WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

STEM Day Lesson Plan

Title: Gerrymandering: Voters Choosing Politicians or Politicians Choosing Voters?

Subject Area:
Political Science

Learning Activity Description:
A set of engaged activities and brief mini-lectures on the problem of Gerrymandering and its solution.

Lesson Activity Objective:
Students will leave understanding the problems related of Gerrymandering and the possible solutions.

Lesson Activity Outcomes:
Students will be able to answer why the power to draw lines is important, how it is misused, why the misuse can occur in our current system and how the misuse might be prevented.

Materials/Supplies Listed:
Display model of a gerrymander (made of legos)
Gerrymandering worksheets (see attached)

Teacher Procedures:
Outlined in Slide Deck (available to teachers)

Preparation Time for Learning Activity:
15 minutes.

Room set-up:
Desks in a circle.

Group Strategies (example, group size, expected time for groups, etc.)
Students will not work in groups during this exercise

Student Products/Artifacts/work pages:
Students will use crayons/markers to draw districts on a numbered grid to see if they can gerrymander as well as the experts.

Assessment Criteria/Rubric:
None.

Closing/Transition to next activity:
None

Gerrymandering Game

Instructions: Make 7 districts, each with 7 squares.

Districts can connect horizontally, vertically or diagonally, but the lines cannot cross each other.

1. Go Blue

Using these squares on your right, try to make as many districts as possible where the number of Blues is greater than the number of Reds

Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
Blue	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
Blue	Red	Blue	Red	Red	Red	Red
Blue	Red	Red	Blue	Blue	Red	Red
Blue	Red	Red	Blue	Blue	Red	Red
Blue	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue

☐ # of Majority Blue districts

☐ # of Majority Red districts

Now using using the same set of squares, how many districts can you make where there are more Red than Blue?

2. Go Red

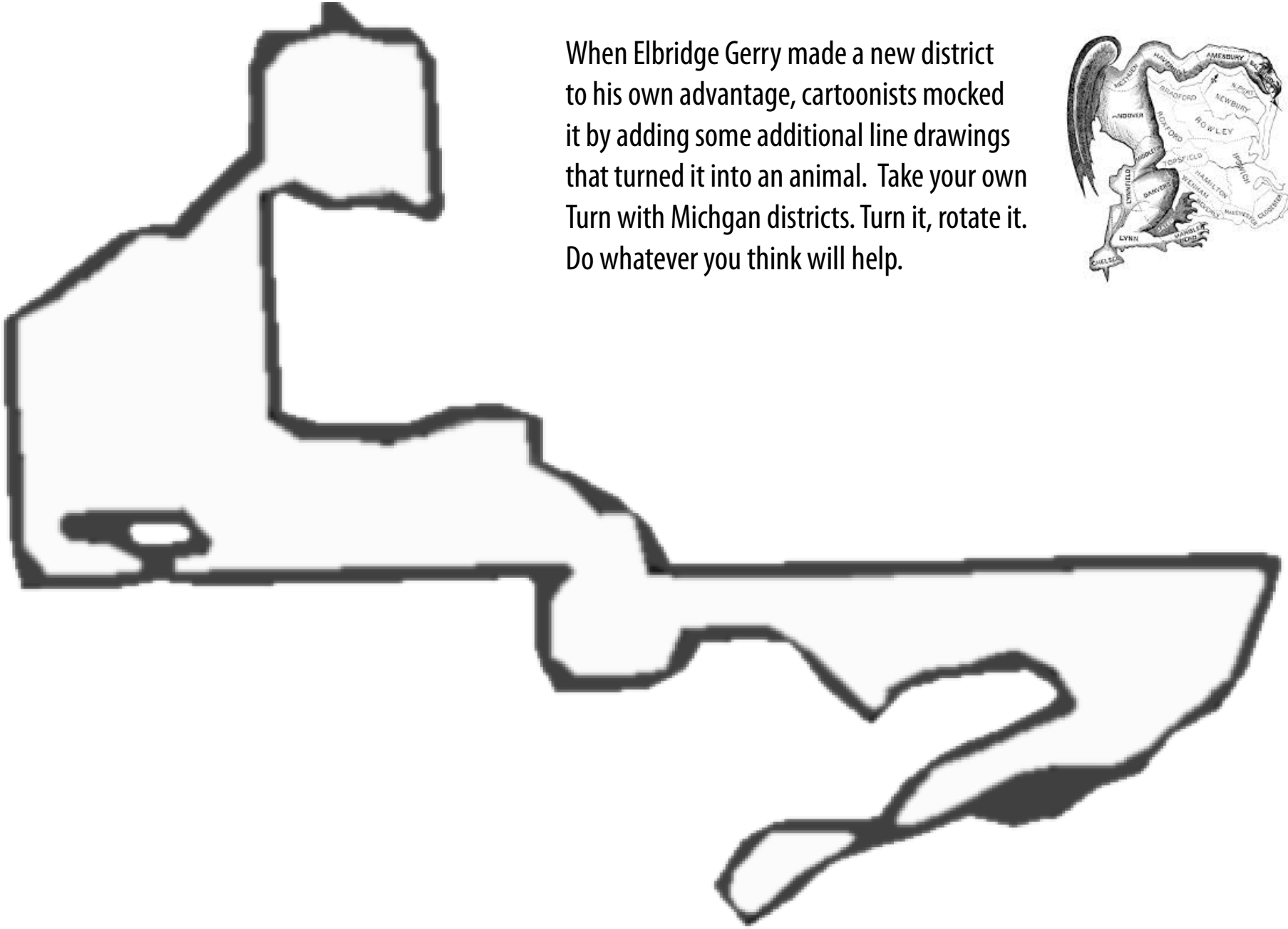
Using these squares on your right, try to make as many districts as possible where the number of Reds is greater than the number of Blues

Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
Blue	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
Blue	Red	Blue	Red	Red	Red	Red
Blue	Red	Red	Blue	Blue	Red	Red
Blue	Red	Red	Blue	Blue	Red	Red
Blue	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue

☐ # of Majority Red districts

☐ # of Majority Blue districts

When Elbridge Gerry made a new district to his own advantage, cartoonists mocked it by adding some additional line drawings that turned it into an animal. Take your own Turn with Michgan districts. Turn it, rotate it. Do whatever you think will help.



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