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School? Why do we even have it? 53 min

Objective:

Students will:

- analyze current problems in education, locally, statewide, nationally, & globally.
- research possible solutions to one problem.
- synthesize research findings.
- present their research.

Big Idea:

Because we want to encourage all students to be responsible, informed global citizens, we must model the process of becoming critically engaged with critical issues in the world. As such, this lesson begins the process of prompting students to WONDER about the purpose for school as they know it. From there, students will examine current problems in education that interest them, do some research, and ultimately develop recommendations for possible solutions.

1. Warm Up / Anticipatory 8 min

Begin with the Wonder: Why Was School Created? Project these focus questions and allow students uninterrupted time to write responses. While students are writing, circulate the room and identify students who have interesting, varied responses. When time to write is up, ask those students to share aloud and generate a list of reasons why we have school in the first place. **Technology variation:** create a Mentimeter and have students send in short responses to create a word cloud. Project the results for the class. [Mentimeter](#)

2. Investigation and New Learning 30 min

Using the Wonderopolis information, guide students through the exploration of the page to see if their thoughts matched the research presented there. Then, distribute one of the following articles to each student:

- <https://www.ket.org/public-affairs/kentucky-educat...>
- http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/finding_common_grou...

- <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/10-barrie...>
- Add one for your local area

Each student should read and annotate the article that he/she receives, keeping in mind the following things (letters in parentheses could be used for annotation):

- Key issues in education (KI)
- Opinions presented (O)
- Facts presented (F)
- Solutions/Suggestions given (S)
- Outside research cited or places to research further (R)

Once this is finished independently, ask students to get into groups of three or four. The groups should consist students with one of each of the articles so that all of the articles are represented. Using your choice of discussion protocols, ask each student in the group to share what they found by reading. Then, as a group, prepare a summary that includes one local, state, national, and global issue in education today (four total concerns). Ask students to put this on chart paper, adding possible solutions to the issues that they brainstorm as a group. Allow the use of technology if needed to do this research. Each group should elect a spokesperson to share their findings and recommendations. Post these in the room.

Possible discussion protocols

3. Review & Check for Understanding 30 min

Each spokesperson should be given 2 - 3 minutes to share out their chart paper. In this way, their understanding of the articles and their problem-solving skills can be assessed formatively. As students share, they may correct misunderstandings themselves by listening to other groups. If not, take this time to clear any misconceptions up or to prompt them with more questions based on their responses. To end, ask students to write on an index card or sticky note one issue in education that they think should be addressed and add a brief explanation of why. This can be done through technology if you have those capabilities. Socratic would work well.

Note: The next logical step with this lesson would be to have students research their chosen educational problem, research solutions, and write about it.