

**MY LIFE**

(30 minutes in class; time varies out of class)

**OBJECTIVE**

Students keep journals of their daily activities to understand how government impacts them every day.

**MATERIALS**

*My Life* handouts; chart paper (optional)

**GET READY**

- ✓ Duplicate *My Life* handouts for each student.

**INSTRUCTIONS**

- ✓ Initiate a conversation with your students by asking, *Is the government just for adults? How does it affect your lives?* Listen to the responses and add, *I bet the government affects us in even more ways.*
- ✓ Tell your students you are giving them a piece of paper that will be their journal for just one day. All they need to do is keep track of what they are doing every hour: ex. 7:00 a.m. Alarm rings—I wake up, brush my teeth, shower. (Students should not feel obligated to record activities of a personal matter that they don't wish to share with the class.)
- ✓ Give the students the handout on a Friday and ask them to bring it back in on a Monday (giving them Saturday or Sunday to complete it). Tell them that when they bring it back on Monday the class is going to look and see how government impacts much of what we do.
- ✓ When students bring back their journal entries, ask them to reflect quietly about the details of their recorded activities. Ask, *When you woke up, did an alarm clock go off? Did it play radio music? Did you run the tap when you brushed your teeth?*
- ✓ Give students enough time to add details to their entries.
- ✓ Pair students to compare journals and observe the influence of government over a single day. Students should look at each other's journals and make notes on the entries showing where government may have an influence.
- ✓ Give an example yourself. Say, *Was it 6 a.m. when your alarm went off? Why was it 6 and not 7? Because the government determines time zones, doesn't it? This is the kind of notation to make for the activities in the journals. Think carefully: there may be more than one governmental involvement.* (Example: turning on the water = plumbing codes, clean water regulations, sewage treatment standards, regulations to heat the water, etc.)
- ✓ After your students are finished, create a class journal by calling on each pair to provide an activity for each hour of the day. Move chronologically through the day, recording the information on chart paper if possible. When the diary entry is complete, look for government influences as a class.



## MY LIFE (continued)

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ★ *Did you find any activities without ties to government? Ask the class to check out the lack of government influence. Be persistent: humming or singing looks government-free... but what about public nuisance laws?*
- ★ *What would America be like without our government?*
- ★ *What does this exercise tell you about the importance of voting and participating in our government?*

### MORE!

Students could ask adults to share what they do over the course of a day. Students can share these activities and how the government impacts them.



# MY LIFE – JOURNAL PAGE 1

Journal of Activities for \_\_\_\_\_

## MORNING

## AFTERNOON

6:00–7:00 am \_\_\_\_\_

Noon–1:00 pm \_\_\_\_\_

7:00–8:00 \_\_\_\_\_

1:00–2:00 \_\_\_\_\_

8:00–9:00 \_\_\_\_\_

2:00–3:00 \_\_\_\_\_

9:00–10:00 \_\_\_\_\_

3:00–4:00 \_\_\_\_\_

10:00–11:00 \_\_\_\_\_

4:00–5:00 \_\_\_\_\_

11:00–12:00 \_\_\_\_\_

5:00–6:00 \_\_\_\_\_



# MY LIFE – JOURNAL PAGE 2

Journal of Activities for \_\_\_\_\_

## EVENING

## OVERNIGHT

6:00–7:00 pm \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

While you sleep, on a mattress tagged to guarantee that it meets federal regulations (a tag you remove at your peril!), what else is happening in your home?

7:00–8:00 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8:00–9:00 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9:00–10:00 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

10:00–11:00 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

11:00–12:00 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_