



Civil Rights: How Are We Doing?

A Perception & Evidence Inventory

Course: Civics / AP Government / Sociology / U.S. History

Grade Level: 10–12

Lesson Type: Diagnostic Inventory + Discussion

Time Frame: 1 class period

Assessment: Participation / Reflection (Not Graded for “Correctness”)



SCHOLARFORGE OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students complete a civil rights perception inventory designed to surface beliefs about equality, discrimination, and access in the United States. The inventory is used as a **starting point for discussion**, not a measure of right or wrong answers.

After completing the inventory, students analyze patterns in responses and compare perceptions to **historical evidence, legal frameworks, and contemporary data**.



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Reflect on personal beliefs about civil rights and equality
- Distinguish perception from evidence
- Engage respectfully with differing viewpoints
- Analyze civil rights issues using data and law
- Evaluate progress and remaining challenges in civil rights



CRITICAL TEACHER FRAMING (READ ALOUD)

“This inventory is not a test.

It measures perceptions, not facts.

Our goal is not agreement—but understanding.”



TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1: Inventory Completion (10 minutes)

Students respond to each statement using the following scale:

- **SA** – Strongly Agree
- **A** – Agree
- **D** – Disagree
- **SD** – Strongly Disagree

Students should respond **honestly** and **silently**.



STEP 2: Initial Reflection (5 minutes)

Ask students:

- Which statements were easiest to answer?
- Which were most difficult?
- Were any uncomfortable?

No discussion yet—just reflection.



STEP 3: Guided Discussion & Evidence (20 minutes)

Use the inventory as a roadmap to:

- Introduce court cases
- Examine data
- Compare perceptions with evidence
- Highlight disagreement respectfully



STUDENT INVENTORY (REVISED)

Civil Rights: How Are We Doing?

Mark each statement using:

SA – Strongly Agree | A – Agree | D – Disagree | SD – Strongly Disagree

1. In the United States, job applicants are evaluated primarily on qualifications rather than race or ethnicity.
2. Women who are equally qualified as men have the same opportunities for hiring and promotion.
3. Schools treat male and female students equally in expectations and discipline.
4. Some groups experience discrimination even when laws prohibit it.
5. Legal protections have eliminated most forms of discrimination in the United States.
6. Racial and ethnic segregation today is mostly the result of personal choice rather than policy or structure.
7. The criminal justice system treats all racial and ethnic groups equally.
8. Victims of sexual assault face significant barriers in the legal system.
9. LGBTQ+ individuals still face legal or social barriers to full equality.
10. Past discrimination continues to affect opportunities today.
11. Government should take steps to address the effects of historical discrimination.
12. Educational opportunities are equal across racial and ethnic groups.
13. Everyone in the United States has a fair chance to succeed regardless of identity.
14. Age discrimination affects employment opportunities in the United States.
15. Gender-based pay differences reflect structural inequality rather than individual choice.
16. Access to affordable childcare is an equity issue.
17. Paid family leave should be expanded for all parents.
18. Access to higher education is an equity and civil rights issue.
19. Most Americans will experience some form of discrimination in their lifetime.
20. Overall, the United States has made significant progress in addressing civil rights issues.

STEP 4: Reflection (Required)

Students respond in writing:

Which statement do you feel most confident about, and why?

Which statement do you believe requires the most evidence to answer accurately?

ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE

- Completion credit only
- Reflection quality
- Respectful participation
- Use of evidence in discussion

EXTENSION OPTIONS

- Compare responses before and after a civil rights unit
- Pair statements with Supreme Court cases
- Assign students to research one statement using data
- Use as a Socratic seminar launch