

Teaching About The January 6 Congressional Hearings

Videos of the hearings can be found [here](#); [transcripts](#) of the hearings can be found here.

NEW: [Insurrection Changed Social Studies Teacher's Approach Conspiracy In America](#) (pg 32 American Educator, Fall 2022; see resources at the end)

[Ultimate Guide to January 6 Hearings: Lesson Plans, Timeline, Key Terms](#) (PBS)

[PBS Committee Hearing lesson plans](#). [Wikipedia page](#) of the hearings. [The January 6 Report](#) (book)

Questions students could consider when approaching learning about the January 6 Congress hearings:

1. What precipitated Congress to investigate events surrounding the January 6th Capitol incursion?
2. Why were there only two Republicans on the Congressional investigating committee?
3. What was the purpose of the hearings?
4. Why were some of the hearings broadcast at night, in prime time?
5. Why did it appear that some questioning Representatives were reading from teleprompters?
6. Have students notice the hearing questioning and strategy: opening statement, presentation of proof, images, videos, in-person expert testimony, conclusions
7. Why did the committee hire a former news broadcaster to advise them? ([Axios](#))
8. How did the committee decide what needed to be investigated?
9. How were words, images and video used as evidence? What were their sources? ([TV Tricks](#))
10. How did lawmakers use "argument" as their approach to telling the story? ([TV Tricks](#))
What arguments were made; which ones were not made?
11. What role did social media play during the January 6

attacks?

12. What role did social media play during the January 6 hearings? ([The Conversation](#))

13. Who testified during the hearings? Who did not? ([PBS](#))

14. What happened to anyone who refused to testify? What was Congress' response?

15. Did anyone "go to jail" for refusing to testify?

Suggestion: Have students research "best quotes" from the hearings and then have them listen for those quotes when watching the testimony.

Other Considerations & Questions, suggested by media educator Art Silverblatt:

1. Audience

a. Who makes up the primary audience?

1) Democrats

2) Independents

b. Who makes up the latent (under the surface) audience

1) Justice Department

2) Legislators

c. Who made up the audience for the live event?

d. Who (and how many) people made up the secondary audience?

e. How did the audience affect the selection and presentation of content?

2. Media Communicator

a. Who is producing the Hearing?

1) What is their objective?

b. Members of the Committee as Characters

3. Function- What are the purposes behind the presentation of the

Hearings? (Affecting attitudes and behaviors)

1. Manifest (Surface) Functions

2. Latent Functions?

4. Affective Response (Emotional Reaction)

a. NOTE: Much of the Hearings focus on evidence, not emotion. However, this in itself

is significant.

b. An intended affective response- Shock

c. Affective Elements – Witness Testimonies

5. In what ways do the Hearings reflect, reinforce, inculcate, or shape cultural attitudes, values, behaviors, preoccupations, and myths?

6. Worldview: What kind of world is depicted in the media presentation?

a. What culture or cultures populate this world?

1) What kinds of people populate this world?

2) What is the ideology of this culture

b. What do we know about the people who populate this world?

1) Are characters presented in a stereotypical manner?

2) What does this tell us about the cultural stereotype of this group?

c. Does this world present an optimistic or pessimistic view of life?

1) Are the characters in the presentation happy?

2) Do the characters have a chance to be happy?

d. Are people in control of their own destinies?

1) Is there a supernatural presence in this world?

2) Are the characters under the influence of other people?

e. What embedded values can be found in the production?

1) What values are embodied in the characters?

2) What does it mean to be a success in this world?

a) How does a person succeed in this world?

b) What kinds of behavior are rewarded in this world?

7. Production Elements: How production elements reinforce messages