| **USG Unit 2 The Structure of our Government** | |
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| **Unit Overview** | |
| 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. | |
| **Overarching Inquiry Question** | |
| What are the roles and responsibilities of each branch and level of government, and how do their functions apply to my life?  *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.* | |
| **Theme(s)** | |
| Civic Engagement  Political Values & Institutions  Process of Law | |
| **Skills Emphasis at a Glance** | |
| **Establish Relationships (ER):** Explore how various Enlightenment philosophers influenced the Declaration of Independence.  **Interpret (IN):** Evaluatewhich limitations of the Articles of Confederation led to the call for a Constitutional Convention.  **Communicate and Conclude (CC):** Compare and contrast the plans presented for the Constitution and determine the reasons the ultimate plan was chosen.  **Informed Participation (IP):** Engage in the political process using acquired knowledge to perform civic duties. | |
| **Standard(s)** | |
| **Standard 2:** Demonstrate an understanding of the structure and functions of government at all levels in the United States.  **USG.2.CC:** Explain how governments in South Carolina are organized and how they function in the American constitutional government.  **USG.2.IP:** Synthesize why the rule of law has a central place in American society and the impact it has on the American political system.  **USG.2.IN:** Analyze how power and responsibility are distributed, shared, and limited in the American constitutional government.  **USG.2.ER:** Explain the authority, organization, purposes, and responsibilities of the three branches of government as enumerated in Articles I–III in the Constitution. | |
| **I Can Statement(s)**  ***I can statements are designed to help guide student understanding.*** | |
| I can explain the authority, organization, purposes, and responsibilities of the three branches of government as enumerated in Articles I–III in the Constitution. (USG.2.ER)  I can analyze how power and responsibility are distributed, shared, and limited in the American constitutional government. (USG.2.IN)  I can explain how governments in South Carolina are organized and how they function in the American constitutional government. (USG 2 CC)  I can synthesize why the rule of law has a central place in American society and the impact it has on the American political system. (USG 2 IP) | |
| **Unit Sequence of Teacher Instructional Practices and Actions Students will Take to answer the Overarching Inquiry Question** | **Instructional** **Guidance and Resources**  *Instructional Guidance and resources listed below are offered as suggestions for educators to assist students in reaching the goals of the proposed sequence.* |
| **I can explain the authority, organization, purposes, and responsibilities of the three branches of government as enumerated in Articles I–III in the Constitution (USG.2.ER); then analyze how power and responsibility are distributed, shared, and limited in the American constitutional government. (USG.2.IN)**   * Using the previous learning in Unit 1 as a launching point, the student should be instructed in the structure and functions of government at the local, state, regional, and federal levels. The students will explore the structure of the United States government through an analysis of the US Constitution and its role in establishing Federalism in the American political system.   + To begin the unit, students should be introduced to the concept of federalism through a study of situations where each level of government (local, state, and federal) is involved. Students should be arranged into groups of two to four people, then assign them a situation (examples could be response to a natural disaster--the Covid-19 pandemic, Hurricane Katrina, etc.--the local school board budget, infrastructure projects like highway construction, etc...).   + Students will then research the role of the (level of) government in the situation while the teacher facilitates quality research practices and focuses them on the task. The teacher could provide students with a graphic organizer to allow students to separate the governmental actions in local, state, and federal actions. Once their research is concluded, the teacher should prompt students to consider a question such as, "What have you learned about the roles and responsibilities of each level of government?"   + To answer this question, students will create a three-way Venn diagram that divides up federal, state, and local powers. *(Teachers can use multiple ways to achieve this, including lessons from the* [*National Archive.*](https://www.archives.gov/education)*)*   + Students will write a brief paragraph that summarizes the concept of federalism and why the American form of government continues to follow this system. | * During this Venn diagram, students will be analyzing the powers of each branch of government, at all levels of government, and what their respective roles are, whether in day-to-day function, or in a given situation like one of those mentioned above. * When finishing this section of the unit, students may go to [iCivics](https://www.icivics.org/games) and play multiple games (i.e. Branches of Power, Law Craft, or others) to emphasize the importance and differences of each branch. |
| **I can explain how governments in South Carolina are organized and how they function in the American constitutional government. (USG 2 CC)**   * Students will fill out a KWL chart centered on the concept of federalism using the guiding question “How does federalism work at the state level?” Students will fill out the K and W parts of the chart before working on the activity below. Once the following activities are complete, have students finish the L portion of the chart. * Students will analyze how federalism impacts state governments by grappling with the question “How do we pay for our school?”   + Teachers will provide students with a copy of the [Historical Analysis of Funding for South Carolina’s Public Schools from the South Carolina Council on Competitiveness](https://sccompetes.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/HistoricalAnalysisofSCPublicSchools.pdf) (link in also in resources below). This could be either a paper or electronic copy.   + Teachers will allow time for students to read and discuss with peers the information in the article. While they are reading, students will complete a t-chart of Federal/State responsibilities regarding public education.   + After the completion of the t-chart, students will explain what impact the Federal government and State government have on the budget. * To wrap up the lesson, students should research “Is it the federal government's responsibility to provide free public education?” Teachers will have students create an opinion based off their findings and have students present their argument in a multimedia presentation of their choosing (for example Tik Tok, Prezi, Google Slides, etc…). | * Teachers can also use a think-pair-share activity or a thinking map to review federalism. * Teachers may find that their students need assistance in reading and interpreting the data in the document. Teachers should feel free to provide the document in chunks to students, and scaffold their reading analysis in order to ensure understanding. * Students could complete the t-chart in partners and/or a portion as a whole class so the teacher can model the expectations. * As an extension for higher-level learners, students could analyze continuity and change within South Carolina’s constitutions from colonialism to present day. Students can do a close reading to compare and contrast: Constitution of South Carolina - March 26, 1776; Constitution of the State of South Carolina, 1868, The Constitutions of the State of South Carolina, 1895. * Students can then defend their opinions in a class debate. The teacher should be the driving opposition to what students are suggesting in order to drive the debate. The teacher can then bring in other topics such as “should they also provide free post-secondary education?” and “should student loans be forgiven?” to further the debate. Have students focus on how this can be accomplished and who will pay for the outcome. |
| **I can synthesize why the rule of law has a central place in American society and the impact it has on the American political system. (USG 2 IP)**   * Students will analyze the role of the rule of law within the court system in the United States. Teachers will break students into groups of three or four and assign each group a different landmark Supreme Court case to research. * Using their research students will create a piece of multimedia or poster to answer:   + Who was involved?   + What were the issues?   + When did this happen?   + Where did the case originate?   + Why was this case heard by the Supreme Court? * Students will synthesize the short and long-term outcome of the case in a short essay. The essays should focus on how the outcome of the case had an immediate impact on the judicial and political systems, as well as the long-term implications for the judicial and political system. Students should make a prediction regarding the potential for the case to be overturned and explain why. | * Teachers can use the various websites listed to assist. * Suggested court cases include but are not limited to Tinker v Des Moines (first amendment) ,*Batson v. Kentucky* (race and jury selection), *J.E.B. v. Alabama* (gender and jury selection), *Snyder v. Phelps* (military funeral protests), *Texas v. Johnson* (flag burning), Morse v. Frederick (first amendment) * Teachers can reference the website [landmarkcases.org](https://www.landmarkcases.org/) to find more information and lesson plans. * Students may show an interest in diving deeper into understanding the American court system, and teachers could include lesson ideas from [Facing History and Ourselves](https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/rule-law-and-why-it-matters). * While the students are writing, teachers should remind them that there are no wrong answers. Students should be encouraged to share their thinking and opinions while supporting them with empirical evidence. |
| A suggested final assessment for the unit is for students to participate in a role-play activity to write their own Constitution. Students can create their Constitution centered around their school, city, or create a brand new one for their state. | |

**References**

Understanding Federalism. (n.d.). Retrieved May 06, 2020,

from <https://www.archives.gov/legislative/resources/education/federalism>

The Rule of Law and Why It Matters. (n.d.). Retrieved May 06, 2020,

from <https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/rule-law-and-why-it-matters>

Historical Analysis of Funding for South Carolina’s Public Schools. (2005, December). Retrieved May 6, 2020, from <https://sccompetes.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/HistoricalAnalysisofSCPublicSchools.pdf>

**Additional Resources**

[Using Primary Sources](https://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/) - The Library of Congress gives information about using primary sources and has a catalogue of primary documents for educational use.

[Digital Public Library of America](https://dp.la/)- The Digital Public Library has a catalogue of various images, sound clips, videos, etc. for educational use.

[iCivics Games](https://www.icivics.org/games)- icivics is a website with various lesson plans, activities, and games for educational use.

[MrBettsClass Review Videos](https://www.youtube.com/user/MrBettsClass)- MrBetts has various videos set up for review of content and educational use.

[Hhughes Review Videos](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCErKUCncCyBgEdxWAtrj5hg)- HipHughes has various videos for review of content and educational use.

[Supreme Court Cases](https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/educational-resources/supreme-court-landmarks)- United States Courts has various educator resources and also landmark cases that can be used for educational purposes.

[Historical Documents](https://www.archives.gov/historical-docs)**-** The National Archive has various educator resources including lesson plans and documents for use in the classroom.

[KhanAcademy](https://www.khanacademy.org/)- Khan Academy is a study site that gives free lessons in the form of videos and quizzes. It spans various content for both teacher and student use.

[South Carolina Constitution from 1776](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/sc01.asp)- Yale Law gives a copy of the SC Constitution from 1776 that can be used in the classroom.

[South Carolina Constitution from 1895](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/scconstitution/SCConstitution.pdf) - PDF copy of the SC Constitution from 1895 that can be used in the classroom.