

**State of the Art & Annenberg/CPB  
MAKING CIVICS REAL: A Workshop for Teachers**

**SHOW 2: ELECTORAL POLITICS**

**FINAL SCRIPT – 5/9/03 – p. 1 of 30**

:16 Annenberg/CPB Funding Logo (include :15 fades)

:06 SOTA Logo (includes :15 fades)

Open Sequence

Velazquez: If we're going to talk about citizenship, democratic participation, then we have to tailor our lessons to model that kind of behavior.

Title: Making Civics Real: A Workshop for Teachers

*Student: May I please introduce the president of the United States...*

**Narrator: Engaged, reflective, concerned and collaborative – these are qualities we hope for in our citizens and in our classrooms. Constructivism is a theory of teaching and learning that helps teachers instill these qualities while also imparting real skills and knowledge.**

Borges: A constructivist teacher is someone who builds on students' previous knowledge and previous experience.

*Johnson: Petitioner will go first ...*

**Narrator: Constructivism incorporates a number of teaching strategies you are probably already familiar with like: simulations, debate, small group work, and socratic questioning.**

Chandler You prepare a lesson that will allow students to bring reality to what they are learning.

Johnson: Each child brings something different and has looked at the material in a different way.

Martin: But they also build on what other students are saying.

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*Student: And here we have the lack of family which I think is the most important...*

*Velazquez: The most challenging thing is being comfortable with letting students find their own way*

*Borges: If you make this decision, how will it affect high school students all around the country?*

**Narrator: This workshop profiles teachers who are effectively using constructivist strategies to address standards and cover diverse content areas. Cooperative learning appears throughout, but you will also see strategies like role playing, consensus building and service learning. The goal of this workshop is to give teachers new resources and ideas to reinvigorate civic education.**

Show Title: Electoral Politics

Ext. driving shot of community with political posters stuck in the lawns.

**NARR: Newark, New Jersey. The site of a hotly contested mayoral election between incumbent Sharp James, Councilman Corey Booker and independent candidate, Dwayne Smith. An ideal opportunity for Newark's young adults to learn the power of the vote and how political platforms relate to real community issues.**

TV Show: Who will be the next mayor of Newark? The election is just days away. What are some of the concerns on the minds of Newark's high school students? And how do each of the candidates feel about those issues?

TV Show: Coming up. Student representatives from High Schools in Newark will pose questions to each of the three candidates about issues the students feel are most important to their lives.

DIP TO BLACK

EXT of School

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**GFX OVER EXT: ONE WEEK EARLIER**

Inside Classroom

**NARR: Seniors in Jose Velazquez' Law in Action class are preparing for the televised Student Voices Forum. They are one of many classes in the city participating in the Newark Student Voices project. Student Voices is a national initiative that encourages the civic engagement of young people by bringing the study of a local political campaign into the classroom.**

*Ebony: Survey right*

**L3: JOSE' E. VELA'ZQUEZ, 12<sup>TH</sup> GRADE LAW IN ACTION**

Vel: We believe that young people need to have their voices heard in this campaign. It's a process of getting young people involved in civics and politics and democratic participation in government. Sometimes the media will focus on personalities, scandals that may break out. And you want to be able to keep the kids focused on issues.

*Vel: I am going to ask everyone to please come to their station, you can leave what you doing on the internet.*

**Narr: With only one week left until the televised Forum, the class begins their culminating activity – the creation of a Youth Issues Agenda.**

**GFX ACTIVITY ONE: GROUPS FINALIZE RESEARCH FINDINGS**

*Vel: The first part of today's lesson will be for us to make our final preparation. We have the educational issues groups. Where are you? This group has been focusing*

**Narrator: Issue identification and consensus building are two methodologies critical to this lesson. The class began the process of issue identification by brainstorming on youth issues covered in the news. The students then divided themselves into groups based on their interests. Each group conducted research on their topic, created a community survey and polled youth in their school and the community at large.**

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**Once this research has been shared, the class can begin the consensus discussion on which issues to include in the agenda.**

*Vel: Now, you're going to be given about 10 minutes to make an oral and visual presentation, that seeks to tell the entire group, when we come together as a class, seeks to tell these are what the issues are that we've been able to investigate, both from our own assumptions as well as our research, and then prioritizes.*

*And this is important for every group. You want to prioritize, let's say maybe the two key issues out of your group. So the first part of the class is really finalizing that preparation.–Hopefully from each group, if everyone has focused on two issues, we'll actually be able to have an agenda, a platform, of 12 different issues which we feel, and this should be key, in this election for young people*

**Vel:** To begin with, we broke up the students into different focus groups, and they've been tackling issues such as education, housing, employment, discrimination, recreational needs, and those groups began to brainstorm, as to what their initial assumptions are about some of the problems in those areas.

Student are preparing for project, grouping

**L3: HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOOD ISSUES GROUP**

**FS Student:** *Let me just give some examples like what street like Chad would need. They've got a lot of empty lots, so you could put some townhouses on those empty lots.*

**Vel:** This was followed up by some initial research to confirm what some of the issues are. And they've been doing investigation on the websites, they've been doing surveys in the community to get feedback.

**L3: EDUCATION ISSUES GROUP**

**Tremayne:** *We want to make a consensus of the two issues that the class feels is the most important, so the one that you would rank as below average we feel is the one that we need to tackle to improve the most. And here, just a couple short sentences about how you feel about these two topics would be fine.*

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**L3: TREMAYNE**

Our group is talking about educational issues, and to start off, we're going to give this survey to the class, to narrow down to two main topics that we feel that the youth think are most important. We're dealing with teacher efforts and the school facilities themselves, because we're trying to see if Newark's graduation rate is comparable to that on a national level. So we're going to go on the computer and get a couple of statistics and find some numbers.

*Matheson: Okay, this is a survey about the educational issues. We're trying to find out, like, what is needed to improve the education.*

*Fstu: I think the state can provide after school programs with more money so that the teachers can do more of what they want with the children.*

*FStu: I think that's basically the most important, because if they have more money they could pay people who really knew what they was doing, versus just having like having people come in that don't know what they doing.*

**L3: EMPLOYMENT ISSUES GROUP**

*Maysa:*

*When we go up there for our presentation right, you going to start the intro, cuz, you know, you ain't got a problem with talking. But tell them what our topics are, and tell them what we studied, like, we researched employment, teen employment in the city of Newark. So. You just tell them what we studied, like teen employment inside or outside of Newark and then we have the MOET: Mayor's Office of Employment and Training.*

**L3: JOSE' E. VELA'ZQUEZ, 12<sup>TH</sup> GRADE LAW IN ACTION**

**Vel:** One thing that a teacher can do is to break them up in groups, that I think immediately takes the role away from the teacher centered classroom, to a student centered classroom. And that doesn't necessarily mean that all of the sudden now a teacher says, okay, you're in groups, now go to work. No, it requires planning and organization. It requires playing

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the role of a conductor in an orchestra. You still have to know where ... where are we going.

Vel: *So from this survey, what will we get from the survey?*

**L3 DISCRIMINATION ISSUES GROUP**

FStu: *We will get our own definition of racial discrimination is, and then we present them to the whole class, and say, okay, this is how we think about racial discrimination.*

Vel: *Okay, great, so we'll be able to confirm ... we'll be able to confirm what some of them think or see whether or not it matches some of your own thoughts. Excellent. Okay.*

**ARCHIVAL PHOTOS**

Vel: I think what inspired me to become a teacher was my experience, with a sixth grade teacher, with a, you know, in ghetto school in Harlem, a teacher actually changed my life. I actually dropped out of college, my first year of college, back in 1970, you know, 1970 was a period of great turmoil in this country. And I actually dropped out of college, went back ten years later. I finished my degree in American History at Columbia University in New York. When I had to make a career choice for myself, and I wanted to talk about how could I impact young people, how could I talk about changing the world, how can I make a difference? And I think the choice became really clear. I think it was sort of automatic, that teaching was going to be my mission.

**L3 DISCRIMINATION ISSUES GROUP**

FStu: *Police patrol has assured better protection in the city of Newark, true or false?*

MStu: *False.*

Vel: *Okay, your attention for one second. Tremayne wants to know ...*

Tremayne: *Anybody who still has the surveys, we would like to turn them in now, so we can tally our results.*

Vel: The teaching methodology which I'm using as a constructivist approach, based on cooperative learning, and it's also based on reflection and discussion where students come back and give presentations.

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**L3 EDUCATION ISSUES GROUP**

*Tremayne: We will both checked statistics for the graduation rate, so you finish, you just need....*

*Samuel: Uh, this is the completed surveys, right here?*

*Tremayne: Yeah ... count that for me? I'm sure there's 11. I think it's 11.*

*Samuel: Eleven?*

Students at computer

*Tremayne: What did you find out about the graduation?*

*MStu: [unint.]We got the project grad website.*

*Tremayne: What did they say was the rate for high school graduates for Newark?*

*MS: Forty five percent.*

*Tremayne: Can you find out the national rate too, like, for United States, what's the national rate? That way I can try and compare if we're on level with the rest of the country.*

*Vel: Of course, in the process, there is direct teaching. We discuss some of the issues in the campaign by reading some of the articles, and having discussions. We've had exams on the issues, so you know, students have been assessed in different ways. But of course, the cooperative learning allows you to really take that direct teaching and actually see what the students have incorporated into their own body of knowledge.*

Groups Work

*Matheson: What you say right here? You can tell me which questions on the survey they felt were more important.*

*Tremayne: The number one question that people seem to respond to is, what is your opinion about after school youth development programs?*

*Matheson: Um hum.*

*Tremayne: And for the explanations, we've got a lot of very good ideas.*

*Matheson: Okay.*

*Tremayne: More money, equipment and facilities.*

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*Matheson: All right.*

*Tremayne: After school tutors.*

**Vel:** Learning is not just something from rote memory, or a book approach, but it's based on actual live learning and participation on the part of students.

*Tremayne: What was the high school graduation rate, so far?*

*MS: The high school ... the average high school graduation rate for the United States was 70%, and the average college graduation rate for the United States is 32.9%.*

*Tremayne: Can you print out a copy of this? I only need the top part*

*MS: All right. '*

*Tremayne: Cuz the graduation rate for us ... our district was 45, and then for college, matter fact, let me get that college too.*

**Vel:** You have to be aware of different abilities? You have to be aware of personality issues. You have to know your students.

*FStu: Drugs and crime have destroyed the city of Newark.*

*FStu: True*

*FStu: Okay. Thank you.*

*FStu: You're welcome.*

**Vel:** You know, as a facilitator, if I was aware of the different styles and abilities of students, I would try to tailor the lesson, so that I incorporate within the focus groups different talents and different abilities, I think the lesson will demonstrate that certain students were doing the visuals, others were on the website, others may have been actually putting together the survey, those students who were better writers took the initiative and did the writing.

### **L3 DISCRIMINATION ISSUES GROUP**

*FStu: For the questions, the open response questions, the response questions, we should have a ... I think we should have a bar graph, and like for people who said that discrimination is more so race, we could have the bar, and then like five percent shaded, then a hundred ...*

*FStu: So who do you think is effected most by discrimination?*

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*FStu: Well, when I was looking on the Internet, it was a little biased on the Internet, because most of the discrimination was talking about females. Like I didn't get any information on like males. Everything was about females that were discriminated against for this and that, but they never say like anything about male. So, what from I was researching, I say females are discriminated more against.*

*FStu: I think that is males, mostly African American males, or Latino males, minority males, I think.*

**L3 HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOOD ISSUES GROUP**

*Carl: Kwane, is this our survey right here. Basically we want to do a general idea of what young people think is most important in a community as far as housing goes, so I want you to rank these three topics – road maintenance, housing, and drug prevention, in order of importance.*

*Vel: Okay. Uh, everyone stop what you're doing.*

*FStu: No.*

**GFX ACTIVITY TWO: GROUP REPORTS ON RESEARCH FINDINGS**

*Vel: Stop what you're doing. That's hard to do, right, because you're so involved in what you're doing. It is hard to stop. But we need to stop, wherever we're at. We're going to go ... we're going to move into large group presentation now, and it's important for us to focus on what exactly we want these presentations to do, what's our goal. Our objective is to be able to identify, as an entire class, what we call the youth issues agenda. And that's why we broke up into focus groups. Everyone has a piece of the puzzle.*

**Narration: Although Mr. Valazquez uses the word “presentations” for this activity, the group reports are not presentations in the formal sense. Instead, they are part of the process of creating the final product – the Youth Issues Agenda.**

*Vel: When each group finishes their presentation, we will take a short period of discussion, And if I feel that there are things that I want to question each group on, then I will, as part of the discussion process. All right, so let's get the educational issues group up first. I'm going to ask everyone to please introduce themselves, and let's get started.*

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**L3 EDUCATION ISSUES GROUP**

*Tremayne: My name is Tremayne Phillips.*

*Matheson: My name is Matheson Mathos [ph.].*

*Tremayne: Okay, we had educational issues, and she'll explain the poster here.*

*Matheson: Okay, the poster basically says Newark's education issues. Here, we have a teacher. See my teacher? Basically from ... based on the surveys we see that a lot of students feel as though we need teachers. Even though we have teachers now, the teachers, they feel as though the teachers don't have enough energy, and they need some more teachers that, you know, give out some more effort, and try to reach out to the student. Then we have my hundred dollar bill. The hundred dollar bill basically is, we need more money. Students are saying that we need more money for different things, such as you know, equipment, books, supplies – just basically anything at school, and just more money to improve the programs and education, and probably if we had more money, we'd have more teachers. Then right here ...*

*Vel: The most challenging thing as the role of a facilitator, is being comfortable with letting students find their own way, and being able to understand that everything is not going to be perfect, you know, the answers are not to be always solid answers. There are going to be weaknesses, there are going to be strengths.*

*Matheson: You know, they want to feel as though, when you come to school, it's safe, but also when you're leaving school, it's safe also. You get home safe, come to school safe. And Tremayne has some statistics.*

*Tremayne: I'm going to go more in depth about the survey today. We passed out the surveys to everybody in the class, and what it came out to was, 23 people felt some aspect was below average, 13 people felt it was above average, and 20 felt that it was average. And the second part of the survey, we asked you questions, to see how you felt that this part could be brought to average, or how you felt they could improve. And I just want to point out a couple. We felt that there was a need for more money, teachers with more energy, or perhaps volunteer teachers who actually wanted to be there, more parent involvement, more programs that weren't one dimensional, program that encompass a lot of different aspects of different areas of learning. Now, I have a couple of statistics. In our district,*

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*the graduation rate is 45%. Now on the national level, that graduation rate is 70%. So we're really behind and lacking, and out of the 45% that graduate, only 55% of those go to college. So we feel that all these ideas are good, and our main two focuses comes from these two questions here. After school program development, and a better learning environment for the students.*

*Ebony: Do you think that, um, just adding more money, adding more money, is going to make the programs better, if they're not constructing them any better? If they involve more stuff that got something to do with real life, maybe people would be more interested in going to these programs that you talk about.*

*Tremayne: Yes, that was also an issue on the survey, that people said that they felt that the programs or the classes should deal with stuff that they could use in the long run, more realistic goals.*

*Vel: Let's see if we can identify the two main issues that you'd like us to adopt, in terms of a student voices agenda.*

*Tremayne: Our main two issues were improvement in after school programs, and improvement in the school environment, and by environment we mean everything encompassed as a whole, whether it be the teachers, the books that we learn in, the facilities that we have access to the entire environment.*

*Vel: I just have one final issue for this group, and it's something to raise the level of discussion. Newark is a state operated district. A few years ago the district was taken over by the state. Eventually the district as it improves will come back to local control. But some will argue that the mayor doesn't really have control of the schools, because the mayor doesn't appoint, for example, the Board of Ed, the Board of Ed is elected. Now the state has control of the schools. Have you thought about that, in terms of ... what do you think the mayor's control over the schools should be? Should we be able to hold the mayor directly accountable?*

*Matheson: If the Board wasn't taken over by the state, then you could hold him accountable, but since the state took over the Board, I don't think you can hold the mayor accountable for the actions of the Board of Education.*

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*Tremayne: We feel that the ideas that we're bringing up are ideas that should, if not used now, kept in mind for later time, because eventually he will have more control and more say so. And we don't want it to revert back to where the state has to come back in and take control, so these ideas would still benefit him.*

*Vel: Intuitively I know when things are on track when I see the comfort level of students, the students are beginning to talk about what the issues are, and feel comfortable in expressing that without thinking, well, do I have it right, is this is what Mr. Valazquez wants to hear. Because I try to tell them it's not what I want to hear, it's what they want to say.*

*FS: Wasn't Mayor Sharpe James the mayor before the state took over, and wasn't the Newark Board of Education corrupt, like why would you want him to have that power again, if he didn't do anything before?*

*Tremayne: If the Board of Education was corrupt like that, he's still the mayor. So me personally, I just feel that he should have another chance, especially with different ideas and new things that's coming up now, I feel he could do a much better job.*

*Vel: I'm glad we're discussing this, because these are issues that have not been discussed in this campaign, and should be on the agenda.*

**L3 EMPLOYMENT ISSUES GROUP**

*Maysa: The first topic we have, as you can see, was teen jobs in Newark or outside of Newark. It's 58% that do not have jobs in Newark, and out of that 42% that work in Newark, 40% of them make less than \$6.50 an hour. So what's the purpose of this whole survey and this whole issue? As a junior or a senior in high school, the average teen will want to make more than \$6.50 an hour, because you have expenses, you have like prom bills and you have your prom to deal with, pay for your yearbook and class dues, you're going on your trip.*

*So the average teen would rather have a job that's going to pay them at least about seven or eight dollars an hour. A person like me, I'd rather have ten, between ten and thirteen, because we're going to college, after high school, at least some of us are, and you know, college is very expensive these days. So you want to make more than \$6.50 an hour.*

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*Now, Ida's gonna talk about MOET, which is the Mayor's Office of Employment and Training.*

*FS: All right. It's like she was saying, well, we averaged 95 people, 53% did not, were not able to be employed, 47 were employed. Out of 53%, 66% didn't want to because of family income, 26% was grades and 8% were juvenile detention. And I feel as though if you went to juvenile detention, they should give you a job, to keep you off the streets, so you will not end up doing the same thing you did before.*

*Maysa: This was a major issue for us, because Mayor's Office of Employment and Training. We're discussing the candidacy between the two candidates that are running for mayor this year. So we figure that the Mayor's Office of Employment and Training should focus on these teens that need jobs.*

*Carl: Couldn't you say that these two topics are strongly related because with better teachers, students will have better grades, which will allow the 26% to be smaller?*

*Maysa: Right. We need better teachers that want to apply learning in a way that the students can relate to it and want to learn, so that they can have the grades, to have a job, as far as ... as much as family income and juvenile detention, like Ida said with, if you got locked up, or if you had to go to juvie hall, you can't have a job because you served time. You should make me serve even more time. give me a job, make me do things that better myself, instead of leaving me out on the streets, so whereas I can just be accustomed to whatever is out there. But our main focus was employment, because like we said, we need some money.*

*Vel: All right. Show me the money, huh? Let's go to housing and neighborhood issues. [applause]*

*Vel: The methodology that this lesson I think demonstrates is the power of cooperative learning, as opposed to teacher fed type of learning, whereas here what we have is students actually being involved in the learning process, taking responsibility for their own learning, actually bringing their knowledge, their prior knowledge of the community, of what the problems of the community are, then confirming that prior knowledge with research. And then making that research part of their own body of*

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knowledge, and then presenting. So rather than teacher taught, what we have here is student led discussion, student facilitated discussion, student centered discussion.

**L3 HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOOD ISSUES GROUP**

*FS: The next section, part 2, is drugs in the community.*

*Carl: It seems like everywhere you go, no matter where you at, you could be next to a church. Everywhere, there's a drug dealer sitting on the corner. It's like the older drug dealers in their 20s raise the younger dealers, like their little brothers and their friends that are 11, 12.*

*And they grow up to be what the older brother was, and just keep on ... it's like a cycle of drug dealers, and all they're looking for the fast money and the cars and jewelry. That's not what's the most important things in life. And then people need to explain to the younger youth that that's just not important, what's important is education and learning.*

*Maysa: Kairon, you said something about the drug dealers, they're selling in front of the churches and things like that, because they want the money. Do you think that the mayor could go with something that goes along with our topic, which was teen jobs, because of course, these drug dealers, they want money quick. It's like the get rich quick idea that's going around.*

*So it's like, can you link it to the teen job issue that we had, as far as the making a lot of money per hours, to have programs for these people who want to make money, but they don't have like background in education and things like that.*

*Carl: I'm going to give you two programs, one from my personal knowledge and one from general perspective.*

*Vel: I think the most challenging thing for our students has been the research part of the lesson. Our students can articulate what they think are the issues and concerns. Now being able to research that and confirm that their own assumptions and their own predictions, if you may, of what they think are the problems, can they confirm that in ways that are a little bit more scientific. And I think for them that's been a challenge.*

**L3 DISCRIMINATION ISSUES GROUP**

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*FStu: Racial and gender discrimination was a bit difficult for us, because most of our sources relied on opinions and the Internet which were both like, to a certain extent biased, because when we were on the Internet, like all we were seeing was women discrimination, nothing against like men.*

*Fstu: Should McDonald's stop asking customers whether they want a boy or a girl Happy Meal? These are questions that we are known in public and we don't really realize it but there are racially and generally based. We did a question in the class that said who is affected most, females or males, from racial discrimination and gender discrimination? And 75% said males, and 25% said females.*

*Matheson: Okay, this is not so much of a question, it's a comment, because I work for McDonald's and you said, um, you were discrimination when ... you asked for the Happy Meal if it's for a boy or girl. Actually it's not because sometimes at McDonald's you have stock that's come in, and it's different, some for a boy and for a girl. So it's not ... I don't think it's really much of a discrimination because I'm sure a girl wouldn't want to have a boy's toy when she can have a Barbie doll.*

*FS: Instead of asking do you want a boy toy or a girl toy, you should ask do you want a car or a Barbie?*

*MS: Since yall all girls I want to know, is it discrimination if Victoria's Secret doesn't want to hire a man?*

*FS: Um. So you tried to get a job there, and they said no? Maybe you weren't qualified.*

*MS: The men have to work in the back, stocking shelves.*

*FS: Maybe men don't apply for the job. Maybe men do want to work in the back. You understand what I'm saying? You act like, did you go get a job, and they told you no? Well, maybe you weren't qualified. It's men ... I've seen men working at Victoria's Secret, that's what I'm trying to tell you, that men do work there.*

*Vel: You have to be flexible enough to pick up on what students' suggestions are. I mean, after all, what you mean is them to take responsibility for their own learning, and for them to direct their learning. Again, this goes back to the role of teacher as facilitator, rather than just completely self-directing the process.*

**L3 CRIME & JUVENILE JUSTICE ISSUES GROUP**

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*FStu: Our topic is crime and juvenile justice. Our two main focuses are why are there so many teens in the juvenile detention centers, and why do teens commit the crimes they do. We did some research as of September 2001 there was 5,600 teens under the age of 17 in the Newark Juvenile Detention Center. Teens that are in the detention centers have committed the following crimes: auto theft, robbery or acts that deal with weapons and gang violence. And we have a little poster which is cause and effect, like, what is the cause of it, and why do they do it.*

*Fstu Okay, so basically what this poster said the reasons why in the survey, the people gave their answers that they did was basically was protection, no parental guidance, money, peer pressure, lack of confidence, no freedom, and basically no one cares. And then we've got the lack of family which personally I think is the most important why teens do the things that they do.  
Teenagers tend to commit crimes because there's nobody in their family that will teach them anything different, or most of the time, if it's a mother and father, they're working, so they don't really pay any attention to their children.  
So basically I think our topic crime and juvenile justice is basically like well all other topics linked into because the lack of teachers and school and jobs and discrimination and stuff like that, cause teens to commit crimes, which cause them to be in the juvenile detention center. And that was it. [Applause]*

*Vel: I don't know if you had the chance to discuss, what would you like the city to do about those two key issues? Did you get a chance to elaborate on that?*

*FStu: And so I think the mayor can maybe put more police officers out on the streets, and then maybe in the juvenile detention centers, maybe he could do something about it, because a lot of children that are in the juvenile detention centers, they go back and forth, back and forth, back and forth. So maybe they're making it so good there that they don't care if they go there, because maybe, I could eat, I could do this, I could do that. So like, it's nothing bad about going here. So I think like he should make it different, and maybe they wouldn't want to go back.*

*Ebony: A lot of the youth, they feel like, oh, my parents don't care, or if they don't have parents, or they don't have nobody at home that's really interested in their life, so they go and they hang out with all these people that's older, thinking maybe they're going to hit them up with some money or whatever. And they influence them, because they don't got*

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*nobody else at home being an influence in their life. That's all. That was just my comment.*

Vel.: *We wanted to get all the groups in before we broke for lunch, but I know you guys are desperate for lunch, so ...*

**L3 EBONY NICOLE**

Ebony: Mr. Valazquez has been one of my favorite teachers since we've been here. he does everything so creative like, if we're going to learn about it, we're going to do it to learn it. Everything he does, every single thing, he brings in newspaper articles all the time, so we've never done anything in there that wasn't realistic. You want to learn it more, because you're like, well, that's what's going on in the world right now, so you want to learn it.

**L3 TREMAYNE**

Tremayne: I talk to a lot of older people. It used to be they talk about the campaign and I just go in my room and maybe listen to music or go watch some television, but now that I've learned about the campaign, I now have formed my own opinion, I can talk to these people and let them know my ideas.

**L3 MAYSA**

Maysa: I recall just being on a bus, and two guys were talking about it, and I wanted to join the conversation so bad. Because like as a teenager it's like we're not really informed, like, we have to get informed, because of course, we don't vote or anything like that. So they really assume that it's none of our concern.

**GFX ACTIVITY THREE: FINALIZE STUDENT VOICES AGENDA**

Vel: *Good morning everyone.*

*Students: Good morning*

Vel: *Today I'm actually going to bring the closure to the work that we did with all of our focus groups. I'm going to start by having us look at the two issues which each focus group decided were priority issues, and which I have typed in the draft, and I want us to*

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*actually look at that draft, and adopt it as our student voices agenda. Let's begin with the discussion of our draft. Carl and Tremayne, please.*

Vel: Today's lesson will actually be the closure of the student voices agenda. What I'd like them to do immediately is to look at that draft and see if we can reach a consensus, that those are the issues, and that the issues are well articulated.

Vel: *Now first of all, what are we looking at these things for? We want to make sure that they reflect the two critical issues from each focus group. And so, everyone who was a member of one of the focus groups, you should see your issue here. And if you don't, we need to make sure that it gets put on here, and that's why it's a draft. We can change this, this is not etched in stone.*

*The second thing we want to look at is, are there ways to make this better? Are we articulating what we want to say correctly. Okay? So let's take a couple minutes to look at that, and then we'll see if we can adopt this.*

Vel: I think this lesson actually prepares them for what we feel in the High School of Humanities what we're all about. And that is lifelong learning, and also giving back to their community. They're going to go to college, but we're hoping they'll come back to this community and have a political and a social and cultural impact.

Class discussion

*Matheson: I think that we should eliminate number 11.*

*Vel: Okay. Why don't you read number 11 for us.*

*Matheson: Develop 24 hour recreational centers. That's not possible.*

*Vel: Okay.*

*FSTU: And why should we be outside that late?*

*Matheson: It should be extended hours, but not 24 hours. That 24 hour, the whole concept ...*

*Vel: Well, let's hear from everyone, one at a time.. But let's talk about this one at a time. Okay ...*

*Samuel: It's a good idea to have the rec. centers open for 24 hours, but for different purposes. Late at night, you could use it as a place to shelter the homeless or bring them in out from the cold.*

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*FS: I think that it's a great idea, being that we have so many recreational centers in Newark, like say on a Tuesday at one recreation center, it could be open 24 hours a day. Then you go on the north side, that recreation center would be open ... you know what I'm saying, like Monday, 24 hours a day.*

*Maysa: I can speak for it, because I work for Newark recreation. I'm a lifeguard employed at the recreation center. Now, if you have them open 24 hours a day, first of all, you're talking extra money, because you have to supply lighting and paying people to stay all night and that's just not going to work.*

*Vel: I think it's important as we go on with the discussion, if you don't agree with number 11, to think about how you would amend it, how you would change it, or do we just want to get rid of it altogether, or is there a way to amend it, to make it better.*

*Maysa: I would alter this whole thing by changing hours completely, because 24 hours is absolutely off the wall, like off the wall, that's just crazy.*

*Vel: Okay. So let's see if we can go back to what was the original concern, which actually brought this on, and then maybe we can talk about what is it we want to say, relating to the original concern. And for that, maybe I can go back to the recreational focus group.*

*MS: The original concern was to take youths off the street at late night. Basically it's for children that don't have homes, and the recreational centers can tutor them with their homework, if they want to go there after school, by themselves.*

*Vel: All right. Let's hear from Ebony. You were on that committee Ebony?*

*Maysa: Let's hear from Ebony.*

*Vel: Ebony was on that committee also.*

*Ebony: You come outside wee hours of the morning, a lot of people, like they get in arguments with their parents, they don't got nowhere to go. And I know you all be seeing people outside real late at night. They go from chillin' at one boy's house, another boy's house to standing on the corner. They don't got nowhere to go.*

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*And like she said, maybe it don't have to be every day. But I think if a place is at least open, you don't got to worry about them being out on the street. At least they do have somewhere to go.*

*FS: But don't you feel as well though if you do open it 24 hours that's just another place for drug dealers to hang out too?*

*FS: Yep.*

*FS: So it makes no ... it really makes no sense for a 24 hour recreation center at all.*

*Vel: Okay let's hear from Monique, and then we'll see what kind of consensus, if any, if any, if we can reach consensus on this issue.*

*Matheson: Basically they're saying it's for shelter, so that means everybody else is going to be coming to the recreation center for the wrong reason. The recreation center is to come, work out, play basketball, swim, whatever you have to do. You know what I'm saying? So, that's what I think. I beg to differ.*

*Vel: All right. This is also a lesson in how we develop consensus. If we cannot all agree, then we don't have a consensus. A consensus is different from majority rules. Consensus means that we all agree. And if we cannot reach consensus by either amending this, or making this in such a way that it reflects what we want to say, then we don't have ... this is not a consensus issue for us, which means that we can't use it. Now is there anyone who could offer some kind of ... after this discussion, some kind of amendment on this, that maybe we could all agree to, or we just don't have consensus on it? Ebony?*

*Ebony: Yeah, I'm trying to think how to word this ... um ... extend ... extend hours of recreation centers to be used for more purposes. I don't know to word it, but you know what I'm saying? Like, extend the hours that you could use for more purposes.*

*Vel: It would be something like, extend the hours and purposes of recreational centers?*

*Maysa: Yeah, what's the purpose though?*

*Vel: Well, that leaves it ... what's good about consensus is that's something we could all agree to. Applying that may be different. So, let's see ... let's see if we can reach consensus on this. Extend the hours ...*

*Maysa: Well, if you leave it broad like that.*

*Vel: Right, extend the hours and purposes of recreational centers.*

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*FS: All in favor?*

*Vel: It's not a vote, not a vote, we have consensus. Okay good. And that, we want to close on that, because that's a good lesson, and sometimes you have to leave something broad to get consensus. Now, how do you apply the purposes and all that may be something that someone would have to work through. That was good, that was good.*

*Vel: I think the closure to the lesson actually went very well. It went beyond my expectations. Overnight I said, am I taking a chance to just open up and rehash the whole discussion that we had, or will the students be able to focus on accomplishing that very specific task, which was to reach consensus that this is what we want to present.*

*And what I'm so happy about is that the suggestion of how to actually finally bring closure to it came from the body of the students themselves.*

**GFX ACTIVITY FOUR: REPRESENT THE CANDIDATES**

*Vel: Just to get you situated*

**Narr: Though the students have completed the final product for this lesson, it is important for them to take the next step – to connect their knowledge of the issues to the candidates' campaign platforms. To prepare for this activity, students read newspaper articles, campaign materials and candidate position papers.**

*Vel: I want to lead into the candidate's presentation. Represent the candidates, we call it, and so what we're going to do is we're going to have representation from each of the candidates. Now, let's stop and think for a minute. These are not the real candidates, so what we have is students who are saying this is why I think this candidate would be the best candidate.*

*Vel: Students have been assigned overnight to prepare to represent each one of the candidates while the other students were also preparing questions for the candidates. So we'll have a really good exchange of what students' opinions are about these candidates, as well as questions and answers, simulating what the candidates would do if they were here in front of the class.*

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*Vel: All right, I'm going to sort of start it off as a moderator. Let's welcome everyone to represent the candidates. A couple of rules. We want you to focus on the issues of this campaign, what do you think are the issues of this campaign, of no more than three minutes per person. After everyone has spoken, then we're going to have a dialogue question and answer.*

*Carl: Hello, my name is Carl Roberts. I'm here to represent with my colleagues Mayor Sharp James. When we first started this campaign, I'll be honest, my vote, if I was able to vote, would have went to Corey Booker. But since then, I have seen Mayor Sharp James done much for the city, and I see his face in the street, and now I represent ... I choose to represent Sharp James.*

*Tremayne: And as far things like education, there are now health clinics in schools, and he's trying to get tutors for every school, to improve the dropout rate for seniors, to improve graduation rates. He's making an attempt to continuously make the city better, and he has been making these attempts.*

*Now, with new candidates, you ... you don't really know what you're getting.*

*FS: With the jobs, as far as building the arenas, that's going to create new jobs of construction, you're going to need people to build it, so that's jobs right there. Then you also going to need people to work there. That's also [gonna have to bring up stores, because you're going to probably want to build some stores around the arenas, you could attract people. And then, with the crime, like he did a tremendous job with the crime. I mean, the crime rate in Newark has went down over like half, since like he's been mayor, and I think he's the most equipped right now to be the mayor of New Jersey, of Newark, excuse me.*

*FS: Hi. I'm going to represent Corey Booker. Obviously, we need a change. And Corey Booker has proven to the neighborhood that he is for the people. We don't see Sharp James doing that. Actually he's just spending our money. So ...*

*Vel: You have to start with that mental state of mind that you don't always have to be in control, that you're not the vessel of all the information. I don't want to just be the person giving out all the information. I want to receive information. So can you step back and*

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give away a little bit of your control, and be comfortable with that, that everything will turn out all right, that students can take responsibility for their own learning.

*FS: My question is for the Corey Booker representatives is ... one of Corey Booker's logos is the change you want, the leadership we need. How do he know, how does he know we want change, and what evidence does he have to show why we need his leadership?*

*Ebony: He says that Newark is really rated one of the ... just the worst places to live, and one of the worst places to raise your children. And he doesn't want people to think that of a place where they live. So I believe he notices that we do want that to change, so we can have a sense of pride.  
The leadership we need. Um ... basically ... do you want to take it?*

*Samuel: Corey Booker was asked for this leadership. When Corey Booker first came to Newark, before he even came a lawyer, while he was still a law student at Yale, he organized a non-profit legal task force to attack the negative landlords and slum lords who weren't doing nothing about the maintenance and the community and building bricks and complexes such as brick towers, where he actually camped out to get rid of the drugs. And he brought all the tenant leaders together in these communities, because nobody else in the current administration or in the current political system, structure of Newark at that time, was driving for such a change, for such a drastic measure. Nobody was really doing anything. There was a lot of talk, but nothing was being done.*

*Vel: Okay, thank you.*

*MS: Do you support the effort to build the arena for the Newark teams?*

*Samuel: That's building the arena, it's good, it's a good idea, but for one example, the arena with the Newark Bears, like, it was built, and it was originally designed to bring more revenue into the city. But the fact of the matter is, most of the people being hired are from outside the city. It's not going back into Newark.*

*Vel: Okay, we have a question now for Sharp James campaign.*

*Matheson: Even though Sharp James is not in control of the Board of Education...*

*Vel: If we are going to talk about citizenship, democratic participation, then we have to tailor our lessons to model that kind of behavior. I think what we had here was modeling of participation, modeling of citizenship, modeling being apart of the process, and I think*

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that will probably reflect its self in first of all students immediately going out to register to vote. They are going to influence the process.

*Vel: Okay, we want to thank all our representatives, the representative of Sharp James, the representatives of Corey Booker, and the representatives of Duane Smith. Give yourselves a round of applause. We're going to go on back to the large group now, and we're going to close our activity.*

*Vel: I think in the context of this lesson, because of the controversial nature of the lesson, the heated 2002 mayoral campaign, I think I've had to really wrestle with how I as the teacher, the facilitator, may or may not impact students in terms of my own political views. So I've made a conscious decision to be neutral. Because we're dealing with students here who have very passionate opinions about these candidates and then we're also dealing with a number of students who really are undecided, and are observing the campaign to make up their minds. And I didn't want to influence that in any way.*

*Vel: In some form or fashion, next week we're going to have a dialogue with the candidates. And of course, we're not going to have as much time as we have here to explore all the issues, so what we're going to try to do is focus in on two questions for each candidate. And I think maybe the best way of doing that is, out of the questions that we ask, we can be able to locate what are the major concerns for each one of these candidates. And that's how we want to close today's activity. We need someone to record our questions, okay?*

**NARR: A week from now, students from all over Newark who are participating in the Student Voices program will attend a televised question and answer session with the mayoral candidates. Only two students from each school can attend, so Mr. Valazquez wants to make sure the questions they ask reflect the youth issues agenda that all the students in the class created.**

*Vel: I think we should start with the Sharp campaign. What are the two or three questions which we think are fundamental, priority questions, that need to be asked of this candidacy?*

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- FS: Since like we did all these visuals, it says there were 5,600 teens under the age of 17 in the Newark Juvenile Detention Center, we can ask him a question referring to that, like, what do you plan on doing for the teens that are committing crimes?*
- Vel: Okay, using as of September 2001 as an introductory, what would he do to prevent repeat offenders of the juvenile justice system, because we can use our student voices agenda to frame that question. Let's do one more, one, two, and let's move onto Corey Booker.*
- FS: My question for Sharp James would be, Corey Booker brings up the fact that the stadium that he already built didn't have jobs for people that lived in Newark, so how can he promise that the arena would give jobs to people in Newark?*
- FS: Well he said that only Newark people would have them jobs, nobody else.*
- FS: That's what I'm saying. If Newark people are supposed to work there, but say we can't. Like say people that come down there to get a job aren't qualified, then the arena is still there in Newark, but there's not a lot of us working there.*
- Vel: Okay, so we can frame that in such a way, we're saying that if people are not qualified for the jobs in the arena, how can he promise, how can he guarantee that Newark residents will get those jobs, in the building of the arena?*
- Maysa: Isn't it true, that all candidates are going to be, when we go down here to question them? Why don't we ask these questions for all of them, because I'm saying, just because Sharp James was the ... he's been the mayor for the past 16 years, but if he's not elected this term, Corey Booker is elected, or if some possible way Duane Smith was elected, what they going to do, because these are main issues and problems in Newark.*
- Vel: I think that's a wonderful idea. I think that's a wonderful strategy to go about doing it. I see a lot of people shaking their heads. Can we agree on that.*
- MS/FS: Yes.*
- Vel: Okay, well, I would ask you then to highlight, let's make sure we have the five issues.*

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Vel: The legacy I hope I leave with these students is that this class, this lesson, this year, will be a lifelong process for them. That they're going to be looking at politics not as something abstract but something that's real, something that impacts their daily lives, and they're going to be critical thinkers. That they're going to be participants when they go to college, when they're out in the community, that they know that the political system is not something that's abstract. That it's something that's, it's going to be a reflection of how much they participate in it, or how much they don't participate in it.

Vel: *Um, we have one last closure event. As we have done so much work, we have done such great work, I wanted for you to stand up and say one thing, that made this a success for you, that made it productive to you, and say that to each other. So let's stand up, and the front row, turn to the outside, that's good. [Everyone talking at once]*

**L3 SAMUEL**

Samuel: Studying civics, I say it make me a better citizen, and it make me better aware of things around me, so when I see something on the news, I'll be able to understand, I'll be able to draw information, I'll be like yeah, that's what we did in class. So I'll be able to connect it, and better judge what's out there.

**L3 EBONY NICOLE**

Ebony Nicole: With the civics education, it gives us a chance to realize who is leading us, why, who can change things, and you get a chance to learn that your opinion and your views do count in society.

**L3 MAYSA**

Maysa: If you feel that drugs and violence is a major issue around your community, then they need to know. So I think it's your responsibility to reach out to them, and tell them what's going on.

**L3 TREMAYNE**

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Tremayne: The class will directly influence my opinion on who I vote for. And me personally, I feel as though I'll vote for Sharp James.

**L3 EBONY NICOLE**

Ebony: I'm 18 years old, I turn 18 February 5<sup>th</sup>, and I am going to be voting, because I realize now that my vote can make a difference.

**GFX STUDENT VOICES FORUM**

Vel: So now our next step is to have a dialogue with the candidates. But it's not going to be just a dialogue without preparation. The students have an agenda, they have a point of view they have real solid questions. I think it is a good thing for them to see that their concerns are not just University High School concerns. They are concerns of all young people in the city of Newark and that other students have been involved in similar type project.

*Maysa: Maysa Washington University High school.*

*FS: Nice to meet you, Maysa.*

*Vel: Hi, and I'm Jose Valazquez, faculty of University High School.*

*FS: Nice to meet you, hi.*

*Tremayne: I'm Trey Phillips, also with University High School.*

*FS: Nice to meet you as well.*

*FS: So again, this is your opportunity to share your youth issues with the upcoming, or the candidates for mayor of 2002. SO this is your time to shine, your time to basically [unint.] together as the youth, the youth of Newark, and talk about what really you feel passionate about. So good luck, enjoy, and just make sure you have fun, okay? I want to see all you guys smiling and just look pretty.*

*Vel: I think it's a great thing to be here in NJN studios and being able to finally pose some direct questions to the candidates, to have a dialogue with the candidates, and the candidates who actually face off on some of the questions that the students have.*

*FS: Jimmy, your question is for Mayor James. Dubois.*

*FS: With the Newark mayor's election just days away, voters 18 years of age and older are preparing to cast their ballots. But what about those young men and women who are not*

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*yet old enough to vote, but old enough to have dreams, fears, and opinions? Well in the last few months, Newark's high school students have been getting a civic and political education as they follow the mayor's race in their classes. It's part of a program called Newark Student Voices. Some of these students are here today.*

*FS: Yes, next person?*

*Maysa: Good morning Mayor James. My name is Maysa Washington, I'm from University High School. And the question for you that I have is with recent developments stalling, the construction of the Newark arena for the New Jersey Nets and the New Jersey Devils, first of all, are you still in favor of this project, and if so, how are you guaranteeing that most jobs, or just some, will go towards employment for Newark residents?*

*Mayor James: University, right? I was a graduate from University. Number one, I believe ...*

*Maysa: I feel it's a good culmination, the lesson that we've been doing, because we got to ask him the questions, instead of just discussing it between the students in class, and like you know, how they asked us the question, like what do you think the mayor. We got to ask the mayor what our questions were, and he answered them fully for us.*

*Tremayne: Yes, my name is Tremayne Phillips from University High School. And in 2001, September, there were over 5,000 teens under the age of 17 in Newark Correction ... or Newark Juvenile Facilities. And I was just wondering, how would ... if you would become mayor, how would you drastically reduce that number, and also reduce the number of repeat offenders, because that's also a very pressing problem.*

**L3 NJN TV**

*Booker: I'm really happy you asked that, because this is something that concerns me very deeply, because [unint.] the drug war going on is ludicrous. First of all [director comments in background] [unint.] adequate job, that they should be protecting residents.*

*Tremayne: This is a student voices agenda and one of the key issues for us was program like the MOET program. That offers summer youth employment, but that program is very limited as far as people that can apply, and also the funding given because of the minimum wage that is given to the students, so we were wondering. Do you have any ideas on how you would improve that program?*

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*Booker: Yeah, I mean, the first thing is, I mean, when I was young in Newark, they used to have summer programs called the Speedy Program. Anybody ever hear of them...*

*Tremayne: It seemed like it was more personal with us, because if you have all reporters, the response or the ambiance in the room will be completely different, as compared to teenagers in Newark, who live in Newark, who lived in Newark all their lives. And you could tell he was more passionate when he talked to people in Newark, because the thing that he's talking about is going to affect us.*

*MS: How do you feel between James and Booker?*

*Maysa: Oh my, honestly, honest to God, I came in here, basically more pro James, but he has blown me away. Corey Booker has blown me away because we were focusing more on in the past, but because I never heard Corey Booker speak. I've read things in the newspaper, I've seen them in the newspaper, pictures on bulletins and things like that, but hearing him speak and hearing his sincerity of how he plans to work in Newark, he has completely blown me away, and I am very impressed. And now I'm more pro Booker than pro James.*

*MS: Okay, let me talk to you real quick. Coming in, going out, James? Booker?*

*Tremayne: Well coming in, I was for James, I was all for James, but when you hear Corey Booker speak live he has such a presence about him everyone, they listen. You could tell, like in the background, everybody was listening, really paying attention attentively to everything he is saying, because you can tell he's going to be somewhere in the future. He has ideas, and he knows where he want to go with the city. I think everybody supports him on that, at least in this room.*

*Vel: I think it's important for educators to really find ways to bring the books to life. I mean, not just civics from a textbook, but make civics real.*

**FINAL CARD**

**ON MAY 14, 2002, SHARPE JAMES BECAME THE 1<sup>ST</sup> MAYOR IN NEWARK'S HISTORY TO WIN A FIFTH TERM, WITH 53% OF THE VOTE.**

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**COUNCILMAN CORY BOOKER RECEIVED 47% OF THE VOTE.**

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