



Lesson One: Challenges In Changing the Face of a City

Grade Levels 9-12

Subject Areas History, English

California State Standards <http://www.cde.ca.gov/board/>

Reading
Grades 9 and 10

2.8 Evaluate the credibility of an author’s argument or defense of a claim by critiquing the relationships between generalizations and evidence, the comprehensiveness of evidence, and the way in which the author’s intent affects the structure and tone of the text.

Grades 11 and 12

2.4 Make warranted and reasonable assertions about the author’s arguments by using elements of the texts to defend and clarify interpretations.

Writing
Grades 9 and 10

2.3 a. Marshal evidence in support of a thesis and related claims, including information on all relevant perspectives.

History
Grade 11

Analyze the persistence of poverty and how different analyses of this issue influence welfare reform, health insurance reform and other social policies.

Grade 12

12.2 8. Explain the role of profit as the incentive to entrepreneurs in a market economy.

Overview

Students will view selected segments of **The Celebrity and the City** and participate in activities designed to explore the complex challenges Jerry Brown faces as he attempts to bring change to the city of Oakland. Key issues include poverty, housing, gentrification, politics and business development.

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- be able to express their understanding of positive and negative aspects of economic development in urban revitalization efforts.
- learn how media can function as a tool to examine social and political mechanisms for change.
- be able to critically analyze economic development efforts in Oakland.

To assess students' understanding of the above learning objectives, teachers may rate students on the quality of their written summarizations, their presentations and their participation in group discussions.

Time Two to three 40-50 minutes class periods

Materials and Teacher Prep

Videotape **Bay Window— The Celebrity and the City**

Internet access

Drawing and writing supplies

Bookmark the following Web sites:

<http://www.oaklandnet.com/>

<http://www.jerrybrown.org/html/brownbio.html>

<http://www.jerrybrown.org/html/articles/art02.html>

<http://www.oaklandnet.com/10k-a/default.html>

<http://www.cued.org/about/history.html>

<http://www.jerrywatch.org/Pages/10K.html#fication>

<http://www.policylink.org/gentrification/>

<http://www.videoactivism.org/gentro.html>

<http://www.cued.org/about/history.html>

<http://www.cued.org/about/mandate.html>

PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Activity One

In this activity students are asked to brainstorm ideas on the components of a vibrant urban community.

1. Divide the class into two groups. Ask the first group to brainstorm a list of things that make a city a vibrant and thriving environment. Ask the second group to brainstorm a list of problems that have a negative impact on city life. Ask each group to provide examples of specific cities that illustrate their ideas (for instance, New York City's theater district might be an example of what makes a city vibrant, or Oakland's high crime rate might be an example of a challenge a city faces).

2. Ask each group to present their ideas to the class.

3. Ask each group to create a descriptive paragraph about an imaginary city that is dealing with the issues both groups raised. Share group paragraphs with the entire class.
4. Begin watching the introduction to the film. Pause the tape when Jerry Brown finishes describing the outline of his plan to revitalize Oakland. Ask the students to discuss the following question:
 - How do the issues you raised compare to Jerry Brown's description of his plan for Oakland's revitalization?
5. Create a class list of ideas about what makes a city vibrant based upon students' group work and discussions. Post the list to use as a shared resource throughout the remainder of the lesson activities.

Activity Two

In this activity, students briefly research the city of Oakland and Mayor Jerry Brown.

1. As a class, visit the official Web site of the city of Oakland at <http://www.oaklandnet.com/>. Allow time for students to browse and explore the Web site.
2. Divide the class into small research groups to collect information about Jerry Brown. Ask each group to create a brief presentation based on their research. They can start their research using some Web sites, including the following:

<http://www.jerrybrown.org/html/brownbio.html>

<http://www.jerrybrown.org/html/articles/art02.html>

<http://www.kqed.org/tv/productions/baywindow/city/celebrity.html>

FOCUS FOR VIEWING

Tell the students that they should try to understand the issue of economic development from different perspectives as they watch the film and listen to the stories of the various people involved.

Some key terms to define and discuss include the following:

- Gentrification
- Development
- Racial profiling
- Capitalism

Tell the students to think about the following overarching question as they watch the production:

What are the pros and cons of economic development in urban revitalization efforts?

VIEWING ACTIVITIES

In the Viewing Activities, students explore the complexity of the issue of urban economic development. They are challenged to grapple with divergent viewpoints through research

and discussion. They are asked to create a presentation that represents a critical understanding of key issues surrounding economic development in Oakland.

Activity One

In this activity students conduct research on economic development efforts in Oakland and learn about different views on the topic.

1. Divide the class into small groups to study the issue of urban economic development in Oakland. Ask half the groups to focus on the positive aspects of the issue and the other half to focus on the negative aspects of the issue. Tell the students that they are going to create a presentation that will present a comprehensive understanding of economic development. Ask the students to take notes on the pertinent issues described in the film, and that come up in class discussions. Tell students they will be using their notes when preparing their presentations.

2. Begin watching the film. Pause the film after Jerry Brown leaves the Gap store. Ask the students to discuss the following question:

- If you were living in a city outside of California, what factors would influence your decision to choose to move to Oakland?

3. Pause the film when the segment on business development ends. Discuss the following with the class:

- What are your thoughts regarding these quotes?

“Jerry Brown faces the classic dilemma of urban redevelopment: Can he rebuild a city without displacing the low-income citizens who have endured Oakland’s hard times?”

“It’s much easier to deal with the politics of prosperity than the politics of poverty.”

4. Have the students conduct Internet research on their assigned viewpoint on business development in Oakland. Tell them they can incorporate the information into their small-group presentations. Some excellent Web sites to use include the following:

Pro

“Oakland Scores 4 Big Housing Deals: 610 Units Slated For Downtown”

<http://www.oaklandnet.com/10k-a/default.html>

Council for Urban Economic Development

<http://www.cued.org/about/history.html>

Con

“Green Light for Builders, No Consideration for Affordable Housing”

<http://www.jerrywatch.org/Pages/10K.html#fication>

Beyond Gentrification Tools for Equitable Development

<http://www.policylink.org/gentrification/>

The Video Activist Network
<http://www.videoactivism.org/gentro.html>

5. Ask each small group to create a presentation that showcases their assigned viewpoint on the issue based on their research, class discussion and the ideas presented in the film.
6. Each group should share its presentation with the entire class.

Activity Two

In this activity students have the opportunity to consider opposing viewpoints on economic development in Oakland through one-on-one discussions. They are also asked to reflect in writing on their own opinions on the subject.

1. Divide the class into pairs. One member of the pair should be from one of the pro-economic development groups of the previous activity and the other from one of the con groups.
2. Ask each pair to discuss their different viewpoints.
3. After the discussion, ask for volunteers to comment on the viewpoint expressed by their respective partners. Focus on what the students have learned from hearing different viewpoints.
4. Discuss the following questions with the students:
 - In your opinion, what person in the film made the most compelling arguments for or against economic development in Oakland?
 - Did your opinion change as you watched this production?

POSTVIEWING ACTIVITIES

After students have watched the film, conducted research, and participated in whole-class and small-group discussions, these activities give students the opportunity to reflect on and synthesize their own ideas and viewpoints concerning economic development in Oakland.

Activity One

In this activity students participate in a mock town hall meeting that gives them the chance to express their individual views on economic development.

1. Ask the students to reflect on the different opinions expressed in the small-group presentations and the film. Each student should then write a paragraph that summarizes his or her own opinions on the issue of economic development.
2. As a class, visit the section of the KQED Web site on Jerry Brown that explores people and their roles in Oakland's city government:
<http://www.kqed.org/tv/productions/baywindow/city/whoswho.html>

Conduct a mock town hall meeting that gives them the chance to express their individual views on the subject of business development in Oakland.

Each student should take on an imaginary persona that best showcases his or her personal views. Encourage them to think about who in Oakland's government would be the person most likely to support them. For example, they might choose to be a developer, a tenants' rights activist, or a small business owner who recently purchased a work/live loft in Oakland.

Enact the meeting of the mock town hall. Students should

- state the role they are playing before they present their viewpoints.
- make suggestions about what they want to see changed.
- direct their comments to an appropriate governmental department or agency within the city government structure.

If possible, invite other classes to view the meeting.

Videotape it and replay for the class. Ask the students to critique the discussion.

Activity Two

This activity gives students the opportunity to express their views on economic development through an art activity.

1. After the students have participated in the mock town hall meeting, ask each of them to create a political cartoon expressing their views of economic development in Oakland. Post students' work on a class Web site or create a display to share with the community.