

Building Language Skills with The Seattle Times

January 19, 2017

Article: Sawant opposes schools' warnings on inauguration

Wednesday, January 18, 2017 in the print replica of The Seattle Times, NW Wednesday, page B1

Standard:

Social Studies EALR 1: CIVICS The student understands and applies knowledge of government, law, politics, and the nation's fundamental documents to make decisions about local, national, and international issues and to demonstrate thoughtful, participatory citizenship.

Objective:

Students will discuss the upcoming presidential inauguration and research the inauguration speeches made by former US presidents.

Pre-Reading:

What do you know about the United States presidential inauguration? When and why does it take place?

Vocabulary:

As you read, look for the following vocabulary words that appear in today's article. Write down what you think the words mean based on the "context," or how the words are used in the sentence in which they appear. Next, look up the definitions in a dictionary and see how close your guess was for each word.

disciplinary

Inauguration

institution

legitimate

ominous

petition

plea

policy

protest

rallies

solidarity

unexcused

vicinity

Comprehension:

1. What are students at a number of Seattle's middle and high schools planning for Inauguration Day?
2. Why did thousands of students walk out of class in November?
3. Who is Kshama Sawant?
4. How many students from how many schools walked out or held rallies in November?
5. Are walkouts planned in other Seattle-area districts?
6. Who has the final word on what happens to students that skip school?
7. Why can't Seattle Public Schools take part in "coordinated political activity"?
8. According to the article, what are some other reasons that Seattle students have staged walkouts?
9. What event in 2014 were students also marked with an unexcused absence for attending?

Post-Reading:

After reading the article discuss the following questions:

Have you ever participated in, or purposely chosen to not participate in, a walkout? Why? Are there any cases where you think students should have the right to attend walkouts without getting unexcused absences? Are there any cases in which you don't believe students should have the right to attend a walkout? Why or why not? Do you agree or disagree with the inauguration day walkouts? What is a reason that someone might see it the other way? What is your school's policy on walkouts? How does your school's policy on walkouts change whether or not you would participate in a walkout?

Building Language Skills:

Visit the following website to view the most frequently used words in the inauguration address of each American president:

http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2009/01/17/washington/20090117_ADDRESSES.html?_r=0

Use what you find to answer the following questions:

1. Find the presidential inauguration speech that occurred closest to when you were born (you might have to round up or down). What was the most frequently used word?
2. Which two words have appeared in the top 5 most frequently used words in every presidential address since 1993?
3. In which two addresses was 'War' the most frequently used word?
4. Find at least one word that was frequently used in both George Washington's 1789 address and Barack Obama's 2009 address?
5. In general, write three observations about the kinds of words that are frequently used in America's presidential inauguration speeches (What are some similarities? What are some differences?):
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

Comprehension Question Answers:

1. Walkouts
2. To protest the election of Donald Trump
3. A Seattle City Councilmember
4. 5,000 students from 20 Seattle middle and high schools
5. Not that officials are aware of
6. Each school's principal
7. Because it is a public institution
8. School funding, standardized testing and teacher terminations
9. The Seattle Seahawks' Super Bowl victory parade

Building Language Skills Answers:

Use what you find to answer the following questions:

1. Answers will vary.
2. America; Nation
3. Abraham Lincoln (1865), James Madison (1813)
4. Answers might include: government, people, American
5. Answers will vary.

