



CURRENT EVENTS - EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

BRITNEY GRINER AND 'HOSTAGE DIPLOMACY'

Below is a list of ideas and ways you might use the resources provided for this Current Events Post to extend learning and civic engagement for your students.

Conversation for Advocating

Writing & Delivering a Persuasive Speech - [LINK TO DIRECTIONS](#)

- **Activity Summary:** In a democracy, good ideas aren't enough – you have to persuade others to agree. You have to garner the votes to move an idea forward or it will die in committee. This lesson helps students develop their ideas into solid proposals that win people over.
- **Suggestion for this Current Event:** Students will develop persuasive speeches around the question of if (and how) the United States government should advocate for Brittney Griner's release from a Russian penal colony. Using the three rhetorical appeals of Aristotle, students should identify how different types of arguments will help them make their case most effectively and draft/present their completed speeches to classmates.

Conversation for Understanding

Microlabs/Triads - [LINK TO DIRECTIONS](#)

- **Activity Summary:** Microlabs is a discussion activity designed to maximize equal participation in conversation among students on nearly any topic. After the teacher provides an overview and instructions, students engage in three rounds of highly structured conversation in response to a series of questions. Students receive an equal amount of time, uninterrupted, to answer each question.
- **Suggestion for this Current Event:** After having read/watched/listened to background material on Brittney Griner's conviction in Russia for drug possession, follow the steps of the Microlab/Triad process to generate deeper engagement with the facts of this current event. Three possible questions to ask could be:
 1. As you studied the Brittney Griner case, what fact or facts stood out to you or surprised you? (Why?)
 2. In the Brittney Griner case, do you believe the punishment (a nine-year sentence in a Russian penal colony) fit the crime (drug possession)? Why or why not?
 3. What role, if any, do you believe the U.S. government should play in helping to ensure Griner's release?

Media Literacy

Current Events Analysis - [LINK TO DIRECTIONS](#)



- **Activity Summary:** This set of activities combines reading for understanding with summarizing, predicting, and other key literacy skills. Additionally, there is an extension activity that allows students to practice historical comparison using the current event they have already examined.
- **Suggestion for this Current Event:** Because the basic facts of the Brittney Griner case are fairly straightforward, this Current Event provides a useful entry point for students to start thinking about some of the bigger questions about this case. Students can use the Current Events Analysis tools to look more deeply at articles/videos/podcasts having to do with the proposed prisoner exchange, conditions in Russian prisons, or the level of advocacy/support the government or other professional athletes have offered to Griner.

Research

Issues & Solutions - [LINK TO DIRECTIONS](#)

- **Activity Summary:** The Issue & Solutions activity seeks to have students examine a current event and grapple with the complex issues and possible solutions centered around the topic. Students practice close reading skills while at the same time practice critical thinking skills in determining consequences and hierarchies.
- **Suggestion for this Current Event:** Now that Brittney Griner has been sentenced to a nine-year prison sentence and exhausted her judicial appeals in Russian courts, what might be the best ways to ensure Griner's release as soon as possible? This activity will allow students to consider the merits of various proposals for prisoner exchanges, as well as to generate their own proposed solutions to a gnarly diplomatic situation.