# Unit 01: Constitutional Underpinnings of the United States Government

Content Area: **Social Studies**
Course(s): **AP US Gov & Pol**
Time Period: **Semester 1**
Length: **4 weeks**
Status: **Published**

## Standards

| | |
|---|---|
| 6.1.12.CivicsPI.2.a | Prepare and articulate a point of view about the importance of individual rights, separation of powers, and governmental structure in New Jersey's 1776 constitution and the United States Constitution. |
| 6.1.12.CivicsPI.2.b | 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. |
| 6.1.12.CivicsPD.2.a | Compare and contrast the arguments of Federalists and Anti-Federalists during the ratification debates and assess their continuing relevance. |
| 6.1.12.HistoryCC.2.b | Assess the importance of the intellectual origins of the Foundational Documents and assess their importance on the spread of democracy around the world (i.e., Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and Bill of Rights). |
| 6.1.12.HistoryCA.2.a | Research multiple perspectives to explain the struggle to create an American identity. |
| 6.1.12.CivicsPI.3.b | Describe how the Supreme Court increased the power of the national government and promoted national economic growth during this era. |

## Enduring Understandings

Founded on the principles of liberty, our Constitution provides the source of legitimate political authority in the United States.

Having a dual system of government provides decisions, issues, and financing of policies to be shared and checked.

- Students will determine, through media literacy skills and lateral, close reading strategies when evaluating primary and secondary resources the following: 1. context of the text; 2. reason for the text; 3. type of source the text is; 4. the point of view of the author of the text 5. the intended audience for the text 6. evaluate the stance of the text
- Students will use Historical Thinking Skills to evaluate sources and ideas. Comparison, Contextualization, Continuity and Change over Time, Periodization, Synthesis, Claims, Point of View, Intended Audience, and Purpose.
- Students will observe, note, and draw conclusions with the understanding that there are multiple perspectives. Multiple perspectives is the foundation to understanding the why and how of history. Documents, primary sources, historical readings will be evaluated.

## Essential Questions

Why did controversies following the Revolutionary War, sectional conflict, and Enlightenment philosophies fuel debate at the Constitutional Convention?

Why do we consider the Constitution to be a "living document"?

Unique to the United States, how and why has the federalist system evolved since our founding?

## Knowledge and Skills

**Students will be able to explain and analyze the constitutional underpinnings of United States Government.**

**Students will trace the creation of the Constitution and examine how it has impacted the American political system.**

**What intellectual forces affected the founding of our nation?**

The influence of the Enlightenment

Locke, Rousseau, Montesquiue

Social Contract Theory

Declaration of Independence

Articles of Confederation

Shay's Rebellion

**What central problems existed in framing our Constitution?**

Virginia & NJ Plans

Connecticut Compromise

3/5s Compromise

**What Considerations influenced the formation and adoption of the Constitution?**

Constitutional Mechanisms

Separation of Powers

Federalism

The Constitution

Theories of democratic government

**What interests motivated the Federalists & Anti-federalists?**

Bill of Rights

Madison, Jay, Hamilton

Creation of political parties

**What has caused dual federalism to be replaced by cooperative federalism?**

McCulloch v. Maryland

Necessary & Proper Clause

The New Deal

**How has the grants-in-aid system changed the role of federal politics?**

Block Grants

Categorical Grants

Mandates

Americans with Disabilities Act

**Clean Air/Water Act**

No child left behind act

## Transfer Goals

Students will be able to independently explain how America was founded on the principles of liberty and how our Constitution provides the source of legitimate political authority in the United States.

Students will be able to independently critically appraise historical and contemporary claims/decisions made at the Constitutional Convention and applied to both the national government and state governments.

## Resources

**Textbooks:**

Ford, Bardes, Schmidt, & Shelley, *American Government and Politics Today (*2015-2016 edition)

Amsco Review Book

**Supplemental Readings/Sources:**

John Locke's *Second Treatise of Civil Government* (1690)

Montesquieu's *The Spirit of the Laws* (1748)

SCOTUS case McCulloch v. Maryland

SCOTUS case United States v. Lopez

SCOTUS case United States v. Morrison

Additional Resources from WH databases, and articles connected to the content, including primary readings, historiography, and secondary sources.

News publications, including but not limited to NYTimes, Washington Post.

Upfront Magazine

Pear Deck

Albert i.o.

WH Databases, AI (Gemini, Copilot, Magicshoolai), Pear Deck

Web-based resources including but not limited to digital media (SIFT method), primary sources, peer reviews, historical documents and writings of historians

**Digital Sources:**

Federalism & legalization of marijuana **https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/whats-next-marijuana-legalization**

10th Amendment and Federalism https://tenthamendmentcenter.com/2009/10/02/federalism-freedom-and-the-constitution/

John Oliver segment on Death Penatly https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kye2oX-b39E

States vs federal government in education reform — interview with Chris Minnich | VIEWPOINT **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHRu-dFwbB4**

CSPAN US v. Lopez **https://www.c-span.org/video/?61488-1/us-v-lopez**

## Assessments

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mKgdwpriGuRcVHIVCJUdBEk7lih12Q0ckKSTC4TMUXs/edit

## Modifications

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ODqaPP69YkcFiyG72fIT8XsUIe3K1VSG7nxuc4CpCec/edit