Unit 1: Our Federal System

Content Area: **Social Studies**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Trimester 1**
Length: **3 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Summary

In the United States History course, students study the development of the early republic through the Reconstruction Era. To expand students' historical understanding, geography and civics are emphasized throughout the course. Moreover, the use of primary sources allows students to analyze and interpret American history via first-hand accounts. Students also examine how women, racial and ethnic minorities, and members of the LGBTQIA+ community have contributed to the American economy, politics, and society. Moreover, the inclusion of current events keeps students informed and helps to refine their civic understanding. Throughout the course, students are challenged with both project- and problem-based activities in order to gain an enduring understanding of the fundamental curricular concepts.

This unit is part of the larger aforementioned course sequence and specifically focuses on our federal system where students will determine how a nation made of individual citizens and public servants establishes and carries out its core principles and evaluates the success of those decisions. By the end of this unit, students will be able to define the key pillars of the Constitution, determine the different interpretations and applications of the Constitution, both past and present, examine the Bill of Rights, and evaluate the way in which this foundational document supported various individuals within the newly formed United States at the time of its creation.

Revised: August 2023

Standards

6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.a: Cite evidence to evaluate the extent to which the leadership and decisions of early administrations of the national government met the goals established in the Constitution.

6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.b: Evaluate the effectiveness of the fundamental principles of the Constitution (i.e., consent of the governed, rule of law, federalism, limited government, separation of powers, checks and balances, and individual rights) in establishing a federal government that allows for growth and change over time.

6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.c: Distinguish the powers and responsibilities of citizens, political parties, interest groups, and the media in a variety of governmental and nongovernmental contexts.

6.1.8.CivicsPD.3.a: Cite evidence to determine the role that compromise played in the creation and adoption of the Constitution and Bill of Rights.

6.1.8.CivicsDP.3.a:Use primary and secondary sources to assess whether or not the ideals found in the Declaration of Independence were fulfilled for women, African Americans, and Native Americans during this time period.

NJSLSA.R1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences and relevant connections from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

NJSLSA.R2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

NJSLSA.R4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

NJSLSA.R5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

NJSLSA.R6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text. Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

NJSLSA.R7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

NJSLSA.R8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

NJSLSA.R9. Analyze and reflect on how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

NJSLSA.R10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently

with scaffolding as needed.

RH.6-8.1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

RH.6-8.2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

RH.6-8.3. Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

RH.6-8.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

RH.6-8.5. Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

RH.6-8.6. Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

RH.6-8.7. Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

RH.6-8.8. Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

RH.6-8.9. Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

RH.6-8.10. By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

NJSLSA.W1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

NJSLSA.W2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

NJSLSA.W3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

NJSLSA.W4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

NJSLSA.W5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

NJSLSA.W6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

NJSLSA.W7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects, utilizing an inquiry-based research process, based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

NJSLSA.W8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

NJSLSA.W9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

NJSLSA.W10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

WHST.6-8.1. Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content. A. Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue, acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically. B. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources. C. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. D. Establish and maintain a formal/academic style, approach, and form. E. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

WHST.6-8.2. Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes.

A. Introduce a topic and organize ideas, concepts, and information using text structures (e.g. definition, classification, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, etc.) and text features (e.g. headings, graphics, and multimedia) when useful to aiding comprehension.

B. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.

C. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.

D. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

E. Establish and maintain a formal/academic style, approach, and form.

F. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

WHST.6-8.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, voice, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

WHST.6-8.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

WHST.6-8.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas clearly and efficiently. Research to Build and Present Knowledge

WHST.6-8.7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

WHST.6-8.8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

WHST.6-8.9. Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. Range of Writing

WHST.6-8.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

9.4.8.CI.2: Repurpose an existing resource in an innovative way (e.g., 8.2.8.NT.3).

9.4.8.CI.3: Examine challenges that may exist in the adoption of new ideas (e.g., 2.1.8.SSH, 6.1.8.CivicsPD.2).

9.4.8.CT.3: Compare past problem-solving solutions to local, national, or global issues and analyze the factors that led to a positive or negative outcome.

9.4.8.DC.1: Analyze the resource citations in online materials for proper use.

9.4.8.DC.2: Provide appropriate citation and attribution elements when creating media products (e.g., W.6.8).

9.4.8.IML.1: Critically curate multiple resources to assess the credibility of sources when searching for information.

9.4.8.IML.7: Use information from a variety of sources, contexts, disciplines, and cultures for a specific purpose (e.g., 1.2.8.C2a, 1.4.8.CR2a, 2.1.8.CHSS/IV.8.AI.1, W.5.8, 6.1.8.GeoSV.3.a, 6.1.8.CivicsDP.4.b, 7.1.NH. IPRET.8).

9.4.8.IML.12: Use relevant tools to produce, publish, and deliver information supported with evidence for an authentic audience.

9.4.8.IML.13: Identify the impact of the creator on the content, production, and delivery of information (e.g., 8.2.8.ED.1).

9.4.8.TL.2: Gather data and digitally represent information to communicate a real-world problem (e.g., MS-ESS3-4, 6.1.8.EconET.1, 6.1.8.CivicsPR.4).

9.4.8.TL.3: Select appropriate tools to organize and present information digitally.

In accordance with New Jersey's Chapter 32 Diversity and Inclusion Law, this unit includes instructional materials that highlight and promote diversity, including: economic diversity, equity, inclusion, tolerance, and belonging in connection with gender and race and ethnicity,and religious tolerance.

This unit also reflects the goals of the Department of Education and the Amistad Commission including the infusion of the history of Africans and African-Americans into the curriculum in order to provide an accurate, complete, and inclusive history regarding the importance of of African-Americans to the growth and development of American society in a global context.

This unit further reflects the goals of the Holocaut Education mandate where students are able to identify and analyze applicable theories concerning human nature and behavior; understand that genocide is a consequence of prejudice and discrimination; understand that issues of moral dilemma and conscience have a profound impact on life; and understand the personal responsibility that each citizen bears to fight racism and hatred whenever and wherever it happens.

This unit is aligned to the English Language Development (ELD) standards for kindergarten through grade 12 since multilingual learners develop content and language concurrently, with academic content in a classroom where the language of instruction is English. As a result, language learning and language as a means for learning academic content are interchangeable. The following ELD standards are relevant for this unit and course of study:

- Standard 1: Language for Social and Instructional Purposes: English language learners communicate for social and instructional purposes within the school setting.
- Standard 5: Language for Social Studies: English language learners communicate information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of Social Studies.

The standards in this unit reflect a developmental progression across grade levels and make interdisciplinary connections across content areas including the humanities, technology, career readiness, cultural awareness, and global citizenship.

Essential Questions and Enduring Understandings

Essential Questions:

- How does a nation establish its identity?

- To what extent is there liberty and justice for all?

Enduring Understandings:

- A nation establishes its identity by developing and carrying out decisions, compromises, and core principles.
- The government plays a leading role in ensuring liberty and justice for all.

Objectives

Students will know:

- Terms, concepts and individuals (including, but not limited to): Constitutional Convention, Bill of Rights, Amendments 1-10, Electoral College, Judicial Branch, Executive Branch, Legislative Branch, checks and balances, veto power, cabinet, compromise
- The role of government and its three branches are outlined within the Constitution.
- The concept of limiting power through checks and balances.
- The people play an important part in their government and subsequently have rights and responsibilities.
- The reason individuals believed a Bill of Rights was necessary.
- The Constitution's interpretation varied between "loose" and "strict" construction. This can still be seen today as the Constitution is a "living" document.
- The Constitution emphasizes federalism and a strong national government, which does leave power to the states.
- The Constitution was created by white, landowning males, limiting the perspectives of other groups at the time.

Students will be skilled at:

- Evaluating the implementation and effectiveness of the Constitution.
- Analyzing the ideals of the Declaration of Independence in relation to the Constitutional pillars.
- Connecting the Constitution and Bill of Rights to past and present day issues.
- Implementing the powers and responsibilities of citizens in and out of the classroom.

- Defining what it means to be a “good citizen”.
- Determining the significance of point of view and subsequent limitations when creating the founding documents.
- Examining leadership and decisions of early presidents in accordance with the founding documents.
- Working independently and collaboratively to present comprehension and understanding of content.
- Contextualizing events and sources within a broader historical timeline to describe the circumstances surrounding the topic.
- Interpreting multiple perspectives to compare and contrast varying viewpoints of a specific topic for relative similarities and differences.
- Creating a claim to respond to a prompt.
- Writing with evidence to support an original claim.

Learning Plan

This unit includes but is not limited to the following learning strategies:

How Does It Run?: Students will work in groups to describe how different institutions (their home, our school, our country) work. After having a group discussion on how their homes and our schools work, students will work on ways they would improve them. Finally, groups will apply the same principles to our country. This will be both a preassessment and a way to establish class norms for group discussions

Creating the Constitution: Students will independently read the Newsela article Creating The Constitution. Students will then take the provided quiz (Multiple Choice and Open Ended).

Bill of Rights Analysis: Students will analyze the impact the Bill of Rights has on present day America discussing how the Bill of Rights supports American ideals. They will then rank the 10 Amendments in order of importance to their lives. After a class discussion, students will make a Bill of RIghts student edition as amendments to the School Code of Conduct.

Secrets of the Constitution: Students will read “Secrets of the Constitution” from Upfront Magazine. They will be able to read about what went on behind the scenes when the Framers met in 1787 to draft the nation’s founding document. Students will then be tasked with writing a newspaper article as if they were a reporter who had access to the Constitutional Convention. They will explain the importance of the meeting and the difficulties being faced.

Liberty and Justice: Students will begin by explaining what the terms Liberty and Justice mean to them. Ideally this will be done so the various answers can be displayed for the class to see. Students will then be given the definitions. In groups they will then go through the Constitution's preamble and Bill of Rights to identify examples of Liberty and Justice and how the Government seeks to provide it. Groups will then design posters or infographics with the theme of Liberty and Justice.

Note: Other strategies to address the learning objectives may include, but are not limited to direct instruction, primary and secondary source analysis (including annotations, critique, questioning and close reading strategies), self and peer review, think-pair-share activities, creating visual representations, debates, film analysis, Socratic seminars, small group discussions, simulations, mapping activities, jigsaw activities, gallery walks, web quests, and/or inquiry or problem based learning projects.

Assessment

When taking a Social Studies course, students demonstrate differentiated proficiency according to their ability to answer the essential questions through formative and summative assessments. Many of the performance tasks below can be implemented as formative and/or summative assessments. As teachers strive for students to demonstrate proficiency, they will need to create additional or alternative assessments based on demonstration or absence of skill.

Formative Assessments:

- Do Nows/ Exit Slips
- Class Activities
- Constitutional Convention Reporter Activity

Summative Assessments:

- Unit Tests including multiple choice and analytical writing questions
- Liberty and Justice for All Infographics

Benchmark Assessments:

- Analytical Writing Responses
    - To what extent did the Constitution support and protect the rights of all people in the early republic?
    - Which part of the Constitution (including the Bill of Rights) do you think was the most

important and had the greatest impact on Americans today?

- To what extent does a citizen play a role in their government today?

Alternative Assessments:

- Revise the Constitution to reflect different groups and perspectives.
- Create an argument paragraph regarding a present day issue related to one of the amendments in the Bill of Rights. Create a claim and support with evidence and reasoning.

Materials

The design of this course allows for the integration of a variety of instructional, supplemental, and intervention materials that support student learners at all levels in the school and home environments. Associated web content and media sources are infused into the unit as applicable and available In addition to the materials below, the following link connects to district approved textbooks and resources utilized in this course: Core Book List.

The following are approved resources that teachers can include to further unit related objectives:

Creating the Constitution (Newsela) Article, Writing Prompt, Quiz, Answers

The Constitutional Convention (Khan Academy)

United States Constitution for Kids (www.civiced.org)

Secrets of the Constitution (Upfront Magazine)

Secrets of the Constitution Teacher Resource (Upfront)

Bill of Rights for Kids (constitutioncenter.org)

Any additional resources that are not included in this list will be presented to and reviewed by the supervisor before being included in lesson plans. This ensures resources are reviewed and vetted for relevance and

appropriateness prior to implementation.

Suggested Strategies for Modification

This link includes content specific accommodations and modifications for all populations:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Pp6EJOCsFz5o4-opzsXpQDQoa6aClW-bkRGPDRHXVrk/edit?usp=sharing

These additional strategies are helpful when learning Social Studies content and skills:

- Highlighter for close reading and summary strategies
- Bolded terms in directions
- Reading texts aloud for students to assist in comprehension and analysis
- Providing opportunities for text-to-speech for written responses.
- Use visual presentations of all materials and instructions.
- Include graphic organizers for writing.