

# Unit 1: Foundations of American Government

Content Area: **History**  
Course(s):  
Time Period:  
Length: **7 Days**  
Status: **Published**

## State Mandated Topics Addressed in this Unit

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N/A	N/A

## Unit Goals

Students should understand the doctrines and historical background to the Constitution; key principles, such as federalism and separation of powers; the ideological and philosophical underpinnings of American government; and theories informing interpretations of the Constitution, including democratic theory, republicanism, pluralism, and elitism.

## Learning Objectives

- Examine the Constitution and the historical background and doctrines
- Examine the ideological and philosophical underpinnings of American government

## Essential Skills

- Artists will be able to understand key principles, such as federalism and separation of powers.
- Artists will be able to understand the doctrines and historical background to the Constitution.
- Artists will be able to understand theories informing interpretations of the Constitution, including democratic theory, republicanism, pluralism, and elitism.

## Standards

SOC.9-12.1.1	Ideals of Democracy
SOC.9-12.EK 1.1.A.2.i	Separation of powers
SOC.9-12.EK 1.1.A.2.iii	Federalism
SOC.9-12.EK 1.1.A.2.iv	Republicanism

SOC.9-12.EK 1.1.A.3

The Declaration of Independence, drafted by Thomas Jefferson (with help from Adams and Franklin), restates the philosophy of natural rights, and provides a foundation for popular sovereignty. The U.S. Constitution, drafted by James Madison at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia that was led by George Washington (with important contributions from Hamilton and members of the “Grand Committee”), is an example of a social contract and establishes a system of limited government. The Constitution provides the blueprint for a unique form of democratic government in the United States.

SOC.9-12.EK 1.2.A.1.ii

Pluralist democracy, which recognizes group-based activism by nongovernmental interests striving for impact on political decision making

SOC.9-12.EK 1.2.A.1.iii

Elite democracy, which emphasizes limited participation in politics and civil society

## Instructional Tasks/Activities

### Textbook Readings

Considerations that influenced the formulation and adoption of the Constitution	Pages 23-41, 96, 307-309, 516
Separation of powers	Pages 28, 33-35, 41-43, 154, 303, 305, 332-333, 342, 347, 358, 365, 398, 516
Checks and Balances	Pages 34, 303, 305, 342-343, 347, 385, 409, 431-434, 519
Federalism	Pages 33-35, 50-75, 154, 91, 303
Theories of democratic government	Pages 5-10, 28-48, 79-80, 82-83, 91

Day	Topic	Lanahan Supplemental Readings	Pages
1	Introduction and Constitutional Scavenger Hunt	8. Richard Hofstadter – The American Political Tradition (1948)	45-51
2	Federalism	10. James Madison - The Federalist 10 (1787)	51-55
3	The War Powers Act - 1	15. James Madison – The Federalist 51 (1787)	97-101
4	War Powers 2, YLI- War and Peace- Whose Power is it?	16. David Bryan Robinson – The Constitution and Americas Destiny (2005)	102-110
5	Modern Federalism	18. James Madison – The Federalist 39 and 46 (1787)	119-123
6	FRQ Practice and Unit Review	20. Andrew Karch – Democratic Laboratories (2007)	129-135
7	Assessment – Multiple Choice and FRQ		

- American Political Tradition
- Analytical Reading of the Declaration of Independence
- Brutus 1
- Constitution Quiz
- Constitution Scavenger Hunt
- Fed 10
- Fed 51
- FRQ Practice
- FRQ Test
- MC Test
- Modern Federalism
- Understanding Federalism
- Unit Review
- War Powers Act 1
- War Powers Act 2

## **Assessment Procedure**

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- Classroom Total Participation Technique
- Classwork
- DBQ
- Essay
- Exit Ticket/Entrance Ticket/Do Now
- FRQ writing handout
- Journal / Student Reflection
- Kahoot
- Multiple Choice and FRQ
- Other named in lesson
- Peer Review
- Performance
- Problem Correction
- Project
- Quiz
- Rubric
- Teacher Collected Data
- Test
- Worksheet

## **Recommended Technology Activities**

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- Appropriate Content Specific Online Resource
- Chromebook
- Copy/Paste Content Specific Link Here
- Copy/Paste Content Specific Link Here
- Copy/Paste Content Specific Link Here
- Gimkit
- GoGuardian
- Google Classroom
- Google Docs
- Google Forms
- Google Slides
- Kahoot
- MagicSchool AI
- Other- Specified in Lesson
- Quiziz
- Screencastify

## **Accommodations & Modifications & Differentiation**

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Accommodations and Modifications should be used to meet individual needs. Their IEP and 504 plans should be used in addition to the following suggestions.

## **Gifted and Talented**

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- Compare & Contrast
- Conferencing
- Debates
- Jigsaw
- Peer Partner Learning
- Problem Solving
- Structured Controversy
- Think, Pair, Share
- Tutorial Groups

## **Instruction/Materials**

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- alter format of materials (type/highlight, etc.)
- color code materials
- eliminate answers
- extended time
- extended time
- large print
- modified quiz
- modified test
- Modify Assignments as Needed
- Modify/Repeat/Model directions
- necessary assignments only
- Other (specify in plans)
- other- named in lesson
- provide assistance and cues for transitions
- provide daily assignment list
- read class materials orally
- reduce work load
- shorten assignments
- study guide/outline
- utilize multi-sensory modes to reinforce instruction

## **Environment**

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- alter physical room environment
- assign peer tutors/work buddies/note takers
- assign preferential seating
- individualized instruction/small group
- modify student schedule (Describe)
- other- please specify in plans
- provide desktop list/formula

## **Honors Modifications**

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## **Resources**

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- News footage and documentaries: C-SPAN's coverage and current events materials
- Articles from current newspapers, such as The New York Times or The Wall Street Journal

- Federalist Papers; modern commentary on federalism
- FRQ writing handout
- News magazines excerpts from Time, Newsweek, or The Economist
- Sections of the Articles of Confederation
- Serow, Ann G., and Ladd, Everett C. The LANAHAN READINGS in the American Polity, 5th ed. Baltimore, 2011
- The Constitution
- Web based resources including: Youth Leadership Initiative, the Bill of Rights in Action, and numerous websites
- Wilson, James Q., Dilulio, John J., and Bose, Meena. American Government: Institutions and Policies AP Edition, 14e. Stamford: Cengage Learning, 2015