



SCHOOL VIOLENCE PREVENTION DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

***FOUNDATIONS OF DEMOCRACY***  
**CURRENT EVENTS COLLECTION BOARDS**  
By Julie Schultz

### **Activity Description**

Students construct a display of news articles categorized under headings from the book titled *Foundations of Democracy*—Authority, Privacy, Justice, Responsibility. Definitions of the headings may need to be updated as students complete work in the book and obtain a deeper understanding of these concepts.

### **Suggested Grade Level**

Fourth grade and above

### **Estimated Time to Complete**

10–15 minutes daily or bi-weekly; display updates throughout the school year

### **Objectives**

Students will

- reach consensus on working definitions and updated definitions of terms;
- read, share, and discuss current events;
- categorize stories under main ideas;
- complete graphic organizers;
- consult the display of issues when deciding on a problem to address through *We the People: Project Citizen*.

### **Materials Needed**

- Chart paper
- Markers to record definitions
- *Foundations of Democracy* books and dictionaries to consult for writing definitions
- Newspaper or Internet articles for categorizing
- Graphic organizers (attached) for creating or updating definitions and for categorizing articles

## Activity Procedures

1. The class must reach consensus on a working definition of the terms *authority*, *privacy*, *justice*, and *responsibility*. This can be accomplished one term at a time, using feedback from the whole class, or by dividing students into four different groups, with each group assigned a different term.
2. Definitions are posted at the top of four different display areas in the classroom. Definitions of the headings may need to be updated as students complete work in their *Foundations of Democracy* books and obtain a deeper understanding of these concepts.
3. As news articles are read, shared and collected, students decide which heading best describes the main idea of the story. Most stories could fall under two or more foundations, creating wonderful discussions and debates. In some cases the actual word or words (authority, privacy, justice, responsibility) may appear in the article.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Fill in answers as much as possible, then write a definition for the word you were assigned.

**Circle your word:** authority      privacy      responsibility      justice

What first comes to mind when you consider this word? \_\_\_\_\_

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Illustrate a scene with this word as the scene's title:

Before today, when was the last time you saw, heard or said this word? List a few details about that time. \_\_\_\_\_

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List key words from the dictionary definition of this word: \_\_\_\_\_

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List some words from your *Foundations of Democracy* book's introduction about this concept: \_\_\_\_\_

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Write your own definition of this word: \_\_\_\_\_

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Use the questions and prompts below to help you decide on which board your news article should be displayed. **Categories:** authority privacy responsibility justice

What are your first thoughts after reading the article's title? \_\_\_\_\_

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If there is a photo with your article, describe what is happening in the photo: \_\_\_\_\_

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Before reading this story, when was the last time you saw, heard or spoke about this event? List a few details about that time: \_\_\_\_\_

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Are any of the category words—authority, privacy, responsibility, or justice—used in the article? List them. \_\_\_\_\_

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Which two category words best describe the main idea/issue in this article? \_\_\_\_\_

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Now, you must narrow your choice of category words down to one. This article is mostly a matter of:

**(circle one)** authority privacy responsibility justice, because \_\_\_\_\_

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