

## **The Butterfly Effect and the First Amendment**

### **Objective:**

Pro-democracy movements occurring in 2010-2011 across the regions of the Middle East and North Africa provide students with an exceptional opportunity to study the role geography, modern communications technology, and the principles of the First Amendment have played in the assertion of human rights, such as free speech, freedom of assembly, and civil liberties for global citizens. The lesson will require students to evaluate the common characteristics of self-government versus autocratic rule, as well as the conditions necessary for a people to obtain civil liberties, such as free speech.

### **Common Core Literacy for Social Studies Standards**

- 1.1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- 1.2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- 1.6. Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose.
- 1.7. Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts) with other information in print and digital texts.
- 1.8. Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
- 2.1. Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content; support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.
- 2.8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources.
- 2.9. Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis and reflection.

### **Oklahoma C3 Standards for World Geography**

- 2.4 Cite specific textual and visual evidence to analyze reasons for conflict and cooperation among groups, societies, countries, and regions of the Eastern Hemisphere, including the struggle for and achievement of civil liberties
- 4.5 Compare and contrast the major political systems of representative governments (democracy, republic, and constitutional monarchy) and authoritarian systems (dictatorship and absolute monarchy) including the role of the citizen in the selection of government officials lawmaking, and the liberties guaranteed under different forms of government.

### **Resources:**

Arab Spring photograph collection (one envelop/packet for every 2-4 students)

"Arab Spring" Powerpoint presentation

Student handouts of the following readings:

"Butterfly Effect" "American Independence Inspires Arab Spring"

"Changing Geography and the Domino Theory"

CSI Investigations Graphic Organizer (one per every 2 students)

Video-clips: "Street Vendor Revolutionizes a Region"

"The Declaration of Independence Revolutionizes the World"

### **Procedure:**

1. Engage students in the lesson by not announcing the topic for study, but by predicting the subject and issues through analysis of a collection of photographs. Each pair of students will be asked to categorize what they see in each photograph. Such classifications should bring out commonalities observed by students, leading them to make predictions about the subject and focus of the lesson. Encourage student pairs to share their categories/classifications and predictions with the class.

2. Initiate the subject of the lesson by informing students that they will hear a brief story about one individual who sparked a revolution, not merely in his own community, but across international boundaries and regions. Show the class the 3-minute video-clip entitled “A Street Vendor Revolutionizes a Region.” Conduct a brief discussion, eliciting from students prior knowledge about single individuals in history who brought about significant change. (A print copy of the story of the street vendor is included in this lesson, as well.)
3. Post a copy of the First Amendment for the class to view. In particular, help students clarify their understandings of what freedom to assemble and freedom to petition mean. Use the Powerpoint presentation, “Arab Spring” to review recent events in the Middle East and North Africa. Pause periodically to ask students to identify examples of First Amendment rights used by citizens in these nations to express dissatisfaction with their government and bring about change.
4. Read the article, “The Butterfly Effect” together. Have students use the CSI graphic organizer to identify the political, economic, and social causes of the Arab Spring. Then have them use information from the Powerpoint presentation and “The Butterfly Effect” article to also identify the immediate effects of the street vendor’s story.
5. Introduce students to the concept of the “domino theory” as it relates to geography’s (relative location) role in ideas spreading spatially. Conduct a brief classroom discussion regarding the role modern communication methods, such as the internet and social networking, played in the events of the Arab Spring. Read together the article entitled, “Changing Geography and the Domino Theory.” Conduct a class discussion answering the question, “Would the Arab Spring have occurred without the internet?” “Why or why not?”
6. Assign students to assume the perspective of any individual or group of individuals who would have had firsthand experience of the Arab Spring. Using the RAFT writing format, allow classtime for students to create a half-page email message reporting the events of the Arab Spring. (For more information about RAFT writings, go to <http://www.readwritethink.org>.)

Remind students that as Americans, we sometimes take for granted the rights and liberties of the First Amendment, as well as the principle of self-government established by our Constitution and first expressed in our Declaration of Independence. (Tip: This lesson can serve as a complement to classroom studies during Oklahoma’s Celebrate Freedom Week, in which all students are required to study the principles of natural rights and the lasting impact of the American Declaration of Independence.) Using the video-clip, “The Declaration of Independence Revolutionizes the World,” ask students to create a Venn-diagram, comparing the revolutions of the Arab Spring to the American Revolution two centuries earlier. Do they agree with the videoclip that the American document is relevant and still inspires peoples of the world’s regions today? How?

### **Assessment:**

1. Assign students the task of writing a brief essay response to the following statement, “Without the 21<sup>st</sup> century’s modes of communication and the exercise of free speech, there would have been no Arab Spring.” Student essays must include use of factual evidence gained from the lesson, but may include individualized opinions about regional events.