



#8967

COLLISION COURSE I & II

Grade Levels: 8-13+

60 minutes

VIDEO RESOURCES SOFTWARE 1999

DESCRIPTION

This drama focuses on freedom of expression, of immigration, of speech, and of equal protection under the law. In Part I, an anti-immigration extremist concentrates on freedom-of-speech issues and deliberately asks a Latino law firm to represent him in court. Part II resolves the issues of personal beliefs versus Constitutional rights to free speech. After the drama, a short narration emphasizes that speech, even when it is contrary to what America represents, is protected by the Constitution.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Subject Area: Civics

- ♦ Standard: Understands the sources, purposes, and functions of law, and the importance of the rule of law for the protection of individual rights and the common good
 - Benchmark: Knows alternative ideas about the purposes and functions of law (e.g., regulating relationships among people and between people and their government; providing order, predictability, security, and established procedures for the management of conflict; regulating social and economic relationships in civil society)
- ♦ Standard: Understands the central ideas of American constitutional government and how this form of government has shaped the character of American society
 - Benchmark: Knows the major ideas about republican government that influenced the development of the United States Constitution (e.g., the concept of representative government, the importance of civic virtue or concern for the common good)

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

PART I

1. To explore the importance of freedom of expression in a democratic society.
2. To learn how the Constitution protects freedom of expression.
3. To explain how the desire for freedom of expression has influenced immigration to the United States.

PART II

1. To explore the value the Founders of the United States placed on freedom of speech.
2. To identify the benefits of freedom of speech.
3. To illustrate when it may be difficult to support free speech.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Collision Course I and II are two of 15 thirty-minute episodes found in the *On Common Ground* series. *On Common Ground* is a different and exciting way to learn about U.S. history and government. Each episode includes an action-filled story and a short documentary segment. The stories show the “common ground”—the common values that people in the United States share.

VOCABULARY

PART I

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. blue collar | 6. riot |
| 2. bureaucrat | 7. scapegoats |
| 3. contract | 8. suspend |
| 4. free speech | 9. temp agency |
| 5. minimum wage | 10. welfare |

PART II

- | | |
|--------------|--------------------|
| 1. anarchist | 5. continuance |
| 2. biased | 6. loyalty oath |
| 3. bigot | 7. socialist |
| 4. communist | 8. symbolic speech |

BEFORE SHOWING

PART I

1. Discuss the following:
 - a. Why is freedom of expression important in a democratic society?
 - b. In what ways does the Constitution protect freedom of expression?
 - c. What role did freedom of expression play in drawing immigrants to the U.S.?
 - d. How has immigration contributed to this country's kaleidoscope of cultures and nationalities?
 - e. Why are some individuals and groups hostile towards immigrants?
2. Speculate as to reasons why people immigrate to America.
3. Discuss what it means to be an American.

4. Think about the series title, *On Common Ground*, and the video title, *Collision Course*. What feelings and ideas do the titles provoke? Share these with the class.
5. Discuss the vocabulary words used in the video.

PART II

1. Review the events that took place in *Collision Course*, Part I.
2. Ask students to consider the following while viewing the video:
 - a. Why is the guarantee of freedom of speech and expression important in a democracy?
 - b. Should hate speech be protected under the First Amendment?
 - c. Under what circumstances, if any, should free speech be limited?
 - d. What considerations have the courts used to limit freedom of expression?
3. Discuss the vocabulary words utilized in the video.

AFTER SHOWING

Discussion Items and Questions



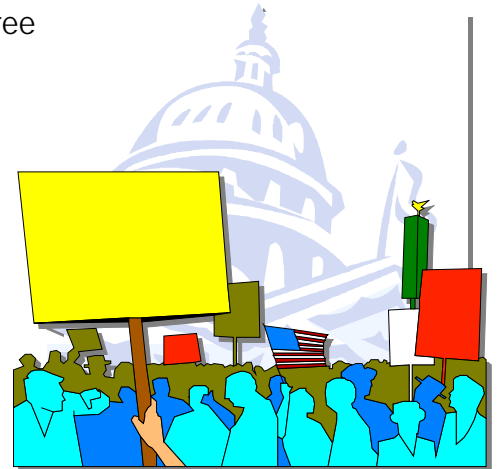
PART I

1. Review the central story line of the video and answer the following:
 - a. How does Sanford capitalize on economic discontent?
 - b. Does Sanford create a climate of hostility towards immigrants or is he playing upon existing hostilities?
2. Analyze and discuss the language Sanford uses during his address at Green Meadows Park.
3. Discuss the following:
 - a. Why did Sanford plant hecklers in the crowd?
 - b. Why is he anxious to promote a confrontation?
 - c. How politically astute was Sanford in securing the legal services of Francisco Lopez?
 - d. If you were Francisco Lopez, would you have agreed to represent Sanford? Explain your reasoning.
4. After reviewing the First Amendment of the Constitution, answer the following:
 - a. Does Sanford have the right to speak? Under what circumstances, if any, can the city refuse to permit him to speak?
 - b. In what ways does the Constitution protect freedom of expression?
 - c. Is free speech an absolute right?

PART II

1. Discuss the following:
 - a. Why did the Founders value freedom of speech?
 - b. What are benefits of freedom of speech?

- c. When is it difficult to maintain the commitment to free speech?
- d. Should free speech ever be limited?
- e. What is an example of the government limiting freedom of speech?
- f. How would your life be different without freedom of speech?
2. Clarify the meanings of "freedom of speech" and "anti-immigrant."
3. Discuss the duties of a lawyer.
 - a. Should lawyers have the same beliefs as their clients?
 - b. Should lawyers defend people that they think are guilty?
 - c. Should lawyers defend people that they dislike?



Applications and Activities

PART I

1. Search the newspaper for examples of the government protecting an individual or a group's first amendment rights. Lead a class debate on the government's decisions.
2. Invite three immigrants from different countries to share their experience with the class. Compare and contrast their reasons for coming to the U.S.
3. Create a picture or an essay promoting tolerance and place the works on a bulletin board.
4. Interview family members about your family ancestry and share your findings with the class.

PART II

1. Beginning with the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798, create a timeline of major court cases dealing with free speech issues.
2. After researching, compare and contrast the factual 1977 Skokie, Illinois Nazi demonstration case to the fictional Clay Sanford case.
3. Arrange a school-wide informational program in which the city attorney, members of the bar association versed in constitutional law and free speech advocates such as the American Civil Liberties Union are invited to discuss the right to free speech.

RELATED RESOURCES



Captioned Media Program



- Amendment 1: Freedom of Religion, Speech, Press, Assembly, and Petition #3562
- Bill of Rights #3438

World Wide Web



The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and "kid-safe" sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

- **THE NATIONAL IMMIGRATION FORUM**

<http://www.immigrationforum.org/>

Embraces and upholds America's tradition as a nation of immigrants. Includes immigration facts, race and ethnic relations, current immigration issues and more.

- **FREEDOM OF SPEECH IN THE UNITED STATES**

http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/avp/cas/comm/free_speech/default.html

Includes free speech court decisions, government sites and other sites dealing with freedom of expression.

- **FREE EXPRESSION NETWORK**

<http://www.freeexpression.org/>

Alliance of organizations dedicated to protecting the First Amendment right of free expression and the values it represents.

- **BEN'S GUIDE TO U.S. GOVERNMENT: GRADES 9-12**

<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/9-12/index.html>

Government site includes topics such as historical documents, how laws are made, national versus state government, branches of government and more.

