

Standards

NCSS Standard I: Culture: a.) Explore and describe similarities and differences in the ways groups, societies, and cultures address similar human needs and concerns; c.) describe ways in which language, stories, folktales, music, and artistic creations serve as expressions of culture and influence behavior of people living in a particular culture; d.) Compare ways in which people from different cultures think about and deal with their physical environment and social conditions

Objectives

Students will be able to compare and contrast the cultural factors that influence attitudes and practices on abortion in Japan and the United States.

Students will be able to generate conclusions about the attitudes and practices on abortion in Japan and the United States.

Central Question

How do changes to social views and practices in Japan compare to the United States?

Procedures:

Opening - Students will complete a warm-up quick-write in response to the following question, “Why is abortion a controversial topic in the United States?” Students will share their responses with partners, and then engage in a class-wide discussion. To further engage students, discussion questions can include:

- What groups are most interested in abortion and why?
- How have views on abortion changed?
- How do views on abortion vary?

Teacher will introduce data and laws on abortion in the United States followed by data and laws on abortion in Japan, asking students to draw comparisons between the two nations.

Jigsaw – Students will break up into groups to read and annotate texts focusing on the following topics: abortion during the Edo period, abortion after the Meiji Restoration, abortion after World War II, the rise of mizuko kuyo during the 1970s, and abortion in Japan today. Then students will jigsaw into new groups to create a timeline outlining the changes of views on abortion and historical contexts with which they changed.

Closing – Students will display their timelines and engage in a “gallery walk” of each timeline making observations about the trends each group discovered. Finally, students will write a paragraph responding to the central question, using evidence from the texts to support their responses.

Modifications

Texts can be modified to simplify language and allow for greater accessibility to students with lower reading levels. Readings can be replaced with short videos on the same topics.

Extensions

Students can further enrich their exploration of the topic by going online to research other controversial social topics like the death penalty and drug use and making similar comparisons or continue to explore the topic of abortion in other countries.

References

BBC - Buddhism and Abortion

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/buddhism/buddhistethics/abortion.shtml>

NY Times – Mourning my Miscarriage

<https://www.nytimes.com/2002/04/21/magazine/mourning-my-miscarriage.html>

Newsweek – Could Japan’s shrinking population lead to shrinking rights for women?

<https://www.newsweek.com/2016/03/18/japan-women-abortion-restrictions-matahara-433808.html>

Japan Times – Abortion still key birth control

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2009/10/20/reference/abortion-still-key-birth-control/#.W4ICDFMvzVo>

[Liquid Life: Abortion and Buddhism in Japan by William LaFleur](#)

Excerpts may be taken from this text