

Social Studies Unit Plan Framework

Unit: Civics

In order to act responsibly and effectively, citizens must understand the important institutions of their society and the principles that these institutions are intended to reflect. That requires mastery of a body of knowledge about law, politics and government.

Essential Question(s):

How do you apply American values and our democratic principles in your daily life?

How do you use research to guide your understanding of your role as a citizen?

How do you effectively use primary and secondary sources to make informed arguments through the use of writing?

Objectives: By the end of this unit students will be able to:

1. Have a detailed knowledge of the United States Constitution and Illinois Constitution.
2. Use research to guide understanding of American government.
3. Be able to write credible and accurate conclusions based on research properly citing primary and secondary sources as support.
4. Understand the important role of the individual citizen to actively participate in American government.
5. Incorporate various technological means to enhance their understanding of American government.
6. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on topics in American government and civic issues.

Target Skills

Comprehension:

What is a democratic republic? How does a bill become a law? What are American values?
Understand the constitution as a living breathing document. Understand the bill of rights and other amendments. Understand responsibilities and duties of American Citizens. Learn about Illinois's constitution and government. Understand separation of powers and the three branches of American government. Understand checks and balances within American government. Understand the American juridical system. Understand complex social problems that currently affect our country. Understand the electoral college system.

Classroom Considerations/Grouping Purpose:

Vocabulary:

Writing:

Opinion paper based on research evidence from primary and secondary sources with citations.

Flag burning opinion paper w/ sources used as evidence and citations.

Gun law opinion paper w/sources used as evidence and citations.

Trace and evaluate an argument from a nonfiction text about our American government.

End of Unit Project: Create a political campaign.

<u>Unit Activities</u>	<u>Why did you decide to do this?</u> <u>What will the students be doing?</u>
Opinion paper with sources/citations	To help students understand complex political issues, and form opinions based on research and personal views. Present your reasons citing types of sources. Students will be researching, reading, writing, discussing and citing.
Supreme court cases mock trials	To help students understand Constitutional amendments and how they are applied to citizen's lives students will debate, discuss and form opinions based on actual court cases. Students will present claims and findings based on examining actual court cases. They will also analyze main ideas of the cases, debate and discuss opinions based on factual evidence from the constitution.
Create a law/mock congress	To help students understand the workings of the legislative branch students will be creating a law of their choosing and try to get it passed. Students will write a bill of their choosing, debate with other members of the class and work as congress to pass or deny bills.
Political Issues Debate	To help students better understand American politics the students will research, form conclusions and debate a current political issue that affects America. The debate will help students formulate opinions and communicate their opinions to their peers.