



## Labor Organizing and Social Class

### Dolores Huerta Day Lesson Plan

#### Five-Day Lesson

#### Lesson Context and Standards

**Context:** A five-day lesson plan in celebration of Dolores Huerta Day (April 10th). This lesson plan falls under the theme of a key part of Dolores Huerta’s legacy -Labor Organizing. There is an accompanying 1-day lesson plan unit as well as two other lesson plans/units addressing the Labor Organizing theme. These lesson plans and units can be accessed through the teacher’s guide on the Dolores Huerta Foundation website (<https://doloreshuerta.org>).

#### Content Standards:

- Historical and Social Sciences Analysis Skills: *Chronological and Spatial Thinking*
  - 1. Students compare the present with the past, evaluating the consequences of past events and decisions and determining the lessons that were learned.
  - 2. Students analyze how change happens at different rates at different times; understand that some aspects can change while others remain the same; and understand that change is complicated and affects not only technology and politics but also values and beliefs.
- Historical and Social Sciences Analysis Skills: *Historical Interpretation*
  - 1. Students show the connections, causal and otherwise, between particular historical events and larger social, economic, and political trends and developments.
  - 2. Students recognize the complexity of historical causes and effects, including the limitations on determining cause and effect.
  - 3. Students interpret past events and issues within the context in which an event unfolded rather than solely in terms of present-day norms and values.



- 4. Students understand the meaning, implication, and impact of historical events and recognize that events could have taken other directions.
- 11.10 Students analyze the development of federal civil rights and voting rights
- 11.11 Students analyze the major social problems and domestic policy issues in contemporary American society
- 12.2 Students evaluate and take and defend positions on the scope and limits of rights and obligations as democratic citizens, the relationships among them, and how they are secured.
- 12.10 Students formulate questions about and defend their analyses of tensions within our constitutional democracy and the importance of maintaining a balance between the following concepts: majority rule and individual rights; liberty and equality; state and national authority in a federal system; civil disobedience and the rule of law; freedom of the press and the right to a fair trial; the relationship of religion and government.

### Lesson Plan Elements

**Essential Question:** How does labor organizing identify a problem and gain power to address the issue?

**Outcomes:**

- Students will be introduced to Dolores Huerta’s activism and Dolores Huerta Day
- Students will understand policy context that led to labor organizing actions and the resulting laws
- Students will be introduced to the United Farm Workers
- Students will examine the power of labor organizing and consider current day examples
- Students will be introduced to concept of class struggle and connect this theory to current labor structures in the United States

**Assessment:** Students will demonstrate understanding of labor organizing’s relationship to class structure through application of the concept of class struggle to current labor structures in the United States.



Materials:

- PDF of PowerPoint Slides
- PDF of Instructor slide notes
- [United Farm Workers Website](#)
- [Cesar Chavez Foundation Website](#)
- [Hispanic Heritage: Who is Labor Activist Dolores Huerta?](#)
- [Chicago Tonight: Latino Voices](#)
- [Portrait in Minute: Dolores Huerta](#)
- [Declaration of Dolores Huerta Day](#)
- [A Brief History of American Farm Labor](#)
- [Labor Unions and the New Deal](#)
- [The Wagner Act of 1935 \(National Labor Relations Act\)](#)
- [Delano Grape Strike](#)
- [Dolores Huerta Speaks at Delano Grape Strike 50th Anniversary](#)
- [Karl Marx's Concept of Class Struggle](#)

## Unit Steps:

### Step 1: Introduction to Dolores Huerta and Dolores Huerta Day

- Quick write: Ask students if they know who Dolores Huerta is and to take a moment to write anything/everything they know.
- Share out with class
- Provide introduction to Dolores Huerta in PowerPoint
  - [Hispanic Heritage: Who is Labor Activist Dolores Huerta?](#)
  - [Portrait in Minute: Dolores Huerta](#)
  - [Chicago Tonight: Latino Voices](#)
- [Declaration of Dolores Huerta Day](#)
  - Have students read declaration
  - Discuss the importance of naming a day after someone and its purpose

### Step 2: Introduction to United Farm Workers and Policy Context

- Use PowerPoint to introduce United Farm Workers
  - [A Brief History of American Farm Labor](#)
  - [Labor Unions and the New Deal](#)
  - [The Wagner Act of 1935 \(National Labor Relations Act\)](#)
- Describe the Delano Grape Strike
  - [Delano Grape Strike](#)
  - [Dolores Huerta Speaks at Delano Grape Strike 50th Anniversary](#)
- Discussion questions: What does it mean to be an organizer? A labor organizer? What are examples of labor organizing in our current time? (Amazon strikes, teacher strikes etc.) What kind of power does labor organizing have? (For an expansion on this topic, refer to the lesson plan/unit on Labor Organizing: A Consideration of Class)

### **Step 3: Introduction to Unions, Labor Organizing Activity and the Dynamics of Oppression and Resistance**

- Describe Dynamics of Oppression (Institutional, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal)
  - Have students apply to the example of farmworkers (use handout in groups)
- Describe Dynamics of Resistance
  - Have students apply to example of UFW and Delano Grape Strike
- What are other examples of union and labor organizing activity?
  - Have students research in groups
  - Some examples include Amazon strikes, Starbucks strike, LAUSD teacher strikes
  - Identify the results of these organizing efforts

### **Day 2**

#### **Introduction to Class Struggle in Capitalism**

- Use PowerPoint to examine Class Struggle
  - Introduce concepts of bourgeoisie and proletariat
  - [Illustrate example video](#) to identify these concepts
  - Apply to labor organizing actions explored previously
    - Boycotting, protesting, calling/writing letters of support to elected officials etc.

#### **Step 5: Connect Class Struggle to Labor Actions**

- In groups, have students choose an organizing action from history (provide examples, can choose from Day 1)
- Have students label which aspects represent oppression and resistance and outline how it is an example of working class power against bosses
- Have students create a presentation to demonstrate their understanding of this connection

### **Day 3**

### **Step 6: Present Class Struggle Labor Actions**

- In groups, have students present their class struggle/labor actions presentations to the class
- Discuss effective methods of labor actions with the class based on these presentation

### **Day 4**

### **Step 7: Community engagement and support**

- Review Dynamics of Oppression and Resistance from Day 1
- Consider how community engagement aligns with aspects of resistance against oppression
- In the same groups as Day 3, brainstorm within groups on an action that each group can take that aligns with the values identified in their presentations from Day 3. These actions can correspond to the community organizations that they researched prior, but they don't have to. Some examples can include:
  - Writing letters to/calling local legislators, encouraging them to support the proposed values/actions
  - Creating a campaign within the school (working with student government etc.)
  - Signing up to volunteer time at local organization
  - Or something else!

### **Day 5**

### **Step 8: Putting it into action! Sí, se puede!**

- Watch video(s) of Dolores Huerta putting her words into action (choose from resources listed above)
- Have students work in groups on their civic engagement action
- Present their action to the rest of the class and discuss outcomes and future steps