Health Care Reform

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4th - 5th Grade

National Standard
Era 10: Contemporary United States (1968 to the present) / Standard 1
*Standard 1: Recent developments in foreign and domestic politics*

Washington State Standards
*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.*
*EALR 4: History - The student understands and applies knowledge of historical thinking, chronology, eras, turning points, major ideas, individuals, and themes in local, Washington State, tribal, United States, and world history in order to evaluate how history shapes the present and future.*

BACKGROUND

Pre-QuickWrite
Have student write everything they know about the 2010 United States health care bill and health care debate.

Background
Health care reform is a debate that has been going on in the United States for decades. The following is a timeline (Reference citations #1, #2) of some of the highlights of this historical debate:

1901 – 1909
Although President Roosevelt believed in health care reform because he felt our country would not be strong if its people were poor or sick, most of the reform during this time took place outside of the government.

1917 - 1930
The California Social Insurance Commission proposed legislation on health insurance, however, opponents associated compulsory health insurance as Communist and it was not taken seriously. Doctors, businesses, and labor opposed compulsory health care as well.

1930s
Health care costs began to rise and focus on health care reform shifted to expanding access to medical care.

1935
Franklin D. Roosevelt pushed the Social Security Bill. However, health insurance was not included in this bill because it was felt that the whole bill would be threatened; unemployment insurance and old-age benefits took priority.

1943
The Wagner Bill was introduced in 1943 and included compulsory national health insurance funded by payroll taxes. This bill was reintroduced every session for 14 years, but it never passed Congress.
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## 1945 – 1953
President Truman’s plan for national health insurance took the direction of a single universal comprehensive plan for all people in the United States, not just the working class. He refuted the fact that this was “socialized medicine” and dropped the funeral benefit that was instrumental in the defeat of national insurance during the Progressive Era. Congress had mixed reaction to Truman’s plan. Some thought it was socialism. The American Medical Association said it would make slaves of doctors. In 1946, Republicans took control of Congress and had no desire to pass national health care. Compromises were made during this time, but a single health insurance system did not get passed. Instead private insurance was available to those who could afford it and public welfare services were available for the poor. Therefore, advocates of public health care insurance made a more modest proposal of hospital insurance for the elderly, and we had the start of Medicare.

## 1965
President Johnson signed into law the Medicare and Medicaid legislation. This included the Democratic proposal for comprehensive health insurance for the elderly and a revised Republican plan for subsidized physician insurance.

## 1970 – 1974
Inflation and health care costs were growing in the United States. Senator Kennedy (Democrat) had a proposal for national health insurance which was responded to in opposition by President (Republican) Nixon’s Comprehensive Health Insurance Plan (CHIP). Other Congressional members wrote other plans. Nothing was decided and health reform was lost under the Watergate hearings and Nixon’s resignation.

## 1975 – 1979
President Carter had health reform as a priority for his administration, but implementation was delayed due to an economic recession.

## 1981 - 1982
Some adjustments were made in Medicaid (additional payments to hospitals were designated and states were required to pay nursing home rates that were more appropriate). Medicaid was expanded to include children with disabilities.

## 1996
Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) adjusted the use of pre-existing conditions, set regulations for privacy of medical records, and regulated tax obligations for long-term care insurance.

## 2002
President Bush established the Health Center Growth Initiative, which increased the number of community health centers.

## 2005
More adjustments to premiums and benefits were made to Medicaid in the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005.
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2006
The Medicare Part D Drug benefit was established. Massachusetts passed a provision of health care coverage for all their residents. After two years of this additional coverage, Massachusetts cut their uninsured rate in half.

2010
President Obama signed into law the Patient Protection Affordable Care Act.

“The historic health reform legislation requires that all individuals have health insurance beginning in 2014.

✓ The poorest will be covered under a Medicaid expansion.
✓ Those with low and middle incomes who do not have access to affordable coverage through their jobs will be able to purchase coverage with federal subsidies through new "American Health Benefit Exchanges."
✓ Employers are not mandated to provide health benefits, however large businesses whose employees receive insurance subsidies will pay penalties. Small businesses will be able to access more plans through a separate Exchange.
✓ Health plans will not be allowed to deny coverage to people for any reason, including their health status, nor can they charge more because of a person's health or gender. Young adults will now have the option of being covered under their parents' plan up to age 26.” (Reference Citation #2, 2010 on timeline.)

Discuss what political cartoons represent, using one or both of these “New Deal” cartoons as models:


Or choose a cartoon from <http://www.cagle.com> as models. (Preview these cartoons first as some may not be suitable for educational purposes.) The teacher may want to choose a cartoon that highlights a topic that has already been discussed in the classroom so that students have a foundation of the issue being depicted by the cartoon.


Talk about the elements of political cartoons as students will be creating modern day cartoons depicting our current health care bill/debate for this PBL. An entire lesson on political cartoons might be helpful before this PBL is even introduced.
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Also, review the You Decide CBA Rubric (see assessment section) with students so that they understand vocabulary and expectations.

PROBLEM

In 2010 Congress passed an historical health care reform bill. Some felt that this bill was long overdue, and they are happy about what this means for the country. Others felt that the bill was not what the majority of the American people wanted, but it was passed for political reasons. Was this bill really the will of the American people? How does health care reform speak to the rights and responsibilities of Americans? How does this new health care law affect the common good of all people?

SCENARIO

It is June of 2010 in the United States and you are just beginning your career in creating political cartoons. You have been hired by the Seattle Times to create political cartoons that reflect current trends or topical issues in our country. Your first assignment is to create a cartoon that addresses health care reform in the United States.

Our country has had health care reform debates for decades. President Obama signed a controversial health care bill into law on March 23, 2010. People are still talking about this new law; and although you have your own beliefs about these new health regulations, you want to make sure you research the topic and get different points of view about how people around the country feel about this law before you create your cartoon.

TASK

Design a political cartoon that shows at least two different sides of the health care debate in the United States in 2010. Also, include a one-paragraph narrative of what your cartoon portrays.
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RESOURCES

Internet


Primary Sources

Check local and school libraries for print reference documents on this topic.

Look for the health care document itself and see if some excerpts can be printed out.

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## Professional Political Cartoons

After the PBL, some of the following political cartoons could be displayed as discussion starters to conclude and/or review this topic. Students might appreciate these cartoons more after they have conducted research on this topic and made cartoons of their own.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cartoon Source</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Website</th>
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## ASSESSMENT

### Review

Give groups time to share their political cartoon with the entire class, including a verbal narrative of what they wanted to portray with this cartoon. Then have a debate on the two sides of the issue or do the debate first and then have groups share their cartoons.

### Assessments

1. **CBA – You Decide – Washington:**

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3. Individual journal reflection about the process.

4. Political cartoon(s) and narrative.

5. Post-QuickWrite about what students know about the 2010 US health care bill and debate.

REFERENCES/CITATIONS


