

# WPS Political & Legal Education Unit 1

Unit: *Social Sciences and History*, Grade(s) *Grade 9 - Grade 12*

Unit 1 begins by examining the type of government established by the Constitution. Understanding the historical building of the Constitution and its principles. A brief history of Political Parties and their current status and impact will also be addressed. Students will then become familiar with the practices of Congress and parliamentary procedure. Students will learn debating techniques, critical thinking skills, research and public speaking will also be practiced. The culmination of this unit is the annual Model Congress competition.

Duration: 10 Weeks

## Unit

Essential Questions/Enduring Understandings

### **Essential Questions:**

- What is political ideology and how does it influence the political platform of an individual?
- What major ideas from political philosophers were adopted by the Founding Fathers and how do these ideas affect our concept of government today?
- Why do countries throughout the world develop different forms of government?
- How does the American distribution of power compare with other forms of government around the world?
- What ideals were in conflict in regards to the ratification of the Constitution?
- How have the beliefs and ideals found in our early government documents changed or remained the same through our country's development?
- How does the idea of rule of law manifest itself in the Constitution?
- How does the Constitution distribute power in terms of checks and balances and separation of powers?
- Where, specifically, does each level of government get its power?
- Why is it important to distribute power both horizontally and vertically?
- How does the relationship between state and local governments compare with the relationship between the national and state governments?In

what ways have our beliefs and values about federalism changed since the ratification of the Constitution? In what ways are they the same?

- How have the first amendment freedoms been expanded and inhibited over time?
- How has suffrage been impacted by changing beliefs and ideals over time?
- How is each house of Congress different from the other?
- Where in the legislative process do individuals get to exert their greatest influence?
- What role do lobbyists and interest groups play in the legislative process?

**Enduring Understandings:**

Analytical questioning creates a purpose for research.

Collaboration is necessary in order to be an effective learner and citizen.

European government structures and political philosophers strongly influenced the principles of the US Constitution.

Individual rights are a driving force of American democracy.

The Constitution is a living document.

The rules of Parliamentary Procedure will be learned.

Students will demonstrate knowledge of whether motions need a majority or two-thirds vote.

The proper procedures for Committee Chair will be learned and displayed via the daily debating of bills in class.

Political Parties are an important component in American democracy.

Students will be able to...

Explain the role of governmental in everyday life.  
Discuss the freedoms guaranteed by the bill of rights.  
Students will describe how the framers of the US Constitution drew upon a history of democratic ideals while developing a document that would establish a new, stronger federal government.  
Students will explain the three levels of government and how they cooperate with each other.  
Students will trace the freedoms spelled out in the Bill of Rights and how they are essential to our democratic system.  
Students will explain how amendments to the Constitution expanded the rights of Americans.  
Analyze key ideas of limited government and the rule of law as seen in the Magna Carta, the Petition of Rights, and the English Bill of Rights.  
Evaluate the Declaration of Independence as a persuasive argument.  
Explain the main ideas in debate over ratification; include those in The Federalist.  
Identify the structure and functions of the legislative branch, or Congress.  
Describe and evaluate the organization and powers, both formal and informal, of the legislative Branch.  
Review how the House of Representatives and the Senate may evolve gradually or change dramatically as a result of crisis.  
Analyze political parties in the past and present  
Demonstrate knowledge of Parliamentary Procedure for Model Congress Competition.  
Research, write and orally debate legislative bills.

Evidence of Learning/ Assessment

Summative Assessment 1- Constitution assessment

Summative Assessment 2- [Model Congress](#)

Formative Assessment

Quizzes- Bill of Rights

Parliamentary Procedure

Letter to Congressman

Performance- Online discussions

Persuasive writing

Parliamentary Debate

Role play

Powerpoint Presentations

Survey

Backchanneling

Discussion

Writing a letter

Constructing a collage

Illustration

Instructional Design/Learning Plan

[Scope and Sequence](#)

Unit Materials

Civics Today Macmillan/McGraw-Hill Glencoe

Guest Speakers- Burlington County law speakers, political speakers, lobbyists

Field Trip to New Jersey Model Congress

Government on File, Facts on File, Inc.

U.S. Constitution copy

UpFront Subscription

Court Cases

- Marbury v Madison
- McCulloch v Maryland
- Plessy v Ferguson
- Brown v Board of Education of Topeka Kansas
- Regents of the Univ. CA v Bakke
- Phillips v Martin Marletta Corp.
- Grutter v Bollinger
- Gratz v Bollinger
- Dred Scott v Sandford
- Gibbons v Ogden
- Griswold v Connecticut
- Roe v Wade
- US V Nixon

Library of Congress [www.loc.gov](http://www.loc.gov).

[www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)

[www.supremecourts.gov](http://www.supremecourts.gov)

[www.ct.gov](http://www.ct.gov)

[www.ccle.org](http://www.ccle.org)

Civics.org

Ozey.org

Congress.org

Debate formats- parliamentary and policy debate

**Videos for Clips:**

Democracy for the People

Hot Coffee

Law and Order

Schoolhouse Rock

Gideon's Trumpet

Frost Nixon

All the President's Men

Mr. Smith Goes to Washington

Olympus has Fallen

Lions and Lambs

Thank you for Smoking

13 hours

Real Justice, PBS

## Standards Covered

### \*ELA NJSL

#### RI: Informational Text

##### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- RI.11-12.7: Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

##### Key Ideas and Details

- RI.11-12.1: Accurately cite strong and thorough textual evidence, (e.g., via discussion, written response, etc.), to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferentially, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- RI.11-12.2: Determine two or more central ideas of a text, and analyze their development and how they interact to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

#### W: Writing

##### Research to Build and Present Knowledge

- W.9-10.7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

##### Text Types and Purposes

- W.9-10.1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence. Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

### \*Social Studies NJSL

**SOC.6.1.12: U.S. History: America in the World: All students will acquire the knowledge and skills to think analytically about how past and present interactions of people, cultures, and the environment shape the American heritage. Such knowledge and skills enable students to make informed decisions that reflect fundamental rights and core democratic values as productive citizens in local, national, and global communities.**

#### SOC.6.1.12.2: Revolution and the New Nation (1754-1820s)

- SOC.6.1.12.A.2: Civics, Government, and Human Rights
  - SOC.6.1.12.A.2.a: Assess the importance of the intellectual origins of the Foundational Documents (i.e., Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and Bill of Rights) and assess their importance on the spread of democracy around the world.
  - SOC.6.1.12.A.2.b: Compare and contrast state constitutions, including New Jersey's 1776 constitution, with the United States Constitution, and determine their impact on the development of American constitutional government.
  - SOC.6.1.12.A.2.c: Compare and contrast the arguments of Federalists and Anti-Federalists during the ratification debates, and assess their continuing relevance.
  - SOC.6.1.12.A.2.d: Explain how judicial review made the Supreme Court an influential branch of government, and assess the continuing impact of the Supreme Court today.
  - SOC.6.1.12.A.2.e: Examine the emergence of early political parties and their views on centralized government and foreign affairs, and compare these positions with those of today's political parties.

#### SOC.6.1.12.4: Civil War and Reconstruction (1850-1877)

- SOC.6.1.12.A.4: Civics, Government, and Human Rights
  - SOC.6.1.12.A.4.b: Analyze how ideas found in key documents (i.e., the Declaration of Independence, the Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments and Resolution, the Emancipation Proclamation, and the Gettysburg Address) contributed to demanding equality for all.
  - SOC.6.1.12.A.4.c: Judge the effectiveness of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments in obtaining citizenship and equality for African Americans.

#### SOC.6.1.12.5: The Development of the Industrial United States (1870-1900)

- SOC.6.1.12.A.5: Civics, Government, and Human Rights
  - SOC.6.1.12.A.5.b: Analyze the effectiveness of governmental policies and of actions by groups and individuals to address discrimination against new immigrants, Native Americans, and African Americans.

Additional Properties

Author: Gauntt, Kelly

Cost/Fee: No

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Keywords:

Created by: willingboro, willingboro (7/3/2018 8:25 AM)

Last modified by: Gauntt, Kelly (10/8/2018 9:57 PM)