



VOTE SMART

JUST THE FACTS

Lesson 2 - The Role of Special Interest Groups

Standards: National Council for the Social Studies

NCSS 5: Individuals, Groups and Institutions

Objectives:

SWBAT (students will be able to) understand the variety of different topics special interests groups address in our country.

Subject Matter:

Yesterday we talked about what a special interest group is and today we are going to learn about some of the different topics they address. Just like the variety of groups and activities you mentioned yesterday that you participate in, special interest groups can cover a number of different topics and be all over the political spectrum. Special interest groups can be found at the national, state and local levels, but we are going to focus on only the state and national levels for this lesson.

Materials:

- Enough copies of the special interest group game (included here) for each student.
- Scissors
- Glue sticks

Procedure: (30 mins)

1. Have each student cut out their special interest group cards and separate them into three different face-up piles (interest group names, descriptions and level of government they address). Pass out glue sticks to each student.
2. Have students put all the names of the special interest groups on the left hand side of their paper where it says "name".
3. Now have the students read through each of the the descriptions and in the second column on their paper, place each description next to the special interest group they think the description goes with.
4. Once the students have the names and descriptions matched, have them match the appropriate level of government based on the interest description and put it in the third column.

5. After they are done with matching and you have given them the correct answers (listed below), have students glue the interest group names, descriptions and levels to their sheets of paper.

Answers: 1: C (national), 2: I (national), 3: E (national), 4: J (state), 5: A (state), 6: D (national), 7: H (state), 8: F (state), 9: G (national), 10: B (national)

6. As you are wrapping up the lesson, reiterate the wide range of topics addressed by special interest groups. You can also name an interest group and ask students to tell you if the group works at a national or state level.

SIGs Worksheet

1. National Rifle Association	A. "a non-profit, conservative research and educational organization whose mission is to develop and disseminate information about, and to comment on, public policies that affect the state of Georgia and the nation..."
2. Planned Parenthood Action Fund	B. "...to equip citizens with timely, reliable information from a conservative, Constitutional point of view on public policy issues that affect the family..."
3. American Humane Association	C. "...relies on a very simple premise: when provided with the facts, the nation's elected officials will recognize that "gun control" schemes are an infringement on the Second Amendment and a proven failure in fighting crime..."
4. Environment California	D. "...is committed to doing what only a national association of attorneys can do: serving our members, improving the legal profession, eliminating bias and enhancing diversity, and advancing the rule of law throughout the United States and around the world."
5. Georgia Conservative Coalition	E. "...advocates for policy and legislation that will benefit children and animals and keep them safe from abuse and neglect."
6. American Bar Association	F. "...working with state leaders to move Kentucky towards Clean, Renewable, Sustainable energy solutions that will not only safeguard the health of Kentuckians, but open the way for a more vibrant, healthy, diverse economy..."
7. Indiana Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals	G. "...an organization of 2-million members united by the belief in the dignity and worth of workers and the services they provide and dedicated to improving the lives of workers and their families and creating a more just and humane society."
8. The Cumberland Chapter of the Sierra Club	H. "...believes that animals deserve the most basic rights. We are seeking a means for the prevention of cruelty to animals throughout the state of Indiana. We speak up for our animals. We lobby for them."

9.
Service Employees
International Union (SEIU)

I. "...is the nation's leading provider and advocate of high-quality, affordable health care for women, men, and young people, as well as the nation's largest provider of sex education..."

10.
Eagle Forum of Alabama

J. "...is a statewide, citizen-based environmental advocacy organization. Our professional staff combines independent research, practical ideas and tough-minded advocacy to overcome the opposition of powerful special interests and win real results for California's environment."

National

National

National

National

National

National

State

State

State

State

Interest Group Name	Description	Level