.g. migration, agenda 2030 topics).
- Real-world relevance: Discussing recent EU initiatives or news events related to inclusion could connect the lesson to students' lives.