

## **South Carolina Department of Education Social Studies Inquiry Unit Guide**

The goal of the Office of Standards and Learning is offering educators a suggested set of inquiry units, designed by educators, that represents classrooms from around the state. The inquiry units are accessible to assist educators in creating their daily lesson plans for inquiry and skills-based instruction to support the [\*2019 South Carolina Social Studies College - and Career-Ready Standards\*](#). The development of these units is the work of these educators with the intent of continuous revisions based on classroom application.

The development of these documents was facilitated by the Division of College and Career Readiness through the Office of Standards and Learning under the direction of David Mathis, Ph.D., Deputy Superintendent, Division of College and Career Readiness; Anne M. Pressley, Ph.D. Director, Office of Standards and Learning; and Dawn Hawkins, Ed.D., Team Lead, Office of Standards and Learning.

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*All units are created to support the **Overarching Inquiry Question**. Inquiry-Based Learning supports the **Profile of the South Carolina Graduate** where students use skills to explore their inquiries related to the content as indicated in the standards instead of the teacher merely providing the information.*

United States Government Inquiry Instructional Units		
Unit Number and Title	Overarching Inquiry Question	Unit Overview
<a href="#"><u>Unit 1 - Foundations of Democracy</u></a>	What aspects of our country's founding influence you the most as a citizen?	The principles of American democracy are reflected in the founding documents and actions of federal, state, and local government entities. The interpretation and application of American democratic principles continue to evolve and be debated. This unit asks students to explore the origins of American Democracy in its variety of forms, analyzing them, and determine individual rights and responsibilities at the national, state, and local levels.
<a href="#"><u>Unit 2- The Structure of Our Government</u></a>	What are the roles and responsibilities of each branch and level of government, and how do their functions apply to my life?	The American government's power is distributed in such a way that no one branch can become too powerful. This checks-and-balances structure of power allows the government to function at a national, state, and local level equally and allows them to govern effectively. This unit asks students to explore the branches of the US government, with a focus on the federal, state, and local government, how power is shared and limited, and how rule of law functions.

<p><b><u>Unit 3 - Government &amp; the Political Process</u></b></p>	<p>What is the impact of American core values on trends in political ideology over time?</p>	<p>America's political beliefs are shaped by an understanding of a combination of our founding principles, core values, and changing demographics that, in turn, shape one's belief about government and ideological trends related to public policy. Governing is achieved through an individual's participation in government both directly and indirectly. In this unit, students will inquire into the political process at varying levels of government and the tools necessary to act as an informed part of the political process.</p>
<p><b><u>Unit 4 - The American Citizen</u></b></p>	<p>What is the American Dream to different groups and why do so many want to live this dream?</p>	<p>A strong constitutional democracy requires active participation on behalf of the people living under its authority. Knowledge of how to become a citizen, the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and an understanding of how to participate in the political process helps to create civic engagement and preserve the American constitutional government. This unit asks students to examine "What makes a good citizen?" through an examination of the rights and responsibilities of the American Citizen.</p>