

STUDENT REFLECTION

Why us? America 250 and President Lincoln's Cottage

At President Lincoln's Cottage, we believe in an America that reflects our common humanity, cultivates belonging, and honors the complexity in our nation's history. We are committed to telling more complete stories that capture the full breadth of the American experience and leading our peers and community in doing the same. We're building a 250th commemoration that meets audiences where they are and makes room for both grief and joy at once. Use this resource to cultivate and lift up the brave ideas of your students as they, like Lincoln, work to form a more perfect union.

Check for understanding

Ensure your students are on the same page about the upcoming discussion.

- 1) When is the 250th anniversary of the United States happening?
- 2) What kind of commemorations and celebrations are planned in your area?

Personal brainstorming (*optional*)

If your students need a moment to brainstorm before moving into more reflective work, you can provide them one here. Students can write a paragraph, talk to the person next to them, or discuss as a group. What does being American mean to you?

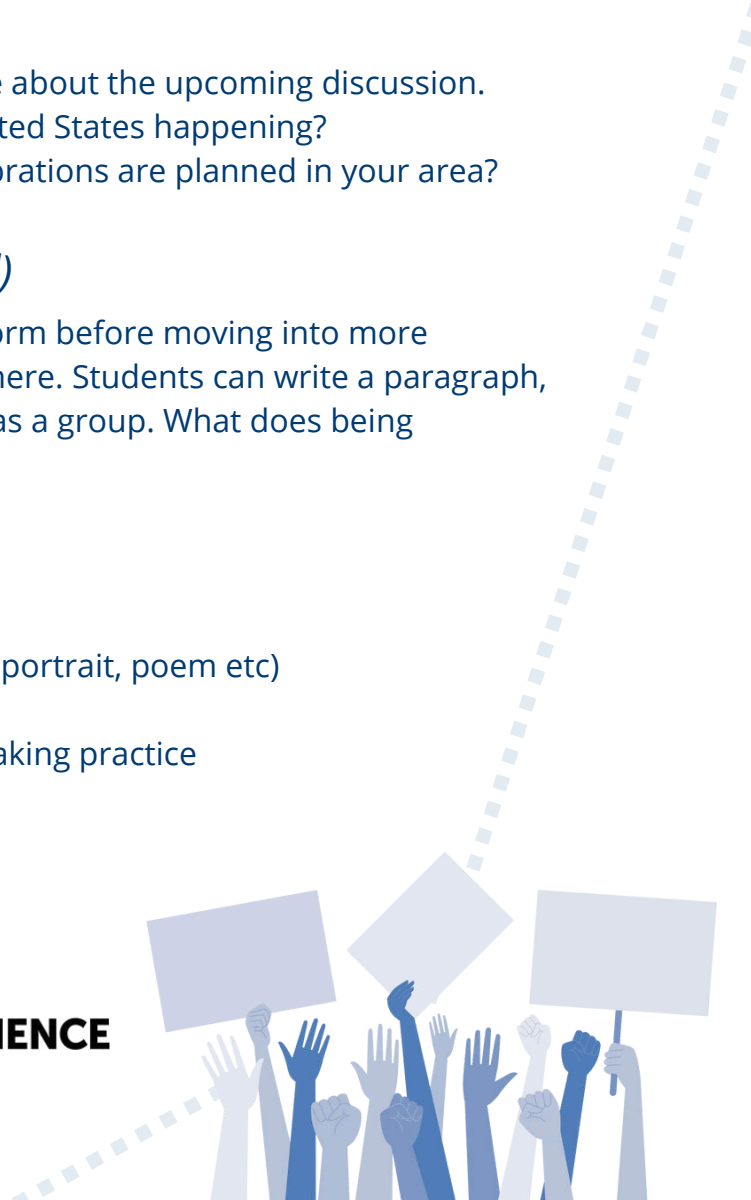
Reflection Strategies

Strategies could include:

- Solo writing or drawing (paragraph, list, portrait, poem etc)
- Think-Pair-Share
- Popcorn, speaking shell, or other turn-taking practice
- Walking reflection
- Group conversation with notetaker



International Coalition of
SITES of CONSCIENCE



STUDENT REFLECTION

Reflection questions

Choose from these questions based on what you think would be most effective for your students. You can make use of as many or as few as you like, in any order.

For younger students:

1. How should we make decisions about what the group (our class) does?
2. Sometimes things happen that mean we are having big feelings. What are some good ways to deal with bad feelings? What are some good ways to share joy?
3. Who's someone in your class you want to spend more time with? What can you do to reach out to them?
4. Can you form a group without leaving other people out? How do we do this?
5. When - if ever - is it ok to leave part of a story out? Does leaving things out count as lying?
6. What are some things a leader should do or not do? How can you practice doing this in your life?

For older students:

1. Should students your age be allowed to vote? Why or why not?
2. Describe a time you were invited into a group and a time you felt left out. What can you do to keep people from feeling left out?
3. What part of your identity has brought you joy?
4. What questions do you have about people like you, but in the past?
5. What's a group you have chosen NOT to belong to? What do you have in common with people in that group?
6. What's a change the US has made that you're proud of? What change would you like to see in the future?

