

MOCK DRAFT
A Lesson Plan Developed by the Catholic Peace Fellowship

*NEEDS: Index Cards,
Copies of “mailgrams” (get these at
http://www.catholicpeacefellowship.org/downloads/mailgram_front.pdf and
http://www.catholicpeacefellowship.org/downloads/mailgram_back.pdf and fill in
the date to report to MEPS 10 days from today’s date.)
Five Poster Boards that say the following: Jail; Bootcamp; Flee the
country; Apply for an exemption; Conscientious objection
“Draft Choices and Exemptions” worksheet:
http://www.catholicpeacefellowship.org/downloads/draft_choices.pdf*

*Make a DRAFT BOARD poster w/ criteria for being a conscientious
objector:*

- 1) Beliefs are sincerely held*
- 2) The applicant is against participation in ALL war, not just a particular
war*
- 3) Beliefs are of a moral/ethical nature, not political*

- 1) Hand out index cards to each student. Have each student write their birthdays on their card and turn them in.
- 2) “Set the stage.” Tell the students that it is now the year (Use the year in which the majority of the youth in your class will turn 20 years old. For example, if it is now 2007 and you are teaching 16 and 17 year-olds, use the year 2010.) Use a likely scenario for that year. For example, “Iran has developed nuclear capability. The president is calling for terrorists to be ‘hunted down,’ etc. (You can expand on this as much as you’d like.) Then say that Congress has declared war on (. . .). Mention also that a brief news report was in last week’s paper on the ninth page (buried in the back) that quoted a representative from the Vatican saying that if the president of the U.S. declared war under these conditions, it would be unjust.
- 3) Announce that the military needs about 100,000 extra troops to fight. They want to win this war quickly, and need the manpower to do it. Last night, Congress authorized the president of the United States to begin inducting 19 and 20 year-olds into the military by using a military draft.
- 4) Draw about half of the birthdays in the room using the index cards, one by one. When each person hears their birthday called, have them stand up and come to the front of the room. (You can dramatize the role play by having a drum roll or using other props.)
- 5) Hand out MAILGRAMS to each “drafted” student. Explain to the class that these students had just been at work, in school, out with friends, and that they have just come home to find this mailgram on the table.

6) Have the drafted students read the mailgram for a few minutes, then ask them to explain what this letter is telling them to do. Try to see if the students can understand the letter. (This is to demonstrate the difficulty of the letter.)

7) HIGHLIGHT THE FOLLOWING POINTS IN THE MAILGRAM:

-They need to report in TEN DAYS

-If they pass the physical, they are GOING TO BOOT CAMP THAT DAY.

-They have already been classified 1-A: “Unrestricted military service.” (The military has never asked them if they are qualified to serve. They have automatically been classified 1-A)

8) Say to the students who did NOT get drafted, “So these are your friends. They are busy packing their bags, finding the correct-sized duffle bags, saying goodbye to grandma/grandpa, boyfriend, girlfriend, so they have no time to think. You are their friends. What are their options?”

9) Brainstorm these options on the chalkboard – write down everything that has been shouted out. (Teachers may want to consult the “If you are drafted” worksheet found at http://www.catholicpeacefellowship.org/downloads/draft_choices.pdf as a reference.)

Categorize the options the students came up with into the following five areas (they should all fit into one of these categories. If not, you can make up another category): Go to jail; Flee the country; Apply for an exemption; Go to bootcamp; Conscientious objection

10) Place each poster in different areas around the room. Have the DRAFTEES then “vote with their feet,” standing in front of the poster with the option they would choose.

11) Have the NON-draftees ask each group “hard questions.” Stress that the options each person faces has consequences, and there are questions each person will have to answer. For the first 3 groups (Go to jail; Flee the country; Apply for an exemption), they will act as “family and friends.”

- a) Good questions for those who chose “Flee Country”: Do you realize you will never see your family again or that you will never be allowed to enter the U.S. again?
- b) Good questions for those who chose “Go to jail”: Are you ready to serve 5 years in prison and/or pay a \$250,000 fine? How will you pay that back? Do you know what prison is like? Are you ready to live the rest of your life as a convicted felon?
- c) Good questions for those who chose to “apply for an exemption”: – (teachers – educate yourselves on the possibilities for exemptions from www.objector.org to find out if their options are legitimate. Examples of legitimate options: studying as a minister, medical/health problems, psychological problems, children dependent on you (must have no

alternative family to watch children. Examples of NON-legitimate options: “only child,” college/university exemption.

For the “bootcamp” group, we will act as their own CONSCIENCE:

Good questions for those who chose to “go to bootcamp” and then serve in the war.

- You are at a checkpoint and you see young girls playing. Your commanding officer orders you to shoot in case they are suicide bombers. You think they are just playing, but they are coming toward you. What do you do?
- You are in the Navy. You are asked to transport mini-nukes (bunker-busters) although the Vatican has clearly condemned the use of nuclear weapons. What do you do?

For those who chose “conscientious objection”, we will act as the DRAFT BOARD whose job it is to determine sincerity.

EXPLAIN RULES FOR DRAFT BOARD: Use DRAFT BOARD poster

Good questions for conscientious objectors

-Do you have proof of your beliefs? What have you done to demonstrate these beliefs? Have you written papers or joined protests?

1) Did you register for the draft? Did you write “I am a Conscientious objector” on the draft card and keep a photocopy?

-I know Mennonites are pacifists, not Catholics. What does your Church say about this? I thought Catholics fought in war....

12) LEAD INTO A DISCUSSION ON CHURCH TEACHING

- 1) Ask kids, “So what does the Catholic Church say about war?” Get a discussion going to see what they already know
- 2) Lay out the 2 ways a Catholic may respond to evil: *use handout sheets on CPF website*
 - Active Nonviolence
 - Participation in a Just War

Ask kids to come up with reasons why a Catholic might choose *Nonviolence*. Then talk about examples of nonviolence throughout history and presently— MLK, Gandhi, Jesus... Christian Peacemaker Teams, etc.

Ask kids to give reasons why a Catholic might participate in a just war.

What are some hard questions we have to ask before we participate in a war? (Just War theory).