

SDGs in Japan and the United States: Action Research

Course: National, State, and Local Government

Unit: Public Policy

Learning Objective:

- Students will identify the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals and develop an action plan to address these goals.

Overview:

- Students will identify the United Nations sustainable development goals and learn how the Japanese government and corporations are tackling these SDGs through specific case studies.
- Students will apply Japan’s proactive approach to SDGs to concerns students have identified in the Unites States.
- Students will create and implement an action plan to address the SDGs they identified.
- Students will produce and present a slide presentation on their SDG and action plan.

Implementation:

SDGs in Japan

1. Begin the lesson by providing students with case studies of Japan’s approach to societal concerns.
 - a. ‘Overcome Obstacles with Technology and Wisdom’
 - i. This video produced by Omron Corporation explains how Omron has used technology to support their disabled workers.
 - ii. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TJvDC8hwF1Q>
 - b. KDDI’s Target SDGs
 - i. This video produced by KDDI shows the corporation’s dedication and action plans to address specific SGDs.
 - ii. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z-GtR9z5vXw>
 - c. ‘Let’s Discuss Cool Biz’
 - i. In this Article the Japan Times outlines the Cool Biz policy and its reception in the workplace.
 - ii. <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/life/2017/05/22/language/lets-discuss-cool-biz/#.XZ9RiEZKggw>
2. After students watch and read the above sources, the teacher will lead students in a class discussion on Japan’s proactive approach to SDGs, how we could apply similar techniques in the United States, and what challenges the United States may face with implementation in the United States.

SDGs in the United States

3. For inspiration and planning purposes, show students two Ted Talks of community members identifying problems in their community and developing action plans to address them.
 - a. 'A Guerilla Gardener in South Central L.A.'
 - i. In this Ted Talk, Ron Finley discusses how he realized he was living in a food desert in South Central L.A. and worked with the local government to create community gardens offering free healthy foods.
 - ii. https://www.ted.com/talks/ron_finley_a_guerilla_gardener_in_south_central_la?language=en
 - b. 'What's Wrong with School Lunches'
 - i. In this Ted Talk, Ann Cooper talks about her experience identifying the problems with school lunches and how she created a new system for her students.
 - ii. https://www.ted.com/talks/ann_cooper_talks_school_lunches
4. After each Ted Talk students should brainstorm which SDG they believe the speaker tackled and how they achieved their goals.
5. Students will be provided with a link to the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals and identify the SDG they want to address.
 - a. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>
6. For their final project, students will create and present a Google Slide presentation with the following criteria:
 - a. Identify the SDG and specific issue their project will address.
 - b. Provide a background on the issue.
 - c. Develop and outline an action plan.
 - d. Carry out some part of their action plan in their school/community.
 - e. Reflect on the state of their issue and the degree of success their action plan achieved.

Student Outcomes:

- Students will have an understanding of the United Nation's SDGs, how Japan is a world leader in the pursuit of the SDGs, and the ways in which the United States could implement similar policies.
- Students will also develop skills related to academic research, project planning, and presentations.