| **USG Unit 3 Government and the Political Process** | |
| --- | --- |
| **Unit Overview** | |
| 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. | |
| **Overarching Inquiry Question** | |
| What is the impact of American core values on trends in political ideology over time?  *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** | |
| 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 3:** Demonstrate an understanding of the political process in determining and shaping public policy and the political climate in the United States.  **USG.3.ER** Describe the policymaking process in the American constitutional government.  **USG.3.IN** Interpret how American political beliefs are shaped by the founding principles, core values, and changing demographics of America, and how those beliefs led to the creation of ideological trends that affect public policy over time.  **USG.3.CC** Investigate the role of linkage institutions (i.e. media, interest groups, political parties), and explain how they shape public agenda and opinion.  **USG.3.IP** Explain how the electoral process works in federal elections and the effects those elections have on the U.S. government. | |
| **I Can Statement(s)** | |
| **I can explain the progression of American political beliefs (USG 3.IN).**  **I can describe the policymaking process in American government (USG 3.ER).**  **I can explain the role of linkage institutions in American government (USG 3.CC).**  **I can interpret the impacts of the federal election process within the American government system (USG 3.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 progression of American political beliefs (USG 3.IN).**   * To introduce the topic, teachers will have students brainstorm an answer to the question of “What are people arguing about in politics today?” The responses will be created on a class master list into categories such as social, environmental, economic, etc.   + Students will then explore the website [I Side With Polls](https://www.isidewith.com/polls) to choose one current day political issue to research more in-depth * Students will be given time in class to research their issue using the following guiding questions:   + What is the history of this topic? For example, if the student were researching gun control then they would need to find information on previous laws that have been passed regarding gun ownership.   + Has this issue come up in prior elections? What were the outcomes of those elections? Did that issue make a difference in the outcome?   + Have laws been proposed and/or passed regarding this issue already? If so, what? * Teachers will direct students to [I Side With: Parties](https://www.isidewith.com/parties/) in order to discover the basic beliefs and platforms of the various active political parties in the United States. Teachers will provide students with a chart or graph for them to collect information on the parties. The chart or graph should encourage students to identify the most important issues and beliefs for each party. Students should answer the question: What does this party believe is the government's role in our country?   + Examples of prompts could include students writing a new mission statement for each party, or even creating new hashtags for the party’s social media pages * Students will then be guided to look at their issue/topic of choice from above & deciding how each political party would respond to their issue. * Students will work with a partner to discuss possible solutions to each of their topics of choice   + As an exit ticket, students will determine which solution aligns best with their personal political beliefs & describe which political party is most likely to support their proposed solution * Students will reflect back on their proposed solution to their topic of choice determining if it is a federal or state issue/law   + Some students may have issues that could be both federal or state, they will need to consider the benefits/problems proposing a federal v. state law by completing a Venn diagram * Students should then work with a small group to listen to each other’s proposals & present a potential problem to the issue while also working as a team to work through solving the problems & creating a more solid solution to each student’s topic of choice * Students will answer the question “How will you get people on your side of the proposed solution?” by conducting research from several different news sources either watching a video or read an article about the topic of choice, coming from all sides of the issue   + Other guiding questions could be: What are top political analysts saying about the issue? What are their followers saying? How does this align with your own personal beliefs? * Students will then work with partners to discuss each of their topics of choice while creating a plan on how to get their proposed solution passed   + Questions here to guide students would be: Whom do you need to convince to get this law passed? How would you go about this? Are there any compromises that need to be made with an opposing political party? How much does public opinion matter with this issue? What interest groups would be involved with this issue (for or against)? * Students will reflect on how their topic has progressed from an idea to a proposal and the changes they have made along the way using a method like Flipgrid or Padlet. | * Teachers may need to show students that some issues like health care can be categorized into both social and economic * Teachers may choose to have students each pick a separate topic or have students work with a partner. Students will be referring back to this research throughout the unit sequence. * Teachers may provide students with a variety of handouts and/or graphic organizers in order for them to be efficient in their research and stay focused on the guiding questions. * Teachers should continue to provide graphic organizers and/or handouts for students to continue to organize their research * Teachers should encourage students to think realistically but also creatively. For example, if a student chose the issue of gun control it might lead them to researching school shootings & may decide on creating a law that puts armed guards in schools   + An unrealistic idea might be that students pick climate change & propose getting rid of cars * Teachers may need to revisit the concept of federalism to help students the difference between state and federal laws * If students decide a state law, they may need to do more research on current South Carolina state laws. It could also be helpful for students to read news articles and op-eds that have been posted on the topic. |
| **I can describe the policymaking process in American government (USG 3.ER).**     * The teacher will introduce the bill-making process to students using the video [CrashCourse Government: How a Bill Becomes a Law.](https://youtu.be/66f4-NKEYz4) * Students will create a flowchart that shows the process of a bill becoming a law. Students should create this flowchart using a blank piece of paper so the information can be organized in a way that makes sense to them.   + Students should include the process for state and federal laws on this flowchart. It may be helpful to use different color writing utensils for this activity.   + Students should also include the obstacles that bills face during this process (aka vetoes). * After completing the flowchart, students will engage in a [Connect-Exchange-Challenge](https://thinkingpathwayz.weebly.com/connectextendchallenge.html) activity in which they will answer questions in order to synthesize the information they have just learned with their issue-based research. * Students will work with partners to analyze different election scenarios to decide how it will impact both of their issues/proposed bills. Students will share their thoughts one at a time and allow their partner to respond and offer insights. This could be completed as a written conversation. * As a reflection on the activity students will complete a 3-2-1 in their notes:   + Write down 3 things that you learned about the impact of elections during your conversation.   + Write down 2 questions you still have about elections.   + Write down 1 thing you think you should change about our election process. | * While watching the CrashCourse video teachers may find it helpful to provide students with key terms and concepts that they should be looking for in the video. Pausing the video to allow for discussion and/or note-taking is encouraged. * There are numerous videos and articles teachers could also use to introduce the bill-making process. * Teachers may find that students can more easily complete the flowchart by working with a partner or in a small group. Teachers should be prepared to model the creation of the flowchart for students that are having difficulty. Focused conversation and discussion should be encouraged. * Teachers should provide student pairs with at least five scenarios for them to discuss. Examples of the scenarios are:   + Republican controlled House, Democrat controlled Senate   + Democrat controlled Congress, Republican Governor   + Republican controlled Senate, Republican President |
| **I can explain the role of linkage institutions in American government (USG 3.CC).**   * Teachers will briefly introduce the concept of lobbying to students. This could be done in a mini-lecture, short video, or close read. Students will be assigned the role of a lobbyist hired by an interest group relevant to the issue and proposed solution that they have created earlier in the unit. * Teachers will instruct students to create a memo that explains to the interest group the various factors that could impact this hypothetical bill becoming a law.   + Teachers should allow students to have time in class to research interest groups that would be relevant to their proposed bill. (For example, the National Rifle Association could be a possible interest group for a bill about gun control. The American Academy of Pediatrics could be a possible interest group for a bill about healthcare.)   + Teachers will supply students with a rubric that provides clear expectations for the format and length of the memo, as well as the information within it. The memo should include information on how the media, social media, other interest groups, and elections could possibly impact the passage of the proposed bill. | * Students should be provided time in class as well as outside of school in order to research and develop their memo. Teachers should allow for peer review and feedback, as well as providing individual writing instruction as needed. * Teachers should provide an example of this kind of writing as well as modeling it for students as needed. |
| **I can interpret the impacts of the federal election process within the American government system (USG 3.IP).**   * Teachers will explain that the students are going to participate in a debate with the overarching question being “Should the electoral college be abolished?” Teachers will allow students to research both sides of the debate thoroughly. Students will have access to opinion articles chosen by the teacher, and teachers will provide students time to research on their own. A “Pros/Cons” chart is one method students could use to organize their thoughts. Students should use data from their research to support the information they put in their pro’s/con’s chart. This could be done individually or in partners. * Teachers will organize students into a debate format:   + The teacher breaks the class into four groups: two affirmative, and two negative. The teacher will allow the groups time to summarize their arguments and collect the strongest evidence from their research to support their assigned stance. The students choose a speaker for their group.   + During the first debate, one of affirmative groups and one of the negative group speakers should be placed in the classroom where everyone can hear them clearly.   + The affirmative group is given two minute to present their case. The negative group then receives two minutes to give their case.   + Speakers return to their group and the groups are given five minutes to prepare a rebuttal and summary.   + The speakers return to their position and the negative group is given two minutes to present their rebuttal and summary. The affirmative team is the last to be given two minutes to present their rebuttal and summary.   + At the conclusion of the debate, the two groups that did not participate in this round are given the opportunity to vote on who the winner is.   + Repeat the process for remaining groups. * At the completion of the debate, students will complete an “I used to think \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, but now I think \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.” summary for their thoughts on the Electoral College and its role in our government. | * There are various debate formats and teachers should choose what is best for their classroom. However, if this is the first time teachers have hosted a debate in their classroom, a simple structure is ideal. |

**References**

Understanding Federalism. (n.d.). Retrieved from

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

The Rule of Law and Why It Matters. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/rule-law-and-why-it-matters>

Law, T. (2019, May 15). These Presidents Won the Electoral College But Not Popular Vote. Retrieved from <https://time.com/5579161/presidents-elected-electoral-college/>

Electoral College Fast Facts. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://history.house.gov/Institution/Electoral-College/Electoral-College/>

**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.

[Pew Research Group](https://www.people-press.org/quiz/political-typology/)- Quiz for students to find out their political affiliation.

[I Side With](https://www.isidewith.com/political-quiz)-Quiz for students to find out their political affiliation.

[Advocates for Self-Government](http://www.theadvocates.org/quiz.html)-Quiz for students to find out their political affiliation.

[Pace News Limited](http://www.politicalcompass.org/)-Quiz for students to find out their political affiliation.

[All Sides](https://www.allsides.com/unbiased-balanced-news)- Website that shows all sides politically of an issue and can be used to show media biases.