

VOCABULARY

WW II

REPUBLIC

A country that has an elected government; governs according to law; and does not have a king or queen. In modern times, the chief of state is usually a president. It's a government based on the idea that every citizen has equal status.

DEMOCRACY

Govt. freely elected by its citizens whose rights are guaranteed by the constitution.

CAPITALISM

Individual and businesses are free to make many economic decisions.

Capital—wealth either in form of money or what it can buy: land, ships, factories, art, etc.

Economic system built on idea of "Private Property" Individuals or groups of individuals or groups can own capital and decide how they want to use their wealth.

Laissez Faire Capitalism—free to do whatever they want with their wealth to try to make more wealth—driven by "profit motive." Desire and acquire more wealth." Law of supply and Demand." Also sell their labor. US not completely Laissez Faire (Let alone). US—minimum wage, factory safety.

IMPERIALISM

Nation builds an empire by conquering and ruling other countries.

SOCIALISM

Stop growing inequality. Workers or government should own factories and fairly distribute factories and products and country's wealth should be more fairly divided among all its citizens.

German Socialism (Karl Marx)

People with money exploited proletariat. "Class Struggle" New proletariat government established a society based on social, private property would be abolished and wealth distributed. Called "Communist Manifesto" "Workers Unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains, and world to win."

COMMUNISM

Government controlled all aspects of economy. Soviet Union believed Capitalism was evil and must be overthrown.

NATIONALISM

Pride in-and devotion to one's country.

Political idea—that each separate people who are bound by a shared language and tradition should have their own separate nation.

TOTALITARIAN STATE

All aspects of life—economic, political, and social controlled by govt. In name “Good of the State.” Soviet citizen denied freedom of speech, press, and religion—rights cherished by Americans.

DICTATOR

A leader of a country who controls everything and who usually has gained power by force.

HOLOCAUST

Total Destruction. Event kills many people and destroys many things.

GENOCIDE

Systematic killing of a whole racial or cultural group.

CIVILIANS

Men, women and children who are not fighting.

VISA

Official government document that permits holder to enter the nation that has issued it.

REFUGEES

Victims of political violence.

Forced to leave country, especially during wars.

Examples:

WWII—Jews fleeing Germany

Today—Hutu and Tutsis fled Rwanda for Zaire.

Extending the concept:

One who flees in search of *refuge*—a place that provides protection or shelter from danger; or seeking refuge from heat; or seeking refuge in a red cross shelter.

Reading for the World

Steven Wolk

How can we make social responsibility a vital part of our classrooms? The answer could be as close as the nearest book.

Books written for children and young adults—fiction, nonfiction, picture books, poetry, short stories, and graphic novels—can be a lens through which students explore important topics and questions about the human condition, social problems, and the world. They can also be mirrors for students to examine those issues within themselves and their communities. If dialogue and debate are central to a healthy democracy, then they are essential in a classroom teaching social responsibility. Books offer endless opportunities to engage children of all ages in discussion. As good readers, students can engage in their own internal dialogue with books, and the ideas inside books can nurture discussion and debate throughout a classroom.

Investing the Imagination

Too often, social responsibility is simply equated with citizenship education, but living a life of social responsibility involves much more than merely being a good citizen. I like Sheldon Berman's (1997) concise definition of social responsibility: "personal investment in the well-being of people and the planet" (p. 15). This definition implies a great deal more than merely obeying the laws and voting in presidential elections every four years. The phrase "personal investment" means that we *care* about the world, from the local to the global, and that we take actions to make it a better place.

We can add to this Maxine Greene's (1995) notion of teaching "social imagination," which she defines as "the capacity to invent visions of what should be and what might be in our deficient society, on the streets where we live, and in our schools" (p. 5). This is a bold idea to teach inside our classrooms, and one perfectly suited to the integration of teaching social responsibility and reading books. Because books nurture our imagination, what better way could there be to integrate social responsibility into our lessons?

Books enable teachers to weave lessons in social responsibility into their regular curriculum. For example, a teacher can help students with their literacy skills by reading aloud the picture book *Wangari's Trees of Peace* by Jeanette Winter. This book is about Wangari Maathai, who won the Nobel Peace Prize for creating the "Green Belt Movement." Reading about the African women who planted millions of trees will open up opportunities to explore issues of poverty, peace, compassion, the environment, life in Africa, and other topics.

Immersed in Stories

It's impossible to care for the world and act in ways that help heal the planet if we don't know what is happening in the world, or even our own communities and nation. This means our schools should be immersing students—from kindergarten to high school—in

current events. Although teaching with newspapers and other authentic sources is perfect for this, books make current events human and accessible by wrapping them into a good story. When reading the novel *Hurricane Song* by Paul Volponi, you are inside the New Orleans Superdome during Hurricane Katrina. The nonfiction book *Our Stories, Our Songs* by Deborah Ellis is filled with the voices of children living with AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa, and *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie immerses readers in the current plight plaguing so many American Indian reservations.

Just as knowledge of what is happening in the world today is central to practicing social responsibility, a good understanding of the past is essential to really understanding the present and making decisions for the future. Books make history come alive in ways that a social studies textbook cannot.

For teaching social responsibility, there is more "truth" in a good work of historical fiction than there is in a 600-page history textbook. Read *The Lord of the Nutcracker Men* by Iain Lawrence, and you are inside the horrifying trench warfare of World War I. The picture book *Freedom Summer* by Deborah Wiles tells a simple story of two boys—one black and the other white—on the day the Civil Rights Act became law in 1964. See my list of Good Books for Teaching Social Responsibility for a sampling of additional books that can stimulate discussion of important social and historical issues.

Teaching for social responsibility through books will not happen by magic. Teachers must explicitly pull out themes and issues of social responsibility for their students to explore through discussion, writing, and inquiry-based projects. We cannot be shy about teaching social responsibility; the health and well-being of our world depends on it.

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