

THS Curriculum Unit U.S. Government

Course: U.S. Government

Grade: 11/12

Unit Name (s): The Legislative Branch

Essential Questions

- Whose views should members of Congress represent when voting?
- What should be the limits on the powers of Congress?
- Can and should the lawmaking process be improved?

Suggested Time Frame: 3 weeks

Common Core Standards Covered:

P2.2 Read and interpret data in tables and graphs.

3.1.1 Analyze the purposes, organization, functions, and processes of the legislative branch as enumerated in Article I of the Constitution.

3.1.5 Use case studies or examples to examine tensions between the three branches of government (e.g., powers of the purse and impeachment, advise and consent, veto power, and judicial review).

3.1.6 Evaluate major sources of revenue for the national government, including the constitutional provisions for taxing its citizens.

3.1.7 Explain why the federal government is one of enumerated powers while state governments are those of reserved powers.

3.2.2 Use court cases to explain how the Constitution is maintained as the supreme law of the land (e.g., *Marbury v. Madison*, *Gibbons v. Ogden*, *McCulloch v. Maryland*).

3.2.3 Identify specific provisions in the Constitution that limit the power of the federal government.

5.5.1 Describe dispositions people think lead citizens to become independent members of society (e.g., self-discipline, self-governance, and a sense of individual responsibility) and thought to foster respect for individual worth and human dignity (e.g., respect for individual rights and choice, and concern for the well-being of others).

6.1.3 Develop and use criteria (e.g., logical validity, factual accuracy and/or omission, emotional appeal, credibility, unstated assumptions, logical fallacies, inconsistencies, distortions, and appeals to bias or prejudice, overall strength of argument) in analyzing evidence and position statements.

Material Used: (textbooks, websites, videos, etc...)

- Magruder's American Government (Chapter 10-12); Power Points, Eminent Domain Film

Major Themes/Concepts:

- The Legislative Branch
- Expressed and Implied Powers
- Law Making Process

Assessments:

- Chapter Quizzes
- Essay writings

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Unit Name (s): Executive Branch

Essential Questions

- Does the current electoral process result in the best candidates for President?
- How much power should the President have?
- Is the bureaucracy essential to good government?
- How should the federal budget reflect American's priorities?
- How should the United States interact with other countries?

Suggested Time Frame: 4 weeks

Common Core Standards Covered:

P2.2 Read and interpret data in tables and graphs.

3.1.2 Analyze the purposes, organization, functions, and processes of the executive branch as enumerated in Article II of the Constitution.

3.1.4 Identify the role of independent regulatory agencies in the federal bureaucracy (e.g., Federal Reserve Board, Food and Drug Administration, Federal Communications Commission). (See USHG 6.3.2)

3.1.5 Use case studies or examples to examine tensions between the three branches of government (e.g., powers of the purse and impeachment, advise and consent, veto power, and judicial review).

3.2.3 Identify specific provisions in the Constitution that limit the power of the federal government.

4.1.1 Identify and evaluate major foreign policy positions that have characterized the United States' relations with the world (e.g., isolated nation, imperial power, world leader) in light of foundational values and principles, provide examples of how they were implemented and their consequences (e.g., Spanish-American War, Cold War containment) (See USHG 6.2; 7.2; 8.1.2; 9.2.1).

4.1.2 Describe the process by which United States foreign policy is made, including the powers the Constitution gives to the president; Congress and the judiciary; and the roles federal agencies, domestic interest groups, the public, and the media play in foreign policy.

6.2.8 Describe various forms and functions of political leadership and evaluate the characteristics of an effective leader.

Material Used: (textbooks, websites, videos, etc...)

- Magruder's American Government (Chapter 13-17); Power Points,

Major Themes/Concepts:

- The Presidency
- The Bureaucracy
- Foreign Policy

Assessments:

- Chapter Quizzes
- Essay writings

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Unit Name (s): The Judicial Branch

Essential Questions

- Does the structure of the federal court system allow it to administer justice effectively?
- How can the judiciary balance individual rights with the common good?
- To what extent has the judiciary protected the rights of privacy, security, and personal freedom?
- Why are there ongoing struggles for civil rights?

Suggested Time Frame: 3 weeks

Common Core Standards Covered:

P2.2 Read and interpret data in tables and graphs.

3.1.3 Analyze the purposes, organization, functions, and processes of the judicial branch as enumerated in Article III of the Constitution.

3.1.4 Identify the role of independent regulatory agencies in the federal bureaucracy (e.g., Federal Reserve Board, Food and Drug Administration, Federal Communications Commission). (See USHG 6.3.2)

3.1.5 Use case studies or examples to examine tensions between the three branches of government (e.g., powers of the purse and impeachment, advise and consent, veto power, and judicial review).

3.4.1 Explain why the rule of law has a central place in American society (e.g., Supreme Court cases like *Marbury v. Madison* and *U.S. v. Nixon*; practices such as submitting bills to legal counsel to ensure congressional compliance with the law). (See USHG F1.1, 8.2.4)

3.4.2 Describe what can happen in the absence or breakdown of the rule of law (e.g., Ku Klux Klan attacks, police corruption, organized crime, interfering with the right to vote, and perjury). (See USHG 8.3.5)

3.4.3 Explain the meaning and importance of equal protection of the law (e.g., the 14th Amendment, Americans with Disabilities Act, equal opportunity legislation).

3.4.4 Describe considerations and criteria that have been used to deny, limit, or extend protection of individual rights (e.g., clear and present danger, time, place and manner restrictions on speech, compelling government interest, security, libel or slander, public safety, and equal opportunity).

3.4.5 Analyze the various levels and responsibilities of courts in the federal and state judicial system and explain the relationships among them.

5.3.5 Explain considerations and criteria commonly used in determining what limits should be placed on specific rights.

5.3.6 Describe the rights protected by the First Amendment, and using case studies and examples, explore the limit and scope of First Amendment rights.

5.3.7 Using the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Amendments, describe the rights of the accused; and using case studies and examples, explore the limit and scope of these rights.

5.3.8 Explain and give examples of the role of the Fourteenth Amendment in extending the protection of individual rights against state action.

5.3.9 Use examples to explain why rights are not unlimited and absolute.

5.5.2 Describe the dispositions thought to encourage citizen involvement in public affairs (e.g., "civic virtue" or attentiveness to and concern for public affairs; patriotism or loyalty to values and principles underlying American constitutional democracy) and to facilitate thoughtful and effective participation in public affairs (e.g., civility, respect for the rights of other individuals, respect for law, honesty, open-mindedness, negotiation and compromise; persistence, civic mindedness, compassion, patriotism, courage, and tolerance for ambiguity).

6.1.5 Make a persuasive, reasoned argument on a public issue and support using evidence (e.g., historical and contemporary examples), constitutional principles, and fundamental values of American constitutional democracy; explain the stance or position.

6.2.8 Describe various forms and functions of political leadership and evaluate the characteristics of an effective leader.

Material Used: (textbooks, websites, videos, etc...)

- Magruder's American Government (Chapter 18-21); Power Points,
- Video – *A Call to Action: The Lilley Ledbetter Story*

Major Themes/Concepts:

- The Federal Court System
- Civil Liberties
- Civil Rights

Assessments:

- Chapter Quizzes
- Essay writings

THS Curriculum Unit U.S. Government

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Grade: 11/12

Unit Name (s): Political Behavior: Government By the People

Essential Questions

- In what ways should people participate in public affairs?
- Does the two-party system help or harm democracy?
- Why do voters act as they do?
- How fair and effective is the electoral process?
- What is the place of the media and public opinion in a democracy?
- To what extent do interest groups advance or harm democracy?

Suggested Time Frame: 5 weeks

Common Core Standards Covered:

1.1.4 Explain the purposes of politics, why people engage in the political process, and what the political process can achieve (e.g., promote the greater good, promote self-interest, advance solutions to public issues and problems, achieve a just society). (See USHG F1.1; F1.2; 6.3.2; 8.3.1)

3.2.2 Use court cases to explain how the Constitution is maintained as the supreme law of the land (e.g., *Marbury v. Madison*, *Gibbons v. Ogden*, *McCulloch v. Maryland*).

3.5.1 Explain how political parties, interest groups, the media, and individuals can influence and determine the public agenda.

3.5.2 Describe the origin and the evolution of political parties and their influence.

(See Grade 5 SS; USHG 9.1.2)

3.5.3 Identify and explain the roles of various associations and groups in American politics (e.g., political organizations, political action committees, interest groups, voluntary and civic associations, professional organizations, unions, and religious groups).

3.5.4 Explain the concept of public opinion, factors that shape it, and contrasting views on the role it should play in public policy.

3.5.5 Evaluate the actual influence of public opinion on public policy.

3.5.6 Explain the significance of campaigns and elections in American politics, current criticisms of campaigns, and proposals for their reform.

3.5.7 Explain the role of television, radio, the press, and the internet in political communication.

3.5.8 Evaluate, take, and defend positions about the formation and implementation of a current public policy issue, and examine ways to participate in the decision making process about the issue.

3.5.9 In making a decision on a public issue, analyze various forms of political communication (e.g., political cartoons, campaign advertisements, political speeches, and blogs) using criteria like logical validity, factual accuracy and/or omission, emotional appeal, distorted evidence, and appeals to bias or prejudice.

P2.2 Read and interpret data in tables and graphs.

Material Used: (textbooks, websites, videos, etc...)

- Magruder's American Government (Chapter 1-4); Power Points,
- Video – *Hacking Democracy*

Major Themes/Concepts:

- Political Parties and the Two Party System in America
- Voting and Electoral Process
- Mass Media, Interest Groups, Public Opinion

Assessments:

- Chapter Quizzes
- Essay writings