

The Changing of West Point  
Grade Level: 11<sup>th</sup>  
Time Allotted: 1 class period

New York State Core Standards:

Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies- Grade 11

Standard 1- Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific detail to an understanding of the text as a whole.

Standard 2- Determine the central ideas of information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies- Grade 11

Standard 4- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Learning Objective:

- 1) Students will be able to explain and assess the changes in West Point's structure and environment following the 1977 cheating scandal.

Materials

- West Point Cheating Scandal PowerPoint
- Hudson River Valley Article "Carved from Granite but Steeped in Change: West Point and the Making of Leaders"
- Before and After Chart

Motivation

- 1) The students will take part in a class brainstorm on what qualities make a great military leader.
- 2) Students will watch a short PowerPoint presentation about the 1977 West Point cheating scandal.
- 3) The teacher will start a class discussion using the following questions:
  - a. Do you think West Point reacted too harshly towards the cadets?  
(students will mostly like say yes- too harsh)
  - b. But, looking at all of the qualities you said make a great leader, cheating violates those. And since the main purpose of West Point is to make strong leaders, shouldn't the institution rightfully expel the cheating cadets?

## Procedure

- 1) The teacher will hand out the HVRI article, “Carved from Granite but Steeped in Change,” to the students.
- 2) The teacher will hand out a before and after chart.
- 3) The teacher will divide the class into two groups.
- 4) The students will read silently the assigned areas of the reading.
  - a. Group one will read the section Academic Program from pages 6-9.
  - b. Groups two will read the section Character Development from pages 10-15.
- 5) While reading students will fill in their before and after charts.
  - a. In the before column, students will write about the structure and the environment of West Point before the 1977 cheating scandal.
  - b. In the after column, students will write about how the structure and the environment has changed since 1977.
- 6) Students will share their writing responses with their group and make their before and after charts more complete.
- 7) Each group will present their findings to the class.

## Summary

- 1) The students will engage in a class discussion using the following teacher-prompt questions:
  - a. What do you think are some of the most significant changes made by West Point since 1977?
  - b. Do you think the new system still works towards making great military leaders?
  - c. Do you think your high school system helps promote leadership? If not, what changes would you make?

## Assessment

The teacher will check for student understanding...

- During the motivation classroom discussion
- While monitoring students’ work during the group activity
- During the group presentations
- During the closing class discussion

# West Point Changes



| <b>Before</b> | <b>After</b> |
|---------------|--------------|
|               |              |

