Teacher Guide: Civics Video

Purpose: This guide offers ideas for using before and after activities to engage students with the Civics Inquiry video.

Before
Prior to showing the video, introduce and/or review the following:

Civic Inquiry Process
- Civic Inquiry: Ask, Think Critically, Solve Problems, Communicate
  *Use the Elementary Civic Inquiry visual posted above this guide

Civic Inquiry Concepts
- Community: a group of people living in a particular space; review the different communities students are a part of - classroom, school, neighborhood, town, state, country, world.
- Public Problem: an issue that affects a community and community members (e.g. pollution, littering, safety, or inclusiveness); different from a private problem which affects individuals.

Civic Inquiry Skills
- Multiple Perspectives: look at public issues and problems from different viewpoints; highlight the value of listening during discussions.
- Action Plan: list the basic steps needed to take action on an issue - what, who, when, how.

Consider introducing the public problem from the video - Sometimes students are lonely on the playground during recess - and having students brainstorm ideas on how to solve this problem.

After
After viewing the video, consider the following activities:

Inquiry Follow Up:
Facilitate a discussion about the Inquiry Process:
  *Why is the issue Pa and Jose identified in their school community a public problem?
  *Why is it important to look at public problems from multiple perspectives?
  *Who did Pa and Jose talk to as part of their action plan?
  *Why is communication an important part of the inquiry process?

Skills Follow Up:
Have students create actions plans for a public problem in the community. Consider developing one of the action plans further, and following the action plan as a class to participate in improving the community. Civic inquiry is a great way to foster civic participation, and will encourage students to care about the community around them.

Extension
Read Maybelle the Cable Car by Virginia Lee Burton

Civic Action Lesson:

Minnesota Center for Social Studies Education. csse.mnhs.org (2015)