

Incorporating Social Justice in the Pre-Service Teacher Classroom

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Abstract

This article outlines the sequence of a semester-long effort to foster social justice awareness and global-mindedness through an examination of human trafficking with special emphasis on the sex slave market in Nepal. Using identified strands from the National Council for Social Studies curriculum as the basis of the semester study, students learned effective methods of teaching geography, history, government, culture, and citizenship using the issue of human trafficking as their focus of inquiry and exploration. Through children's literature and group projects, the students created lesson plans and units of study around the topic of slavery. Transitioning from the concept of US citizenship to global citizenship, the students explored other countries through the strands of culture and geography, including the nation of Nepal. Using documentaries, interviews, and Internet research, students learned the details behind the plight of thousands of exploited women in Nepal. Students generated unique ways of creating awareness of the issue.

Keywords: Social justice; human trafficking; global citizenship; pre-service teachers

"Great teaching is about so much more than education; it is a daily fight for social justice." —US Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, October 9, 2009 As Secretary Duncan suggests, teaching is, at its core, a process rooted in social justice. By teaching our students to become perceptive participants in a democratic society, and especially as we encourage the development of the sort of critical thinking that does not accept the status quo at face value, we are also equipping them to be active champions of social justice in their own contexts. The intention of this paper is to describe methods employed in a pre-service teacher education course "to foster a broad and continuing dialogue among the many people who struggle ... to find more effective ways to challenge oppressive systems and promote social justice through education" (Griffin, 2007).

But how can we effectively bridge the gap between theory and practice? As teacher educators, my colleagues and I felt as if we were frequently wasting valuable classroom time with trial-and-error of methods to propel the precepts of social justice education in our social studies methods classes. This article will show the specific steps we took collectively and individually in our pre-service teacher program to use a social justice curriculum as a vehicle to build community within classes, to bridge gaps between students, to empower students, and ultimately to motivate them to become passionate social justice educators in their own classrooms. From the beginning of the semester until the end, this article will capture the experiences of one social studies methods class as they used social justice as the matrix within which to learn methods of teaching social studies in the elementary classroom.

Why Include Social Justice?

A survey of existing research reveals a number of well-founded motivations for including social justice education in the pre-service education curriculum.

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The surveyed research reflects an understanding that teachers can work to challenge and alter an educational system that presently inadequately serves large numbers of children, particularly poor children, children of color, and children with special needs (Kozol, 1991; Oakes & Lipton, 2003; Zollers et al., 2000). Also, social justice education aids development and deployment of an academically rigorous curriculum relevant to the increasingly racially and ethnically diverse student population. It also bolsters the learning and achievement of all students in the classroom (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Haberman, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Sleeter & Grant, 2009; Zeichner, 2003). Finally, students are challenged to be active participants in our democratic society (Oakes & Lipton, 2003; Nieto, 2000). As characterized by Griffin (2007), "Social justice is both a process and a goal. The goal of social justice is full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs." In keeping with fostering active participation on the part of pre-service teachers, Griffin further states, "Social justice involves social actors who have a sense of their own agency as well as a sense of social responsibility toward and with others, their society, and the broader world ..." (2007).

When I first began teaching social studies methods using the James Banks textbook (*Multicultural Education, Transformative Knowledge, and Action: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*) (1996) fifteen years ago, I recall my growing interest in the social reconstructionist approach to schooling wherein teachers work to unpack the "hidden curriculum" (Horn, 2003), reforming and restructuring curriculum so that students are challenged to question and examine the social structure of society. The students unpack assumptions around race, class, and gender, connect current issues to historical trends of the past, and critically challenge single versions of the truth (Banks, 2008). For teacher educators committed to social justice, it is more important than ever to recognize the importance of providing pre-service teachers with an understanding of how to translate theory into practice, elucidating for them the complexities in translating a social justice vision into a context of accountability and standardization. As teachers often are required to follow a mandated curriculum and/or state content standards, they need to learn to effectively discern what to teach, what not to teach, and how to teach it. Teaching social studies from a social justice perspective often requires a "rethinking of the curriculum and its purposes, nature, and goals" (Lee et al., 2006, p. 38).

Teachers working within this framework enact lessons that challenge students "to critique prevailing norms, to examine underlying assumptions and values, and to explore their own roles in relation to social problems." (Wade, 2007, p. 11). Teaching for social justice requires one to challenge the hegemonic, status quo norms of historical knowledge and seriously examine the "Eurocentric cultural values, norms, and expectations that form the dominant perspectives through which many of us theorize about education and develop curriculum" (Lee, Menkart & Okaazawa-Rey, 2006, p. x). In a Eurocentric, patriarchal curriculum, taken-for-granted themes undergird the content of curriculum. Social studies texts in general suggest that in the USA, almost everyone is white, middle class, Christian, and heterosexual (Sleeter & Grant, 2009). Typically, US history texts start in Europe, then move westward from British settlements on the East Coast. Texts may include some Native Americans, Mexican Americans, African Americans, and Asian Americans, but only as they relate to the larger story dominated by white people (Sleeter & Grant, 2009). Social studies for social justice supports the continuing encouragement of juxtaposing historical text and content against various points of reference, so that we may be able to develop a more critical and comprehensive understanding of reality (Zinn, 2003).

Introducing Social Justice in the Methods Classroom

In our particular context, the social studies methods semester begins with a historical study of civil liberties in the United States. Our pre-service teacher courses are taught in a block once a week, so there are nearly three hours of class time in which to fully explore a single curriculum strand identified by the National Council for Social Studies (NCSS; National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies, n.d.; see also Table 1, below). Beginning with an object lesson, I knock over a container of water at the beginning of class. I usually stage this "historical event" right around calling the roll (making sure it does not occur near the computer or other electronic equipment and that paper towels are handy nearby). After spilling the water and the cleanup, I ask students to take out a sheet of paper and write down the events of the past one minute in class. Students look confused and always wonder if this is a test of some kind, but I simply ask them to write down an account of what they know happened within the past minute. I then collect all of the papers, and as a class we begin to construct "The Great Water-Spilling Event of March 16, 2014" or whatever the date may be. We read each student's historical account and piece together facts surrounding the event. Inevitably, some students missed the entire episode because they were texting their boyfriends or getting something out of their backpacks.

Some students include names of people in their account: "Ashley went and got some paper towels to clean up." Others assign motive to the action: "She purposefully knocked over her water bottle"; and still others add text: "She exclaimed, "Oh my, my water bottle! Someone get paper towels, quick!" When the students and I piece everyone's accounts together, we have then created the official historical documentation of "The Great Water-Spilling Event of March 16, 2014." We discuss how each account is told from a certain perspective and therefore excludes facts and points of view not available or apparent to the writer. From here, we move on to a discussion of who was generally writing American history at certain times in the past. At this point in class, I ask students to remember a misspelled word that I am about to teach them. I teach them the word "History" as "History." Writing "His Story" on the board, I ask students to think about what they know about early America. Who would have been writing down the accounts of what was happening? As a class, we come up with not only men, but rich, white men, since they were the only ones educated enough to be recording historical details in written form. In other words, the seed is planted that what we may have been traditionally taught in History classes, may have been only "His Story." (I recognize that this mnemonic device is not etymologically rigorous, but it helps students remember that all history is told from a certain perspective.)

A social justice–based social studies curriculum is focused on multiplicity, conflict, and complexity (Agarwal et al., 2010), requiring teachers and students to examine whose voice or perspective may be left out of the Eurocentric narrative. In teaching social studies for social justice, teachers work to instill wonder in their students, building curriculum that connects to their students' lives and prior learning. Referring to "His Story" and the Eurocentric, patriarchal account of history as it is traditionally taught, together as a class we raise questions such as: Who or what might be absent from an account written by wealthy white males? Who stands to benefit or be hurt by the inclusions and omissions in this text? How is language used in specific ways to convey specific ideas in this text? Drawing a line across from "wealthy," "white," "educated," and "male" and listing those excluded clearly illustrates to students that voices unlikely to be heard are those of the poor, women, children, the uneducated, and anyone who wasn't white.

By identifying the absence of these other perspectives, teachers are in a position to challenge normative thought by integrating multiple—and perhaps less familiar—perspectives into the curriculum, especially the voices of those likely to have been dominated, marginalized, or excluded from "canonical" texts. As Wade explains, "Teaching multiple perspectives can help students realize that there is more than one story that can be told about any event that happens" (2007, p. 38). At this point, I ask students to brainstorm with me what they know about one event in American history: the Civil War. Words and phrases such as "blue and gray," "Robert E. Lee," "Abraham Lincoln," and "Gone with the Wind" are typically generated, but the list is generally not very long. Introducing Patricia Polacco's book *Pink and Say* (1994), I explain that this is another story about the Civil War. This account, however, is from two boys' perspective, and we read together about the unlikely friendship of Pink and Say, the two principal characters—one of whom is black and the other white. As the story unfolds, the students become more and more engaged, and there is usually not a dry eye in the room at the close of the book.

After a moment, we go back to the list we wrote earlier about what we knew about the Civil War and begin to add words and phrases. Now, the students are reminded that blacks were not allowed at first to carry arms, but instead were given clubs and sticks. They are reminded what the soldiers ate and what mealy worms are. They recall that slaves were not permitted to be taught to read and what it meant to "jump the broom." The students generate themes such as "friendship," "trust," and "loyalty." The earlier list tends to be academic and somewhat dry; the second is rich with imagery and emotion. Class discussions ensue about how a student in an elementary classroom might not think he or she has anything in common with Robert E. Lee but might well know a thing or two about what it feels like to not be trusted or to have a friend who helped in a time of need. Making connections to student's lives is the first step in the scaffolding process of creating a classroom environment where social justice themes can be taught and can take root. According to Darling-Hammond (2005), to become educators for social justice, teachers need to understand who they are and their views on the sources of inequity and privilege (p.). Thus, beginning with the Civil War, students undertake a historical study of civil liberties in the United States. Moving forward from the war through the civil rights movement roughly a century later, the students engage in class discussions and write lesson plans centered around this topic in order to practice methods of teaching history.

How the Issue of Human Trafficking was Chosen

As the chapter title indicates, the students themselves selected human trafficking as a topic they were passionate about. Greene (1998) explains that in a just society, everyone affected by a decision should have a part in making the decision. Likewise, Hooks (1995) expresses as a fundamental goal of transformative pedagogy the creation of a democratic classroom setting in which everyone is committed to making a contribution. Using the methods outlined in Project-Based Learning (Boss et al., 2013), students directed their own learning. Further, an emphasis on the curriculum adopted by the NCSS, which is the principle body that sets standards for social studies education in the United States, mandates that group discussions surrounding future areas of inquiry should include opportunities for everyone's voice to be heard. This ethic of inclusion arises from the precept of the democratic classroom (Colin, 2001), which functions in our context as a laboratory in which pre-service teachers may develop behaviors and strategies to aid them in their classrooms. Thus, they are equipping themselves to both teach and model behaviors geared to nurture the development of inclusive, participatory principles in their future students.

As the students engaged in class discussion about which particular issue of social justice they wanted to learn more about, their self-directed inquiry identified a small organization recently created by a twenty-year-old student at another university. The organization, a 501(c) 3 non-profit founded in 2010, called the Red Thread Movement, is focused on supporting efforts to rescue women in Nepal from being sold into the sex trade and on providing vocational opportunities for the rescued women. With the civil liberties research and activities from earlier in the semester fresh on their minds, the students were understandably appalled to learn from their review of the Red Thread Movement website and materials that slavery is not only still in existence but thriving in the modern world. Soon the students all became passionate about finding out all they could about Nepal, as many had little knowledge of the country. This, logically, led into discussion of methods of teaching geography and culture.

When students became familiar with where Nepal was on the map, and as they learned more through their study of the Red Thread Movement, they discovered that Nepalese girls are usually brought across the border into India, where they are either trafficked to other places in the world or forced into sexual slavery in India. The class studied the cultures, customs, and traditions of both Nepal and India, affording deeper understanding of the plight of the trafficking victims. The students learned that an estimated 12,000 victims of sex trafficking cross the border between Nepal and India every year. Data indicates that the human trafficking industry, which is the world's second largest criminal enterprise, is gaining momentum worldwide. It is a problem that is shockingly prevalent in Nepal, where women's low status and insufficient education make them vulnerable targets for traffickers (Red Thread Movement, 2012). Using a world map with Nepal enlarged, students traced the east-west highway in Nepal, which is 1026 kilometers long and has 15 border stations. The border between Nepal and India is open, allowing citizens of these countries to travel between the two without visas or passports. Since victims of sex trafficking are nearly impossible to trace once they pass over the borders of their countries, border surveillance units at the legal checkpoints are the principal means to monitor the movement of traffickers between countries. The principal strategy of the Red Thread Movement is to increase border surveillance and rescue girls before they cross the borders.

Next, students sought out personal stories through blog entries and the Internet. At this point, they began making real internal connections. One student noted the example of a 16-year-old girl named Alina* that had been rescued after being trafficked into India, enslaved in numerous brothels, and eventually escaping. Her story detailed how Alina grew up very poor and caught the attention of someone who promised her a better life moving to India for good wages as a domestic worker. Once the borders were crossed, Alina realized that she had in fact, been duped and she was then sold into a Red Light District in India where she was forced to work as a prostitute. After two years, she escaped and was intercepted by KIN [Kingdom Investments Nepal, an Non -Governmental Organization affiliated with the Red Thread Movement] staff at the border, and her story was revealed. Alina is now receiving counseling in the safe house sponsored by the Red Thread Movement. (Red Thread Movement, 2012a). The pre-service students focused on this blog entry of one girl's story because it had a clearly defined beginning and ending. By all accounts they could find, this was not an isolated type of story. It helped them understand the plight of one young girl and also helped the students realize that the socially just thing to do was to help others like her not be trafficked in the first place. In other words, rather than trying to picture an abstraction such as a statistic, they could picture a young girl named Alina, and they knew her story. Through studying the culture of Nepal, the students came to realize that there was an enormous social stigma attached to the girls who had been sold into slavery; even if they escaped their circumstances, many of these young women had few alternatives for survival. The culture dictates that their families disown the girls, and they are no longer welcome in their former villages and communities.

The students realized that they appreciated how this particular social justice organization helped to teach the rescued girls skills such as weaving and sewing, along with giving them shelter at safe houses.

What the Students Did about It

At this point in the semester's study of methods of teaching social studies, the students had covered the NCSS strands of history, citizenship and government, and geography and culture. The economics strand was the next logical topic. The students had come to recognize the economic factors contributing to the victimization of the Nepalese women, and concurrently, they achieved an understanding of the economic importance of awareness. Thus, the students, armed with their newfound knowledge (and with Red Thread bracelets upon their wrists), were ready to spread the news about the struggle of young women in Nepal and highlight what the Red Thread Movement's mission was all about. Continuing the precepts of Project-Based Learning, the students divided into teams to brainstorm ways to promote awareness of the issue of human trafficking in general and specifically sexual slavery. The students selected a striking image of a young woman's face with the words, "I bought this so they couldn't buy her." Using this design, they ordered t-shirts to be offered for sale, along with the bracelets woven by the young Nepalese women under the sponsorship of the Red Thread Movement. The students decided together that they would sell the bracelets at the website cost of \$3.00. Proceeds would be sent back to the Red Thread Movement organization. Similarly, they determined that they would not profit from the sales of the t-shirts, opting for awareness as their focus rather than fund-raising. Students created note cards to carry around with them at all times, and when someone asked them about the meaning of the Red Thread bracelet they were wearing, they were to tell them some of these facts.

Note card information compiled by students included the following:

- Did you know that there are more people in slavery now than at any other time in history?
- Worldwide, it is estimated that somewhere between 700,000 and four million women, children, and men are trafficked each year, and no region is unaffected.
- An estimated 14,500 to 17,500 women and children are trafficked into the United States each year.
- There have been reports of trafficking instances in at least 20 different states, with most cases occurring in New York, California, and Florida.
- UNICEF reports that across the world, there are over one million children entering the sex trade every year and that approximately 30 million children have suffered sexual exploitation over the past 30 years.
- The US Department of State estimates that about 600,000 to 800,000 people—mostly women and children—are trafficked across national borders annually.
- The specific program that I advocate is called The Red Thread Movement, and it is an awareness campaign started by current college students.
- The average age of trafficked Nepalese girls is 12.

The students committed to memory much of the card information and could be overheard across campus, reciting the facts about which they had become fiercely outraged. Armed with their knowledge and sense of social justice, the students brought back their information to sororities, student organizations, and churches. They promoted the social media presence of the Red Thread Movement among their peers and told of the organization's mission and strategies. They organized a "Wear Red" fashion show and set up tables in the student center to sell bracelets and t-shirts and talk to anyone who would listen about the issue of human trafficking. Over 200 shirts were sold at cost over the course of the semester, and the students wore them on designated days, including a day in which the university newspaper came to interview the students about their experience during this semester with its social justice emphasis. Striking the "Yes We Can" pose taken from World War II's Rosie the Riveter, the students held up their Red Thread bracelet-adorned arms in a gesture of determination to make a difference. The subsequent news story was featured on the front page of the student newspaper and as a featured article on the university website, including a slide show of photos of the students. They were thrilled to be able to spread even more local awareness through this medium.

The featured newspaper article read, in part, as follows:

Sex trafficking is a worldwide criminal enterprise, seen especially in third-world countries where women and young girls are coerced to leave their homes and villages and then placed into underground prostitution markets. These kidnapped victims are often forced to work within large cities in America and rest of the world, where they can seamlessly blend in to a diverse pool of citizens. The Red Thread Movement concentrates a large amount of their efforts in Nepal where the problem is significantly prevalent. There, women's low social status and insufficient education make them vulnerable targets for traffickers, according to Eidson. "Many of my classes are composed mainly of females, so I knew they would be able to deeply relate with the cause in that way," Eidson said. It was only halfway through the first class and two documentary videos later that her prediction came true, she said. For SHSU senior Christie Samayoa, seeing the video accounts of survivors and their stories was a jaw-dropping moment. "Hearing that these other women are experiencing things like this all over the world moves you and horrifies you at the same time," she said (Thompson 2012). This article validated the students efforts and confirmed that their concerns could be parlayed into creating awareness in an arena larger than our classroom.

Challenges throughout the Semester

During the information-gathering stage of choosing a particular focus area of social justice, the students watched several documentaries in class, a few of which were rather graphic. I had previewed the episodes and offered a disclaimer to the class about the potentially disturbing content. Still, in one documentary showing raw footage of an interview with some of the men involved in trafficking, the subtitles relayed the men's sentiment that they did not have a moral problem with what they were doing, because these women were just like cattle. Who has a problem with selling cattle? The date stamp clearly indicated that this was current footage, and the nature of the filming was authentic. All this proved more disturbing to some of the students than they could bear, and a few became so outwardly emotional that they had to leave the room for the rest of the documentary. Other challenges were posed by the common problem inherent in group work involving an equal division of labor, although the use of peer evaluations for group-participation grades was highly effective in mitigating the tendency for some students to coast along on others' effort. Nevertheless, some students are always going to participate more, work harder, and carry a greater load of group work whenever a cooperative learning model is used. Interestingly, class discussions among these future teachers about the pros and cons of using this model in their classrooms offered a significant side benefit to this teaching methodology.

Creating a Paradigm Shift

The class discussion after the viewing of these documentaries was focused on what the students could do to help young women like those in the films. The students expressed a deep desire to make others aware of this growing problem, and they wanted to bring the perpetrators to justice. Significantly, all of the actions that they supported were outwardly focused. This is important, particularly in the pre-service social studies classroom and especially at this time in history. We have already discussed the problems associated with teaching social studies and history through a Eurocentric lens, but what also needs addressing is the egocentric nature of many of our young adults today. Their worlds can become very small and focused on their own schedules, their own problems, and their own dreams and ambitions, with little thought to others around them. Further, the demands of college life often place students in an insular environment, a bubble that they rarely leave. But the social justice focus in the university curriculum forced these students to turn their gaze outward. Indeed, in my experience in the classroom, "millennial" students are eager to embrace the challenges present in our world, once they are effectively presented with the information. The current generation of students is deeply concerned about its impact on the world and feels a great sense of indignation at the many injustices present, particularly those involving personal freedom. This shift from self-absorbed student to activist for the downtrodden is nothing short of remarkable, and as was witnessed in this particular study, can happen in the short span of one semester.

Instilling Hope

This has been the description of one experience using social justice as the vehicle with which to introduce pre-service teachers to methods of teaching the strands of social studies. As the chapter comes to a close, we will end by describing a culminating event of the semester's study. During the last week of class, Twitter followers of the Red Thread Movement saw a link to the blog entry below.

Yesterday, the following story ran in Nepal:

BHAIRAHAWA, APR 25 – A teenage girl from Tanahu district, who was being trafficked to India by three men, was rescued from Belahiya border in Rupandehi district on Wednesday evening. Officials of K.I. Nepal, an organization working against human trafficking, rescued 17-year-old SimaThapa as a group of traffickers were trying to take her across the border. The three men fled leaving behind Thapa when they were stopped at a check post. Thapa, a native of Arunodaya VDC-3 in Tanahu, was drugged by the three men she had met in a passenger bus headed for Bhimad Bazaar. “When I woke up I was in Belahiya. They threatened to kill me if I did not do what they told me. I relented and walked along with them,” said Thapa. While two of the traffickers walked ahead to cross the border, Thapa was instructed to walk along with the third man and identify him as her uncle if inquired. UshaGurung, in-charge of KI Nepal Belahiya check post, said Thapa’s nervous expression suggested something was suspicious about her being there with a man. “When we stopped them for questioning, she first said that the man was her uncle. Not convinced, we pressed her to tell the truth when the man ran away. She later told us what had happened to her,” said Gurung. Police Inspector Mohan Bahadur Khand of the Belahiya Area Police Office said Thapa was handed over to her parents on Thursday (Red Thread Movement, 2012b). One student read this blog entry aloud and the class erupted in cheers and applause. There was such ownership of this social justice effort that one could have thought these students themselves were the ones who had stopped this girl and her would-be captors at the borders. This serendipitously served as the perfect close to the semester, ending it with a success story and instilling hope that change can and does happen when we work together to bring it about.

Table 1: NCSS Curriculum Strands

The 10 NCSS Themes The National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) is the national umbrella organization for the social studies.	Alignment with Social Justice Issue of Human Trafficking	Corresponding Activities Performed by Students
CULTURE —Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.	Learning about the culture of Nepal was crucial to understanding the plight of the women who were and are affected by trafficking. The concept of family identity and shame culture were explored to understand why women were not permitted to return to their homes after they were kidnapped and later rescued.	The rich culture of Nepal was discovered through a multi-media group presentation. Students created a Glogster poster that contained video clips of music and dancing, textile weaving, and many photographs of the people. This group title was “Culture of Nepal.”
TIME, CONTINUITY, AND CHANGE —Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the ways human beings view themselves in and over time	Students parallel their understandings of the slavery era in America to the plight of victims of human trafficking.	Students became familiar with the misspelling of “history” as “His Story” and the fact that much of early American history was recorded by upper-class, educated, white males. Methods of teaching the history of the American Civil War were demonstrated through class discussion and brainstorming and creating a KWL chart before and after reading Patricia Polacco’s book <i>Pink and Say</i> . Students wrote lesson plans covering an event of the civil rights movement.
PEOPLE, PLACES, AND ENVIRONMENTS —Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, places, and environments	Students located Nepal on a map and learned the names of other third world countries that have incidences of human trafficking and where they are located. Students researched the ports in America where sex slaves are brought in.	Students study world map and learn how to use Google Earth in the classroom. Trace the highway in Nepal and the border area shared with India to become familiar with the areas of high incidences of human trafficking. Students create lap-boards to teach geography and countries of the world.

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND IDENTITY —Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of individual development and identity.	Students involved in social justice curriculum came to feel a personal connection with those oppressed.	Students reflect on times in their life they have felt hopeless and what they did to overcome that feeling (journal prompts). Class discussions occurred after viewings of documentary films in which victims were interviewed.
INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS, AND INSTITUTIONS —Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of interactions among individuals, groups, and institutions.	Students learn about the NGO working with Red Thread Movement called K.I. Nepal, the entity that helps patrol borders. They become familiar with other social justice organizations through social media.	Students collaborate on glogster poster group presentations, awareness campaign, and designing and all class activities.
POWER, AUTHORITY, AND GOVERNANCE —Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of how people create and change structures of power, authority, and governance.	Corrupt law enforcement along the borders is discussed through viewing of a documentary. Students related current issues in Nepal to the US civil rights movement wherein a few people had to break an unjust law in order to create change.	Students learn methods for teaching the branches of government, vote on decisions made regarding social justice issues, perform assignment centered around creating the democratic classroom. Group presentation is entitled “Faces of Change” and feature historical figures such as Martin Luther King Jr.
PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION, AND CONSUMPTION —Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of how people organize for the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services.	Depressed economy and issue of poverty is explored. Students learn that little industry equals few choices for livelihood and how this plays a factor in the problem of human trafficking.	Students create chart with industry in Nepal and national income averages. Women’s role and perceived worth in the culture are revisited.
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND SOCIETY —Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of relationships among science, technology, and society.	Students follow Red Thread movement on Twitter and Facebook. Documentaries are viewed on YouTube.	Student group presentations are glogster posters that include video links and podcasts.
GLOBAL CONNECTIONS —Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of global connections and interdependence.	Students learn personal stories of affected persons through blog entries.	Students’ research focus groups require them to explore how different countries depend on each other.
CIVIC IDEALS AND PRACTICES —Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the ideals, principles, and practices of citizenship in a democratic republic.	Women and girls sold into slavery is a violation of human rights that the students define as a social injustice requiring remedy, rather than a distant problem that is nebulous.	Through teaching methods of citizenship and government, students are reminded of their own rights as Americans and explore the definition of “human rights” around the world.

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