Honors U.S Government



No man is good enough to govern another man without the other’s consent

- Abraham Lincoln

**overview**

Students in grade eleven and twelve pursue a deeper understanding of the institutions of American government. They compare systems of government in the world today and analyze the life and changing interpretations of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the current state of the legislative, executive and judiciary branches of government. An emphasis is placed on analyzing the relationship among federal, state and local governments, with particular attention paid to important historical documents such as The Federalist. These standards represent the culmination of civic literacy as students prepare to vote, participate in community activities and assume the responsibilities of citizenship.

**guiding question 1: What was the process of creating the Constitution?**

# lessons

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Overview of government

\_\_\_\_\_\_ The Articles of Confederation

\_\_\_\_\_\_ The Constitutional Convention

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Ratification

# group work

Choose one of the following. Presentations September 11/12

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Chose a position of either large state or small state. Research and present their concerns during the Constitutional Convention. How were these concerns resolved, and/or how did they adapt their position?

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Choose either the federalist or anti-federalist position. Summarize their positions.

# individual work

\_\_\_\_\_\_Complete the “Constitution questionnaire” Due August 28/29

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Socratic Dialogue: Read pages 119 - 127 in “A Patriot’s History” and prepare for a dialogue. Dialogue: August 31/September 1

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Watch “A More Perfect Union”. Consider the question “How did the framers of the Constitution come to agreements given their political differences?” and write/graph/map a takeaway. Movie September 5/7 assignment due September 8/11

Choose one of the following: Due September 11/12

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Construct your own constitution based on proposal’s presented at the Constitution or some of your own.

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Create a graphic organizer showing what the Constitutional Convention discussed and what was decided.

# assessment

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Highlight the Constitutional Convention, showing the main issues that were debated, with mention of who supported each side. Show how each issues was resolved. Due September 14/15

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Take a ten question assessment. In class September 14/15

# readings

“A Patriot’s History of the United States”

**guiding question 2: Why were certain ideas included in our Constitution?**

# lessons

\_\_\_\_\_\_ The preamble to the Constitution

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Federalist papers

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Separation of Powers

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Civil Rights vs. Civil Liberties

# group work

\_\_\_\_\_\_ As a group choose from a list of concepts that were included in the Constitution. Research what the concept means and how it is interpreted today.

Presentations September 28/29

# individual work

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Participate in a socratic dialogue on the preamble to the Constitution. Write a one page takeaway about the main concepts discussed during the dialogue about the Due September 18/19

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Choose either checks and balances, separation of powers, civil rights, or civil liberties. Summarize the concept and identify clauses in the Constitution that discuss this idea. Cite your sources if you use any. Due September 21/22

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Choose from a philosopher that influenced the Founding Fathers. Research their ideas and writings and why they were influential. Present your findings to the class. Include quotes from their writings. Due September 25/26

# assessment

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Participate in a socratic dialogue on the following topic: “What key concepts are found in the U.S Constitution.” Dialogue September 28/29

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Take a 15 question assessment. In class September 28/29

# readings

Preamble to the Constitution

**guiding question 3: How has the Legislative branch interpreted its responsibilities laid out in the Constitution?**

# lessons

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Bills and Laws

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Congressional powers

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Modern Congress

# group work

Choose one of the following:

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Locate four bills of your choice at www.congress.gov website. Identify its bill number, sponsor(s), committee(s) referred, title, and body. As a group write your own bill about a topic of your choosing. Make sure your topic follows the same format as those introduced to Congress. Presentations October 16/17

# individual work

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Socratic dialogue: Read Article 1 of the Constitution and prepare for a dialogue. Dialogue October 2/3

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Research a topic or bill that is up for debate in the House or Senate (Go to the House or Senate website for this information). Write a letter to your Congressman or Senator expressing your opinion about that topic. Due October 5/6

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Choose one of the following articles. Read it and present it’s information to the class.

* + - Geoghegan, Thomas “ The Case for Busting the Filibuster”
    - Hamilton, Lee H. “The Case for Congress”
    - Lessig, Lawrence. “How to get our Democracy Back”
    - Mathew, David. “Congress: The Electoral Connection”
    - Wilson, Woodrow. “Congressional Government

\_\_\_\_\_\_ After watching “Mr Smith Goes to Washington” write a takeaway of the movie. Movie October 7/8 - 10/11 Takeaway due October 16/17

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Choose an elected legislator from a state other than California. Search their social media accounts, website, news releases, and other news articles about their work. How have they been fulfilling their office as an elected official? Due October 16/17

# assessment

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Write an essay about the Legislative Branch and answer the following question “How has the Legislative Branch fulfilled its Constitutional duties throughout history?” Due October 19/20

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Take a 15 question assessment. In class October 16/17

# readings

U.S Constitution article 1

# midterm

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Take a 30 question assessment on topics discussed during quarter one. In class October 19/20