

FREEDOM DAY



LESSON PLAN

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER



GRADES K-4

LESSON OVERVIEW

Students will relate personal experiences to the content of this lesson. They will play games of “Simon Says” and participate in other kinesthetic experiences and consider the differences and similarities between activities to understand varying degrees of freedom. Students will participate in whole group discussion and individual reflection to analyze and evaluate the meaning of *freedom*.

RATIONALE: “Simon Says” gives students the opportunity to move around while following directions. It also piques their interest and stimulates their minds as they try to connect the game of “Simon Says” with the meaning of *freedom*. Significantly, “Simon Says” is an activity that does not promote freedom of movement or expression for students. Only “Simon” has freedom to move and give commands. A free choice “dance session” after the game of “Simon Says” allows students to move around with very little direction and minimal rules. The two activities, when done in sequence, allow students to compare and contrast their experiences in situations with different amounts of freedom to explore the concept of *freedom*, itself.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- ▶ What is the meaning of *freedom*? How do we define *freedom*?
- ▶ What is the relationship between *freedom* and *responsibility*?
- ▶ What are your basic freedoms? How are they protected?
- ▶ How do we exercise *freedom* in our homes, at school, in our communities?

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Students will develop a basic knowledge of and ability to identify freedom and responsibility at home, school, and the playground.
- ▶ Students will understand how the U.S. government promotes freedom and responsibility.
- ▶ Students will have increased awareness of, understanding of, and interest in government.

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- ▶ What is freedom?
- ▶ What does it mean to be free?
- ▶ What responsibilities come with freedom?
- ▶ What role does government play in our freedom and responsibilities?

INTRODUCTION

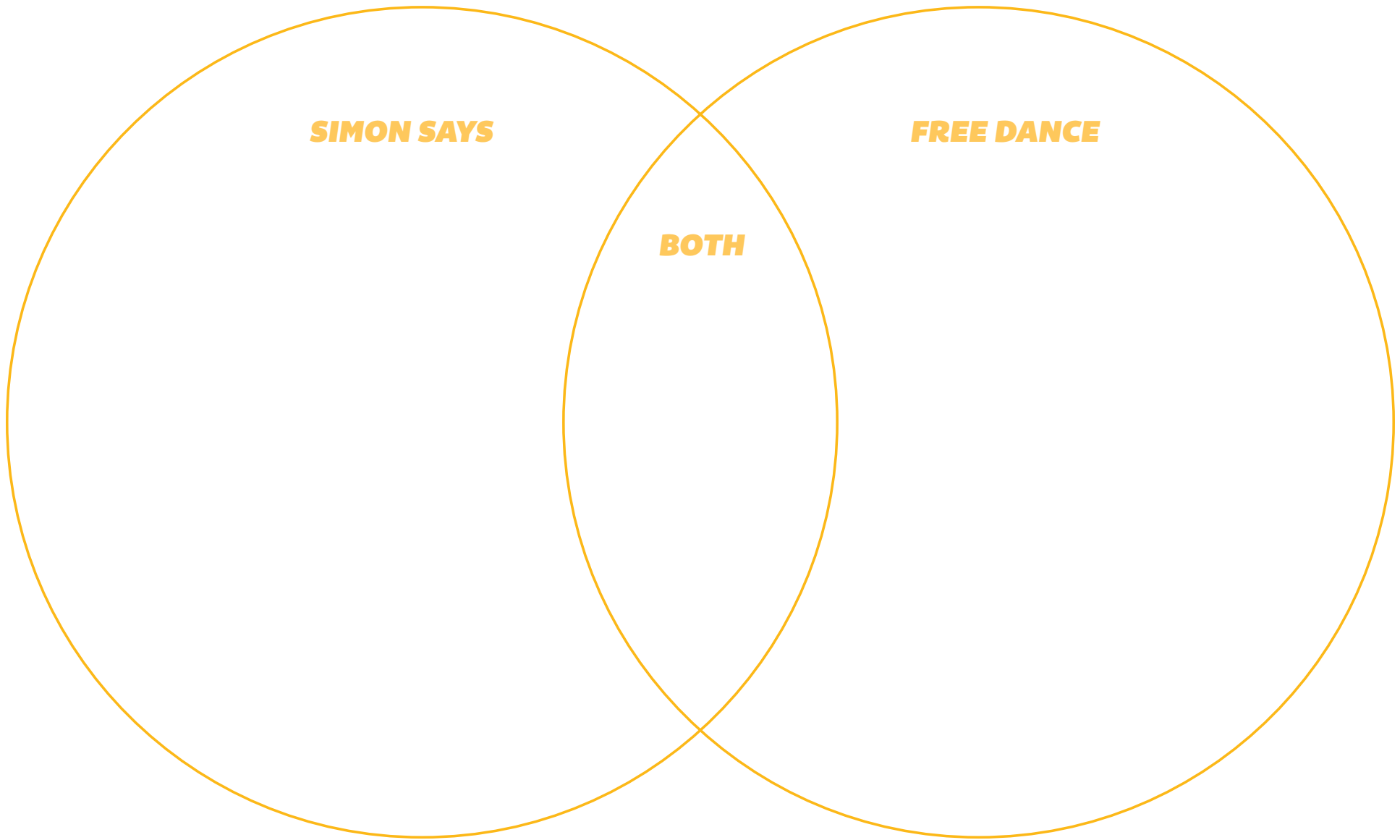
What is freedom? What does it mean to be free? How do students experience freedom in their lives? In this lesson, students will explore idea of freedom and responsibility. They will examine freedoms they have at home, school, and the playground. They will also connect those freedoms with responsibilities.

PROCEDURES

- A. Introduce topic to students: "Today in class we will learn about the idea of freedom. First we will play a game of 'Simon Says.'"
- B. Post the rules to "Simon Says" on the board and read aloud:
 1. Everyone will stand.
 2. The teacher will be "Simon" for the first round.
 3. Students must copy the actions of the teacher when given the command "Simon says ..."
(i.e. "Simon says, 'touch your nose.'" "Simon says, 'touch your knees.'")
 4. If "Simon" gives a command without first saying, "Simon says," and students follow that command, those students sit down because they are out of the game.
 5. We will play 2 or 3 rounds. (Students will be "Simon" in those rounds).
 6. Each round will be no longer than 3 minutes
- C. Play two or three rounds of "Simon Says." Have a student(s) be "Simon" for the second and/or third round(s).
- D. (Post Activity – Processing) On the board, write "Simon Says." Ask students to describe how they felt during the activity (ex: happy to win, liked giving commands, sad to sit down so fast, confused by the commands, felt tricked by "Simon," etc.). Write their ideas and responses on the board.
- E. Ask students to stand again for the beginning of the next activity. In this activity, the teacher will play music. (Choose something popular that students might like to dance to.) Tell students they can dance any way they like for the duration of the song. If they want to sit they can sit. If they want to move about the room they can do that, too. Give them freedom to express themselves through dance and have fun.
- F. (Post Activity – Processing) On the board, write "Dancing." Ask students to, again, describe how they felt during the activity (ex: happy to dance, liked being able to move about the room, had fun acting "silly," felt uncomfortable because they do not like to dance, were angry because someone invaded their personal space, etc.). Write their ideas and responses on the board to compare with "Simon Says."
- G. To illustrate student responses, turn the lists of student responses into a Venn Diagram. Discuss with the students the similarities and differences between the two activities and how they made students feel. For older grades, a handout is provided for students to fill out their own diagram and record the classmates' responses. (See page 4.)



NAME: _____



WHOLE GROUP DISCUSSION

“How do these activities relate to the word *freedom*? What does it mean to be free? In which activity did you experience freedom? How did it make you feel?”

“Based on the activities we just did, let’s create a class definition of the word *freedom*. Students may suggest ideas such as ‘being able to do what you want,’ ‘no limits,’ ‘choices,’ and ‘to be free.’”

Talk with students about the experiences some more.

- ▶ “What was the class like during ‘Simon Says?’”
Talk about aspects of the game like the structure, how it was ordered, and that everyone knew what their roles were.
- ▶ “What was the class like during the free dance?”
Talk about how it was more chaotic, kids were everywhere, and there was less control.
- ▶ Guide students to the idea that with freedom there comes responsibility.
“What happens if people just run around wherever they want? What can we do to allow students to be free, but also respect each other?”

Teacher leads students in this discussion toward the ideas of Rights and Responsibilities. Create a flow chart to illustrate the relationships between freedom, rights, and responsibilities. and responses on the board to compare with “Simon Says.”



CLOSURE ACTIVITY (GRADES K – 1)

Students will draw a picture of what *freedom* means to them. They can draw something that shows *freedom* in school, at home, or somewhere else. After 10 minutes of drawing time students will share their drawings of *freedom* with a partner and explain what *freedom* means to them.

CLOSURE ACTIVITY (GRADES 2 – 3)

Students will draw a picture of what *freedom* means to them. They can draw something that shows *freedom* in school, at home, or somewhere else. On the bottoms of their pictures students will write a one-to-two-sentence description of what *freedom* means to them.

CLOSURE ACTIVITY (GRADE 4)

Using the attached handout, students will write a few words that come to mind when they think of *freedom*. Then, they will write an example of something they consider themselves “free” to do. (Students can be encouraged to include the freedoms of U.S. citizens—but personal freedoms in school, at home, or elsewhere are acceptable, too.) Next, they will write a few words that come to mind when they think of *responsibilities* and name an example of a responsibility they have. Finally, students will write an example of how they can be “free” while also being “responsible.” Students can draw a picture for this last activity in addition to—or instead of—writing out their example.

TO ME, FREEDOM MEANS...

AN EXAMPLE
OF A **FREEDOM**
I HAVE IS...

TO ME, RESPONSIBILITY MEANS...

AN EXAMPLE OF
A **RESPONSIBILITY**
I HAVE IS...

ONE WAY THAT I CAN BE FREE AND RESPONSIBLE AT THE SAME TIME IS...

