

**Introducing PolitiCraft: What is the root of my issue?**

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| **Title:** What is the root of my issue? | **Time Frame:** 30-45 minutes |
| [**C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards**](http://socialstudies.org/c3)D1.1.9-12. Explain how a question reflects an enduring issue in the field.D2.Civ.7.9-12. Apply civic virtues and democratic principles when working with others.D4.7.9-12. Assess options for individual and collective action to address local, regional, and global problems by engaging in self-reflection, strategy identification, and complex causal reasoning. | [**CCSS/ELA Literacy Standards**](file:///%5C%5Cstaff.d94.org%5Chome%24%5Cmdaneels%5CCCSS%5CELA%20Standards)ELA.SL.9-10.1A: Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.ELA.SL.9-10.1C: Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.ELA.RH.9-10.3 Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them. |
| **Objectives**: Students use a root cause tree model to explore the “root causes” of issues to support PolitiCraft game play and plan informed action/service learning projects. |
| **Recommended Procedures**1. Review with students the objective of the PolitiCraft Game- to achieve the most social impact points while working towards advancing a solution for a social issue through constructing a narrative for change.
2. Use the chart overview of [“What Kind of Citizen?”](https://democraticdialogue.com/DDpdfs/WhatKindOfCitizenAERJ.pdf) by Kahne and Westheimer found on page 4 to review the variety of options for advancing a social issue. “What sorts of activities can help me build my narrative for change”?
3. Have students get together in small groups of 4 to 6 students and give each group a deck of PolitiCraft Cards.
4. Have students go through the cards in the deck and find at least three examples of actions made by Personally Responsible Citizens, Participatory Citizens and Justice Oreinted Citizens.
5. Engage in a wraparound activity for groups to share their examples.
6. Draw a “Root Cause Tree” on the board or project an image of a root cause tree of your choice easily found online through an online search.
7. Demonstrate how the root cause tree is a tool to differentiate the difference between the symptoms and root cause of issues using the simple issue of flu season. Have class brainstorm common symptoms of the flu- “how do we know it is flu season”? Illustrate these symptoms in the leaves of the tree (fever, runny nose, aches, chills, sleepy, absences, cough, etc.)
8. Have students brainstorm why students and staff often get sick-what are the root causes happening under the surface that cause people to get sick or make them more susceptible to illness? Illustrate this underground in the roots of the tree. (germs, exhaustion, poor nutrition, stress, proximity, etc.)
9. Ask students if you wanted to get rid of the issue of flu outbreaks at school, would you be better served focusing on the symptoms or the root causes of people getting sick (if you kill the roots, you kill the tree)?
10. Watch video from the [Teaching Channel](https://www.teachingchannel.org/video/prepare-civic-engagement-edda), Educating for Democracy, Preparing Students for Action- of students using the Root Cause Tree to plan for social change on an issue of concern.
11. Have students work on creating their own root casue tree for an issue of concern for them.
12. Have students share their trees on small group to gather more ideas to fill out their tree.
13. Have students use one of the “roots” of their issue to inspire their issue for game play the following class period.

**After PolitiCraft game play**, 1. Have students revisit chart and add more elements to the symptom leaves and root causes based on game play.
2. Have students use elements of the root cause tree and game play to answer the question, “What is the root of my issue?”
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| **Alternative Procedures:*** Have students meet in small groups to complete the root cause tree with a common issue of concern.
* Create a common google doc of the graphic for the class and have individuals/ groups simultaneously fill in their root cause tree. Students can then journal about the ideas in the chart that are new to them and which elements of the tree they have personal experience with.
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| **Other Resources:*** A google slide deck to guide this activity is available at https://tinyurl.com/PolitiCraftRCTree
* If norms for classroom discussions have not been established, here are some resources teachers can use to scaffold civil discourse.

 [Conducting a Civil Conversation in the Classroom by CRFC](http://www.crfc.org/sites/www.crfc.org/files/program_documents/ConductingCivilConversation.pdf) [Contracting by Facing History and Ourselves](https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-strategies/contracting) |