

High School American Government

HS American Government

Theme 1- Tools of Social Science Inquiry- In order to investigate and draw conclusions about the past, students need to think critically about information as well as evaluate multiple sources of evidence. The following steps of inquiry outline ways of thinking that apply to the study of social studies rather than content to be learned. As part of this process, instruction should apply disciplinary tools as well as use these processes to answer questions and solve problems.

- Ask questions (Why? Why there? Why then? What's the impact of? What's the real story of? What's the significance of?)
- Develop compelling questions and research the past.
- Anticipate and utilize the most useful sources to address their questions.
- Develop and test claims and counter-claims to address their questions.
- Take informed action based on their learning

Strand	1. History: Continuity and Change	2. Government Systems and Principles	3. Geographical Study	4. Economic Concepts	5. People, Groups, and Cultures
Disciplinary Tools	<p>A. Create and use tools to analyze a chronological sequence of related events that happen at the same time.</p> <p>B. Explain connections among historical context and peoples' perspectives at the time.</p> <p>C. Develop a research plan, identify appropriate resources for investigating social studies topics, and create and present a research product which applies an aspect of government to a contemporary issue.</p>	<p>A. Analyze laws, policies, and processes to determine how governmental systems affect individuals and groups in society.</p> <p>B. Distinguish the powers and responsibilities of citizens and institutions to address and solve problems.</p>	<p>A. Create and use maps and other graphic representations in order to explain relationships and reveal patterns or trends about government.</p> <p>B. Analyze the relationship between of the geography of the original 13 colonies on the formation of United States government.</p>	<p>A. Examine the opportunity costs and benefits of economic decisions on society as a whole as well as on individuals and government.</p>	<p>A. Using a government lens, describe how peoples' perspectives shaped the sources/artifacts they created.</p> <p>B. Examine the origins and impact of social structures and stratification on societies and relationships between peoples and governments.</p>

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Strand	<p><i>1. History: Continuity and Change</i></p> <p>D. Using an inquiry lens, develop compelling questions about government, determine helpful resources and consider multiple points of views represented in the resources.</p> <p>E. Analyze the causes and consequences of a specific issue tied to government as well as the challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address the problem.</p>	<p><i>2. Government Systems and Principles</i></p>	<p><i>3. Geographical Study</i></p>	<p><i>4. Economic Concepts</i></p>	<p><i>5. People, Groups, and Cultures</i></p>
Disciplinary Tools					

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Theme 2: Historical Foundations—The foundations of American government were shaped by western ideas which culminated in the 17th and 18th century. Steps taken in creating new governments were based on Enlightenment values of liberty, equality, and justice. The foundations of American government reveal that the experiment of self-rule was not a sudden change brought about by the Declaration of Independence, but a gradual shift in attitude based on social and political experiences.

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Key Concepts and Understandings	<p>A. Trace the evolution of government in the English colonies to explain colonists' expectations for self-rule.</p> <p>B. Analyze the Declaration of Independence to determine the influence of classical and Enlightenment thought on revolutionary ideals.</p> <p>C. Evaluate the extent to which decisions made in the Constitutional Convention were influenced by previous models of government and experiences under British rule.</p>	<p>A. Analyze how the codification of law impacted early civilizations and shaped enduring concepts government, law, and social order.</p> <p>B. Apply the concepts of natural law, social contract, due process of law, and popular sovereignty to explain the purpose and legacy of the Declaration of Independence.</p> <p>C. Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation to explain its failure as a national government.</p>	<p>A. Analyze how geography of North America influenced the governmental systems which developed there.</p>	<p>A. Analyze the impact of economics and economic theories on the formation of United States governmental ideals, principles and structures.</p>	<p>A. Analyze the varying perspectives of individuals and groups to explain emerging divisions and political philosophies as the United States was founded.</p>

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Key Concepts and Understandings	D. Compare and contrast the structure and function of democratic governments and authoritarian governments, noting their impact on people, groups and societies.				

Possible Sources of Study	<p>Primary Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marcus Tullius Cicero, On The Laws, On The Republic (55 B.C.) • Magna Carta (1215) • Mayflower Compact (1620) • Hugo Grotius, The Law of War and Peace (1625) • Fundamental Orders of Connecticut (1639) • Joseph Addison, Cato: A Tragedy (1712) • Trenchard and Gordon, Cato’s Letters (1720 – 1723) • Albany Plan (1754) • Thomas Paine, Common Sense (1776) • Massachusetts State Constitution (1780) • The Articles of Confederation (1781) • The Annapolis Convention Resolution (1786) • The Northwest Ordinance (1787) • John Adams, A Defense of the Constitution of Government of the United States of America (1787) 	<p>Secondary Sources:</p> <p>Roger William, On Religious Liberty (2008)</p> <p>Carl J. Richard, The Founders and the Classics (1994)</p>
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Theme 3: Structure of Government—Upon gaining independence from Great Britain the newly formed nation, governed by the Articles of Confederation, seemed ready to collapse. The creation of the American Constitution developed as a necessity due to the weaknesses found in that first government. The convention resulted in many compromises which shaped its structure and function. Debates and propaganda highlighted significant differences in perspectives on the role of government and state power. These compromises and debates created a Federal government which would change and expand over time as each generation applied the document to fit the needs of the nation.

Strand	1. History: Continuity and Change	2. Government Systems and Principles	3. Geographical Study	4. Economic Concepts	5. People, Groups, and Cultures
Key Concepts and Understandings	<p>A. Explain how the central debates during the Constitutional Convention were resolved.</p> <p>B. Explain how concerns over a strong central government were addressed to provide for the ratification of the Constitution.</p> <p>C. Trace significant changes in the role, powers, and size of the three branches of government over time.</p> <p>D. Trace the changing relationship between state and federal governmental power.</p>	<p>A. Apply the concepts of due process of law, popular sovereignty, rule of law, representation, and federalism to explain the purpose and legacy of the Constitution.</p> <p>B. Analyze the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution to determine their success in implementing the ideals of the Declaration of Independence</p> <p>C. Analyze the unique roles and responsibilities of the three branches of government to determine how they function and interact.</p> <p>D. Describe and give examples of how the constitutional principle of checks and balances limits the power of government and leaders.</p>		<p>A. Compare trade, monetary policy, and taxation under the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution.</p> <p>B. Analyze the changing roles of government in the economy throughout United States history.</p>	<p>A. Analyze the perspectives of individuals and groups regarding the development of the American governmental system to explain emerging divisions and political philosophies.</p> <p>B. Evaluate the intended and unintended impact of government decision-making on individuals, groups, and society.</p>

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Key Concepts and Understandings		<p>E. Explain how the Bill of Rights and subsequent amendments limit the power of government, protect individual liberty, and provide for equality under the law.</p> <p>F. Compare the structure and functions of federal, state, and local government.</p>			
Possible Sources of Study	<p>Primary Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Madison, Hamilton, Jay, The Federalist Papers (1787-1788) • The Anti-Federalist Papers (1787-1788) • The US Constitution and Constitutional Amendments (1787-) • Missouri Constitution (1945) • Local city/county charters • James Madison: Notes on the Debates in the Federal Convention, Vices of the Political System of the United States [Articles of Confederation] (1787) • Seminal Supreme Court Cases 		<p>Secondary Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joseph Story, Commentaries on the Constitution (1833) 		

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Theme 4: Government in Action - The ability to be civically engaged relies upon an understanding of the historical foundations, structure and functions of American government. Students should recognize the ways in which decisions are made and how they might, in turn, influence the government. In achieving this, the student will be equipped with the rationale, knowledge, and skills necessary to realize the promise of American ideals.

Strand	1. History: Continuity and Change	2. Government Systems and Principles	3. Geographical Study	4. Economic Concepts	5. People, Groups, and Cultures
Key Concepts and Understandings		<p>A. Evaluate the role and influence of contemporary political parties on government.</p> <p>B. Explain a citizen’s legal obligations, as well as opportunities for, engaging with and using local, state, and federal governments to shape decision-making.</p> <p>C. Compare the various processes pertaining to the selection of political leaders at the federal, state, and local level.</p>	<p>A. Analyze state and federal electoral results to determine the influence of social, regional and demographic characteristics.</p>	<p>A. Analyze the role that people, businesses, and government play in taxation and spending required to maintain the public good.</p>	<p>A. Explain how political parties and interest groups reflect diverse perspectives and are influenced by individuals.</p> <p>B. Evaluate factors that shape public opinion on elections and policy issues.</p> <p>C. Predict the consequences that occur when institutions fail to meet the needs of individuals and groups, and when individuals fail to carry out their personal responsibilities.</p>
Possible Sources of Study	<p>Primary Sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Election Maps and exit polling • Party Platforms • US Census Data • Political Advertisements • Presidential Debates • Public Opinion Polls <p style="text-align: right;">Secondary Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political Identity Quizzes 				

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