



United States Government Alignment Guide

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Purpose and Use

The development and revision of the Alignment Guides is the work of South Carolina educators. The Alignment Guides are created to assist educators in aligning all components of the 2019 South Carolina Social Studies College- and Career- Ready Standards.

Components of the Document

Course Themes

K–12 instruction centers on the themes of history, economics, geography, and civics and government. While the standards in the primary grades are these actual four themes, subsequent courses are built on sub-themes of the original four.

Course Themes	Description
Civic Engagement	The Civic Engagement theme encourages the study of and the importance of active participation in the constitutional democracy of the United States. Active civic engagement reflects personal values and a society's prioritization of civil rights and responsibilities. American constitutional democracy functions upon the key ideas of balance of powers, the establishment of government by the consent of the governed, and federalism. These principles guide governmental leaders in creating and enforcing laws that support fundamental American political values.
Political Values and Institutions	The Political Values and Institutions theme encourages the study of founding documents and philosophies, the socio-political context in which they were created and their importance in the continuing development of the constitutional democracy found in the United States. A practical knowledge of laws, politics, and governmental structure at the local, state, national, and global level is important in the development of an informed, involved citizenry.
Process of Law	The Process of Law theme encourages the study of the creation, execution, and interpretation of law in the United States political system. Founding principles guide the public policies developed to address new challenges and issues. By design, effective governmental decision making at the local, state, national, and global levels is a complex process that involves compromise and consensus building.

Course At a Glance

The Course at a Glance provides teachers with a visual overview of the course components, including the progression of topics for each indicator.

STANDARD 1 FOUNDATIONS OF DEMOCRACY	STANDARD 2 GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE	STANDARD 3 THE POLITICAL PROCESS	STANDARD 4 CITIZENSHIP
1.ER: Historical and Philosophical Influences on the American Constitutional Democracy	2.ER: Functions and Interdependence of the Three Branches (Articles I-III)	3.ER: Public Policy and Policymaking	4.ER: Immigration and Citizenship
1.IN: Founding Documents and Constitutional Principles	2.IN: Federalism and the Distribution of Power	3.IN: Impact of Public Opinion and Political Ideology on Public Policy	4.IN: Conflicting Rights and Responsibilities (Civil Liberties and Civil Rights)
1.CC: Formation, Debate, and Ratification of the Constitution	2.CC: Organization and Functions of Government in South Carolina	3.CC: Role of Linkage Institutions	4.CC: Expansion of Individual Rights
1.IP: Constitutional Principles in Practice	2.IP: Rule of Law and its Role in the American Political System	3.IP: The Electoral Process and its Impact on Government	4.IP: Civic Participation and Responsible Public Discourse

Standard Overview

The Standard Overview provides the Key Concept, Topics at a Glance, Enduring Understanding, and the Identified Course Theme for the entire standard.

Indicator Overview

The Indicator Overview includes the Indicator and Topic, Possible Questions for Inquiry, Content list, and Sample Tasks. Possible Questions for Inquiry related to course content are provided with each indicator. A Content list containing the suggested content associated with the indicator is accompanied by Sample Tasks to demonstrate the relationship between the content and the skill. While not considered to be a checklist, the content and skills outlined in this document should all be explored with students. Additionally, Sample Tasks, Cognitive Complexity Examples, Possible Terminology to Support Teaching Skills, and Example Question/Sentence Stems are included for instructional guidance to support teaching the civics and government thinking skill.

Teachers can use excerpts from sources identified in the Content list as (stimuli) and in the Example Question/Sentence Stems. Depth of Knowledge (DOK)/Cognitive Complexity Examples help to convey information about the expected depth and breadth of the content/skill for each indicator of the standards. Teachers have the flexibility to include additional related content that meets the needs of their students.

Standard 1 Overview: Foundations of Democracy

Standard 1: Demonstrate an understanding of the fundamental historical and philosophical principles and ideas that led to the development of the American constitutional democracy.

Topics At a Glance	Enduring Understanding
Key Concept: Foundations of Democracy • 1.ER: Historical and Philosophical Influences on the American Constitutional Democracy • 1.IN: Founding Documents and Constitutional Principles • 1.CC: Formation, Debate, and Ratification of the Constitution • 1.IP: Constitutional Principles in Practice	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.

Standard 1 Course Theme:

The theme identified for Standard 1 is as follows:

Identified Course Theme	Description
Political Values and Institutions	The Political Values and Institutions theme encourages the study of founding documents and philosophies, the socio-political context in which they were created and their importance in the continuing development of the constitutional democracy found in the United States. A practical knowledge of laws, politics, and governmental structure at the local, state, national, and global level is important in the development of an informed, involved citizenry.

USG.1.ER:

Analyze the philosophical influences on core political principles in the American constitutional democracy.

This indicator was developed to encourage inquiry into the historical and philosophical origins of American government and the purpose of government in a democracy. This includes inquiry into the legacies of Greek democracy and Roman republicanism, as well as the impact of Enlightenment thinkers on the formation of America's constitutional democracy.

Topic: Influences on the American Constitutional Democracy

Possible Questions for Inquiry:

- Why did the Framers blend ideas from multiple sources when writing the Constitution?
- What do the principles included in the foundational documents reveal about the purpose of government in a democracy?

Content	Sample Tasks
Founding Principles • Due process • Natural rights • Representative government • Republicanism • Rule of law • Separation of powers	• Define core political principles and explain how they relate to one another in shaping American constitutional democracy. • Choose one American political principle and explain how philosophical or historical influences contributed to its development in the U.S. Constitution. • Create a concept map linking English legal traditions to American principles such as due process and rule of law, with annotations explaining the connection.
Historical and Philosophical Influences Classical Roots • Greek democracy • Roman republicanism	• Compare Greek democracy, Roman republicanism, and Enlightenment ideas by explaining how each influenced American principles such as representative government and rule of law.

Enlightenment Thinkers • John Locke • Montesquieu • Rousseau • Voltaire • Hobbes • Blackstone • Jefferson (adaptation of Enlightenment ideas)	• Explain how Enlightenment ideas about natural rights, government authority, and individual freedoms shaped the core political principles of the U.S. government. • Describe Montesquieu’s ideas about separation of powers and show how they influenced the structure of the U.S. government. • Summarize Rousseau’s concept of the social contract and analyze how this idea contributed to American beliefs about popular sovereignty. • Define Voltaire’s views on freedom of speech and religion, and evaluate how these ideas relate to American constitutional protections. • Discuss Thomas Hobbes’s views on government and security and clarify how these ideas help explain the purpose of government in the United States. • Interpret Blackstone’s ideas on common law and trace how they shaped American understandings of legal rights and judicial authority. • Show how John Locke’s ideas about natural rights influenced Thomas Jefferson’s writing in the Declaration of Independence.
Foundational Documents and Legal Traditions • Magna Carta (1215) • English Bill of Rights (1689) • Influence of English Civil Law • Common Sense (1776) • Declaration of Independence (1776) • Articles of Confederation (1781)	• Develop a timeline that interprets how ideas from the Magna Carta, the English Bill of Rights, and key colonial documents (i.e., Common Sense, the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation) influenced the founding principles of the U.S. government, explaining how each contributed to American political thought.

DOK/Cognitive Complexity Example:

Content/Topic	Low	Medium	High
Social Contract	What is the Social Contract Theory?	Compare similarities and differences in Hobbes' and Locke's ideas on the Social Contract Theory.	What evidence supports the claim that the U.S. Constitution is an example of a Social Contract?

Possible Terminology to Support Teaching Establish Relationships:

- associated
- cause
- comparison
- connection
- contrast
- correlation
- difference
- effect
- impact
- influence
- interaction
- link
- outcome
- relationship
- result
- sequence
- similarity

Example Question/Sentence Stems:

- Explain how _____ relates to _____ and why that relationship is significant.
- Describe how _____ influenced _____ and what that influence reveals.
- Compare _____ and _____, by explaining how they are connected.
- Explain how _____ and _____ interact to shape _____.
- Analyze how changes in _____ affected _____ over time.
- Explain how _____ demonstrates the connection between _____ and _____.

USG.1.IN:

Interpret founding documents and principles that led to the creation of the American constitutional democracy.

This indicator was developed to encourage inquiry into the historical and philosophical origins of the American constitutional government presented in the Founding Documents, which provide the structure and framework on which the nation is governed. This indicator also encourages inquiry into the ideas that influenced the Framers of the Constitution and their contributions to the creation of the Constitution.

Topic: Founding Documents and Constitutional Principles

Possible Questions for Inquiry:

- How did political and social experiences in the colonies shape the creation of the American constitutional democracy?
- In what ways did economic challenges after the Revolution affect the push for a new framework of government?

Content	Sample Tasks
Founding Documents • Magna Carta (1215) • Declaration of Independence (1776) • Articles of Confederation (1781) • Constitution (1787) • Bill of Rights (1791) • <i>The Federalist Papers</i> [4, 10, 37, 47, 51, 84] (1787-88)	• Analyze how principles found in the Magna Carta compare to principles found in the Declaration of Independence and explain what those comparisons show about how ideas of government evolved. • Read a section of the Articles of Confederation and conclude what it shows about the powers and limitations of the early national government. • Interpret how the Preamble of the Constitution reflects the principle of popular sovereignty. • Determine how the Bill of Rights limits government power while protecting individual freedoms. • Choose one right from the Bill of Rights and summarize what the founders intended to protect. • Examine excerpts from Federalist No. 51 and interpret how Madison uses checks and balances to explain the protection of individual liberty.

Founding Principles • Due process • Natural rights • Representative government • Republicanism • Rule of law • Social contract	• Analyze how the Fifth or Fourteenth Amendment demonstrates the principle of due process and explain what this reveals about the government’s responsibility to protect individual rights. • Identify an example of natural rights in a founding document by summarizing how the text shows the belief that rights exist independently over government. • Examine evidence from founding documents to show how the support the creation of a representative government in the U.S. • Determine how the Constitution reflects the idea of republicanism by limiting the concentration of powers and emphasizing government accountability to the people. • Describe how the principle of rule of law is demonstrated in the Constitution’s Supremacy Clause. • Evaluate evidence from the Declaration of Independence to show how it reflects the idea that a social contract exists between people and the government.
Basic Principles of the Constitution • Checks and balances • Constitutionalism • Federalism • Limited government • Popular sovereignty • Separation of powers	• Interpret how a specific example of checks and balances in the Constitution limits the power of one branch of government. • Analyze a passage from the Constitution to show how it establishes a framework all government officials must follow. • Read the Tenth Amendment and determine how it divides powers between the federal government and the states. • Evaluate evidence from the Constitution to explain how the structure of the new government reflects the Framers’ intentions to limit government power. • Locate a sentence in the Constitution that says something the government is not allowed to do and summarize how that rule limits the government’s power. • Select a line from the Constitution that assigns a specific power to one branch of government and interpret how this demonstrates the separation of powers.

DOK/Cognitive Complexity Example:

Content/Topic	Low	Medium	High
Founding Documents	What are <i>The Federalist Papers</i> ?	What event(s) motivated the authors to write and publish <i>The Federalist Papers</i> ?	How do the arguments for ratifying the U.S. Constitution outlined in the <i>Federalist Papers</i> continue to influence modern interpretations of federal power?

Possible Terminology to Support Teaching Interpret:

- analyze
- assess
- attribute
- classify
- decode
- deduce
- evaluate
- examine
- identify
- infer
- interpret
- investigate
- justify
- observe
- scrutinize
- synthesize
- trace
- verify

Example Question/Sentence Stems:

- What does the evidence from _____ suggest about _____?
- How does the perspective in _____ influence the interpretation of _____?
- Explain what _____ reveals about _____ and why that matters.
- Analyze the meaning of _____ in the context of _____.
- What conclusions can you draw from _____ based on the data provided?
- How does bias in _____ affect the interpretation of _____?

USG.1.CC:

Analyze the major debates and compromises underlying the formation and ratification of the Constitution.

This indicator was developed to encourage inquiry into the crucial events and conflicts that led to the ratification of the United States Constitution. This indicator also encourages inquiry into the major debates and compromises at the Constitutional Convention and how economic, political, and social goals impacted the formation of the new government.

Topic: Formation, Debate, and Ratification of the Constitution

Possible Questions for Inquiry:

- Why were compromises necessary to resolve conflicts among states during the Constitutional Convention?
- How did debates over federal versus state power emerge from earlier political experiences?

Content	Sample Tasks
Constitutional Convention: Plans for Representation and Structure • Virginia Plan ○ Bicameral ○ Strong national government • New Jersey Plan ○ Unicameral ○ Strengthening Articles Major Compromises • Connecticut Compromise (Great Compromise) • Three-Fifths Compromise • Commerce and Slave Trade Compromise	• Determine how the Virginia Plan and New Jersey Plan differed in their approach to representation and conclude why a compromise was necessary. • Assess the problem the Connecticut Compromise was designed to solve, explain how it balanced the interests of large and small states, and evaluate its long-term impact on representation. • Explain the purpose of the Three-Fifths Compromise and conclude how it affected representation in Congress. • Describe the issue behind the Commerce and Slave Trade Compromise and determine why Southern states accepted its terms. • Develop a well-supported argument explaining how the Connecticut Compromise, Commerce and Slave Trade Compromise, and Three-Fifths Compromise addressed conflicting economic, social, and political interests at the Constitutional Convention.

Ratification Debates - Federalists vs. Antifederalists - Debate over the Bill of Rights	- Describe one main argument made by the Federalists and determine how it supported their case for ratification of the Constitution. - Explain one main argument made by the Anti-Federalists and conclude why it led them to demand a Bill of Rights.
Foundational Documents <i>The Federalist Papers</i> [including but not limited to 10,37,47,51,84] - Brutus 1 - Bill of Rights	- Examine the central message of Federalist No. 10 and show how it addressed concerns about factions in the new government. - Summarize the main concern expressed in Brutus I and determine why Anti-Federalists feared an overly powerful national government. - Justify why the Bill of Rights was added after ratification and conclude how it helped resolve the debate between Federalists and Anti-Federalists.

DOK/Cognitive Complexity Example:

Content/Topic	Low	Medium	High
Representation of large vs. small states	What was the main difference between the Virginia Plan and the New Jersey plan?	Why did small states oppose the Virginia Plan, and what concerns did this raise about representation in the new national government?	To what extent did the conflict between large and small states over representation shape the compromises made at the Constitutional Convention, and how did these compromises influence support for ratifying the Constitution?

Possible Terminology to Support Teaching Communicate and Conclude:

- articulate
- argue
- assert
- clarify
- conclude
- convey
- critique
- elaborate
- explain
- express
- formulate
- illustrate
- justify
- negotiate
- persuade
- propose
- summarize

Example Question/Sentence Stems:

- Present an argument that supports _____ using evidence from _____.
- How would you justify _____ as a solution to _____?
- Summarize your position on _____ and explain how you reached that conclusion.
- What counterarguments might challenge _____, and how would you respond?
- Explain how your conclusion about _____ is supported by _____.
- Propose an alternative to _____ and defend your reasoning.

USG.1.IP:

Investigate and communicate the importance of constitutional principles and fundamental values and apply them in abstract and real-world situations.

This indicator was developed to encourage inquiry into how the American idea of constitutional government has distinctively shaped American society. Further inquiry into this indicator focuses on the extent to which the Constitution is a living document, capable of being altered over time as needed, and how these changes may personally impact students.

Topic: Constitutional Principles in Practice

Possible Questions for Inquiry:

- How does the Constitution enable political participation from individuals, groups, and states?
- How have changes to the Constitution expanded or limited political participation over time, and how do its ideas affect issues in the world and your life today?

Content	Sample Tasks
Basic Principles of the Constitution: • Checks and balances • Constitutionalism • Federalism • Limited government • Popular sovereignty • Separation of powers • Judicial review • Amendment process	• Investigate a national policy issue and explain how one branch used checks and balances to influence or limit the actions of another branch in that situation. • Analyze how federalism affects a local or state law and propose a recommendation for addressing an issue related to that rule. • Debate whether federalism or limited government should guide policy in a real-world scenario and justify your position with constitutional principles. • Investigate recent statewide or local election issues, such as a school board vote, and explain how popular sovereignty is demonstrated through the voters' role in the decision. • Review a Supreme Court decision involving judicial review and evaluate how the ruling affects citizens today. • Examine a constitutional amendment and explain one way it changed the powers of the government.

Foundational Principles: • Due process • Natural rights • Property rights • Representative government • Republicanism • Rule of law • Social contract	• Investigate a situation where due process and the rule of law protected someone's rights and propose a civic action to ensure government officials continue to follow these protections. • Identify a real or simulated situation where natural or property rights were challenged, explain how the social contract guides government response, and propose a civic action to protect those rights. • Analyze a recent local or state election to show how representative government and republicanism work together, and recommend one way citizens can increase participation or influence the decision-making process.
Fundamental Values/Rights • Liberty • Equality • Justice • Individual rights/freedoms	• Identify a situation in the news where two values conflict and describe how people disagreed. • Choose a current issue and explain which American value is at the center of the debate. (i.e., school dress code vs. the value of individual rights) • Investigate a real-world event and explain how competing values influenced public opinion or policy decisions.
Application to Real-World and Contemporary Contexts	• Select a current event and describe one constitutional principle you see in action. • Identify a recent Supreme Court case or debate and describe how it shows the Constitution being interpreted today. • Choose an amendment and explain how it affects something in everyday life. • Explore age-appropriate current events and how they affect our lives in the present and predict if and how they will have an effect in the future.

DOK/Cognitive Complexity Example:

Content/Topic	Low	Medium	High
Popular Sovereignty	What is popular sovereignty?	Popular sovereignty is not explicitly mentioned in the constitution. Can you provide examples of this principle at work?	How does the process for amending the Constitution reflect the idea of popular sovereignty, and what are some potential challenges associated with the process?

Possible Terminology to Support Teaching Informed Participation:

- advocate
- collaborate
- contribute
- decide
- engage
- implement
- organize
- participate
- prioritize
- recommend
- represent
- respond
- strategize
- support
- volunteer
- vote

Example Question/Sentence Stems:

- How would you apply your knowledge of _____ to make a decision about _____?
- What steps would you take to engage in _____ effectively?
- Explain how participating in _____ can influence _____.
- How would you prioritize actions to address _____ in your community?
- What strategies could you use to advocate for _____ at the local or national level?
- How does informed participation in _____ contribute to _____?

Standard 2 Overview: Government Structure

Standard 2: Demonstrate an understanding of the structure and functions of government at all levels in the United States.

Topics At a Glance	Enduring Understanding
Key Concept: Government Structure • 2.ER: Functions and Interdependence of the Three Branches (Articles I-III) • 2.IN: Federalism and the Distribution of Power • 2.CC: Organization and Functions of Government in South Carolina • 2.IP: Rule of Law and its Role in the American Political System	In American constitutional democracy, power is widely distributed and checks prevent one branch of government from becoming too powerful and seizing powers from the other branches of government. National, state, and local governments are in positions where they must all compete and cooperate in order to govern effectively.

Standard 2 Course Theme:

The theme identified for Standard 2 is as follows:

Identified Course Theme	Description
Political Values and Institutions	The Political Values and Institutions theme encourages the study of founding documents and philosophies, the socio-political context in which they were created and their importance in the continuing development of the constitutional democracy found in the United States. A practical knowledge of laws, politics, and governmental structure at the local, state, national, and global level is important in the development of an informed, involved citizenry.

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.

This indicator was developed to encourage inquiry into the formal and informal structure, roles, and operations of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the national government, including the specific powers of each branch. Additionally, this indicator promotes inquiry into the extent to which the three branches are interdependent.

Topic: Functions and Interdependence of the Three Branches (Articles I–III)

Possible Question for Inquiry:

- How do the branches cooperate and collaborate to achieve shared goals?

Content	Sample Tasks
Articles I–III: Constitutional foundation of the branches	• Evaluate how the distinct powers and responsibilities granted to the branches in Articles I–III require them to use shared powers and work together effectively.
Legislative Branch (Article I) • Organization: House of Representatives vs. Senate, Constitutional requirements for office • Core responsibilities: law-making process, representation of the people and the states • Enumerated powers: impeachment (House impeaches; Senate tries), power of the purse, Interstate Commerce clause, Necessary and Proper (Elastic) clause • Non-Legislative powers: Senate confirmation of presidential nominees, Congressional investigations, and oversight of the executive branch	• Compare the powers, roles, and responsibilities of the House of Representatives and the Senate and conclude how the differences affect lawmaking and representation. • Explain how the requirements for congressional office influence legislators’ roles within the lawmaking process. • Connect the impeachment power of Congress to its role in checking the executive branch and judicial authority. • Examine how the Necessary and Proper Clause expands congressional power and explain how this shapes the balance of power in the federal system. • Analyze how Congress’s law-making powers relate to its non-legislative powers, such as investigations and confirmation of executive appointments.

• Supreme Court interpretations of Legislative power ○ <i>McCulloch v. Maryland</i> (1819) ○ <i>Gibbons v. Ogden</i> (1824)	• Using the Supreme Court’s decision in <i>McCulloch v. Maryland</i>, explain how the ruling illustrates the relationship among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches in defining and applying the federal government’s authority to regulate interstate commerce. • Compare the impact of <i>McCulloch v. Maryland</i> and <i>Gibbons v. Ogden</i> on congressional power over commerce.
Executive Branch (Article II) • Authority and organization ○ Constitutional requirements for office ○ Office of the President as a single executive • Roles and responsibilities: chief executive, commander in chief, chief diplomat, chief legislator, chief of state	• Contrast the qualifications for the presidency with those of Congress and describe how the differences affect each branch’s role. • Evaluate how the Executive Branch functions within the system of checks and balances by describing its interactions with the legislative and judicial branches. • Explain how the President’s role as a single executive and chief of state shapes the relationship between the executive branch and the public. • Describe how the roles of the President as commander in chief and chief diplomat interact during times of war. • Analyze how the President’s role as chief legislator influences the relationship between the executive and legislative branches. • Evaluate how the President’s role as chief of state differs from other executive roles and explain why this role matters for national unity and public perception.

• Powers: executive order, executive privilege, war powers • Interdependence and checks ○ Veto power and Congressional override ○ Appointment of federal officials with Senate confirmation ○ Informal expansion of executive power	• Connect the use of executive orders to the expansion of executive power over time. • Explore how executive privilege affects the relationship between the executive branch and the other branches of government. • Describe how checks and balances limit the President's ability to exercise war powers. • Explain how the President's appointment and veto powers require cooperation with Congress and demonstrate interdependence between the branches.
Judicial Branch (Article III) • Authority and organization ○ Establishment of the Supreme Court ○ Creation of lower federal courts by Congress ○ Types of federal courts • Roles and responsibilities ○ Interpretation of the Constitution and federal law ○ Resolution of civil and criminal cases • Judicial power and philosophy ○ Judicial review ▪ <i>Marbury v. Madison</i> (1803) ○ Judicial activism vs. judicial restraint • Interdependence and checks ○ Judicial appointments by the President with Senate confirmation ○ Congressional authority over court structure and jurisdiction	• Describe how Article III's creation of the Supreme Court establishes its authority within the federal court system. • Determine how lifetime appointments for Supreme Court justices supports independence and affects the balance of power among the branches. • Evaluate how the judicial branch's responsibility to interpret federal law shapes its relationship with Congress, which writes the laws. • Analyze how the federal courts' role in resolving civil and criminal cases affects their interactions with the executive branch, which enforces the law. • Explain how judicial review, as established in <i>Marbury v. Madison</i>, shapes the relationship between the judicial and legislative branches. • Compare judicial activism and judicial restraint in shaping the relationship between the courts and the other branches. • Trace how the appointment process for federal judges works in the system of checks and balances. • Examine how jurisdiction determines the relationship between federal courts and state courts.

DOK/Cognitive Complexity Example:

Content/Topic	Low	Medium	High
Checks and Balances	Identify examples of checks and balances in the United States government.	Explain how the _____ branch can check the power of the _____ branch.	Does the system of checks and balances work as the Framers intended? Explain your answer.

Possible Terminology to Support Teaching Establish Relationships:

- associated
- cause
- comparison
- connection
- contrast
- correlation
- difference
- effect
- impact
- influence
- interaction
- link
- outcome
- relationship
- result
- sequence
- similarity

Example Question/Sentence Stems:

- Explain how _____ relates to _____ and why that relationship is significant.
- Describe how _____ influenced _____ and what that influence reveals.
- Compare _____ and _____, by explaining how they are connected.
- Explain how _____ and _____ interact to shape _____.
- Analyze how changes in _____ affected _____ over time.
- Explain how _____ demonstrates the connection between _____ and _____.

USG.2.IN:

Analyze how power and responsibility are distributed, shared, and limited in the American constitutional government.

This indicator was developed to encourage inquiry into how the principles of American democracy are reflected in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, as well as in the organization and actions of federal, state, and local governmental entities. Further inquiry encourages discourse on how the interpretation and application of American democratic principles continue to evolve over time.

Topic: Federalism and the Distribution of Power

Possible Questions for Inquiry:

- What are the roles and responsibilities of each branch and level of government, and how do those functions operate in real-world situations?
- How does the role of federalism apply to my life at the federal, state, and local levels of government?

Content	Sample Tasks
Distribution and Limitation of Power • Articles I-III • 10th Amendment • Necessary and Proper clause (Elastic clause) • Supremacy clause • Interstate Commerce clause • Full Faith and Credit clause (Article IV)	• Interpret how Articles I-III divide government authority and explain how this separation limits the concentration of power. • Determine how the 10th Amendment limits the federal government and provide an example of a power reserved to the states. • Use an example to summarize how Congress has used the Necessary and Proper Clause to expand its power over time. • Examine the Supremacy Clause to show how it limits state power by making federal law superior when conflicts arise. • Analyze the Interstate Commerce Clause to show how it distributes power by granting Congress authority over economic activity that crosses state boundaries. • Review two state court cases involving the Full Faith and Credit Clause; assess how this clause promotes unity among states.

Types of Constitutional Powers • Delegated powers: enumerated (expressed), implied, inherent • Reserved powers • Concurrent powers • Powers denied	• Identify an enumerated power found in Article I and interpret how the Necessary and Proper Clause allows Congress to exercise implied powers. • Analyze a scenario involving reserved powers and explain how the 10th Amendment limits federal authority. • Evaluate a conflict over concurrent powers (e.g., taxation) and explain how constitutional principles guide resolution of overlapping authority. • Review a historical example of powers denied to the states and interpret why these limitations protect national unity.
Federalism: Shared and Competing Power Across Levels of Government • Intergovernmental relationships ○ Interstate compacts ○ Extradition • Grants-in-aid as tools of influence ○ Categorical grants ○ Block grants • Tensions and negotiations between national and state government	• Analyze a recent interstate compact and explain how it demonstrates cooperation among states within a federal system. • Interpret a case study involving extradition and explain how constitutional principles resolve disputes between states. • Examine a chart of federal grants (i.e., categorical, block, project) and argue which type best balances federal and state interests. • Provide an example where federal power/law was limited, and state law prevailed.
Shared and Limited Powers Within the National Government • Legislative branch • Executive branch • Judicial branch	• Explain how the veto, override, and impeachment processes illustrate shared lawmaking power among branches. • Summarize how executive orders, war powers, or executive privilege demonstrate both the expansion and limitation of executive authority. • Interpret how judicial review functions as a constitutional check on legislative and executive actions.

Constitutional Change - Formal amendment process - Informal amendments (i.e., judicial interpretation, legislative action, executive practice)	- Compare the formal amendment process with an example of informal constitutional change and explain how each alters the distribution of power. - Determine how judicial interpretation has reshaped constitutional meaning over time.
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DOK/Cognitive Complexity Example:

Content/Topic	Low	Medium	High
Federalism	What is the basic definition of federalism?	Explain how the Framers included the idea of federalism throughout the writing of the Constitution.	Describe how the meaning and practice of federalism have changed over time in the United States.

Possible Terminology to Support Teaching Interpret:

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> analyze assess attribute classify decode deduce | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evaluate examine identify infer interpret investigate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> justify observe scrutinize synthesize trace verify |
|--|--|---|

Example Question/Sentence Stems:

- What does the evidence from _____ suggest about _____?
- How does the perspective in _____ influence the interpretation of _____?
- Explain what _____ reveals about _____ and why that matters.
- Analyze the meaning of _____ in the context of _____.
- What conclusions can you draw from _____ based on the data provided?
- How does bias in _____ affect the interpretation of _____?

USG.2.CC:

Explain how governments in South Carolina are organized and how they function in the American constitutional government.

This indicator was developed to encourage inquiry into how state and local governments are organized and how they function under the American constitutional government. This indicator encourages further inquiry into how federalism provides for several levels of government supported by many state and local officials.

Topic: Organization and Functions of Government in South Carolina

Possible Questions for Inquiry:

- Why were responsibilities divided among federal and state governments when designing the U.S. system of government?
- In what ways did historical debates over authority and control shape the balance of power between national and state governments?

Content	Sample Tasks
South Carolina's Role in the Constitutional System	• Describe how federalism shapes the role of South Carolina within the federal government and conclude whether this strengthens or limits state authority. • Analyze how federal mandates impact South Carolina's responsibilities and argue whether they are fair or burdensome.

Organization of South Carolina State Government • South Carolina Constitution • Legislative branch ○ General Assembly: House of Representatives and Senate • Executive branch ○ Governor ○ Executive agencies • Judicial branch ○ Supreme Court of South Carolina ○ Circuit courts	• Contrast the structure of the Federal government with that of South Carolina and explain how each reflects constitutional principles. • Research the South Carolina Constitution and analyze how it reflects the core principles of American constitutional government. • Evaluate the effectiveness of South Carolina's three-branch structure and determine whether it adequately limits the concentration of power. • Debate the effectiveness of the General Assembly's bicameral structure in representing citizens' interests. • Compare the roles of the House of Representatives and Senate in lawmaking and conclude which chamber has greater influence on state policy. • Analyze the governor's powers and propose reforms to strengthen or limit executive authority. • Investigate how executive agencies enforce laws and argue whether they have too much or too little autonomy. • Explain the role of the Supreme Court of South Carolina in interpreting state laws and debate how its rulings affect state governance, using evidence from at least one real or hypothetical court case.
Functions of South Carolina State Government • Lawmaking at the state level • Enforcement of laws by state and local agencies • Judicial interpretation of state laws • Taxation, budgeting, and spending	• Investigate the lawmaking process at the state level and argue whether it promotes transparency and citizen participation. • Evaluate how state and local agencies enforce laws and propose solutions to improve efficiency. • Analyze judicial interpretation of state laws and assess its role in shaping public policy. • Evaluate South Carolina's taxation and budgeting practices and argue whether they reflect the state's priorities and values.

Local Governments in South Carolina - County governments: County councils - Municipal governments: mayors, city councils - Special purpose districts: School boards, Utilities and service districts - State authority over local governments (Dillon's Rule)	- Compare the roles of county councils, mayors, and city councils, and conclude which level of local leadership is most responsive to community needs. - Assess how special purpose districts (such as school boards or utilities) function and argue whether they should have greater or more limited authority. - Evaluate how Dillon's Rule shows that local governments in South Carolina get their powers from the state government.
Functions of Local Governments - Provide public services - Local law enforcement and administration - Local taxation and budgeting - Implementation of state and federal policies at the local level	- Analyze how local governments provide services and enforce laws and conclude whether these responsibilities are best handled at the local or state level. - Explain how local governments collect and use tax revenue and determine whether the current budget meets the community's most important needs. - Research the responsibilities of county or municipal officials and argue whether they effectively address local issues.
Fiscal Relationships Across Levels of Government - State and local sources of revenue - Federal grants to state and local governments - Role of funding in shaping intergovernmental relationships	- Explain how South Carolina's state and local governments raise revenue and determine which source is most important for meeting community needs. - Describe how federal grants support state or local programs in South Carolina and conclude whether the programs could operate effectively without this funding. - Analyze how funding decisions between federal, state, and local governments shape their working relationships and debate which level holds the most influence.
Supreme Court Cases <i>Gibbons v. Ogden</i> (1824) <i>McCulloch v. Maryland</i> (1819)	- Research <i>Gibbons v. Ogden</i> and argue how its interpretation of federal power affects South Carolina's ability to regulate economic activity. - Analyze <i>McCulloch v. Maryland</i> and conclude its significance for state-federal relations today.

DOK/Cognitive Complexity Example:

Content/Topic	Low	Medium	High
State Government	Who is the governor?	What is the role of each house in the State General Assembly?	How do the governor and General Assembly work together to accomplish goals each legislative session?

Possible Terminology to Support Teaching Communicate and Conclude:

- articulate
- argue
- assert
- clarify
- conclude
- convey
- critique
- elaborate
- explain
- express
- formulate
- illustrate
- justify
- negotiate
- persuade
- propose
- summarize

Example Question/Sentence Stems:

- Present an argument that supports _____ using evidence from _____.
- How would you justify _____ as a solution to _____?
- Summarize your position on _____ and explain how you reached that conclusion.
- What counterarguments might challenge _____, and how would you respond?
- Explain how your conclusion about _____ is supported by _____.
- Propose an alternative to _____ and defend your reasoning.

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.

This indicator was developed to encourage inquiry into how the U.S. Constitution shapes the actions of governments and politics, draws its authority from the people, and defines the extent and limits of government power and the rights of citizens. This indicator also promotes inquiry into the reasons particular laws have been passed and the role of the federal and state judiciary system to resolve arising controversies.

Topic: Rule of Law and its Role in the American Political System

Possible Questions for Inquiry:

- How does the rule of law protect individual rights and limit government power?
- How does the rule of law shape political decision-making and hold leaders accountable in a democracy?

Content	Sample Tasks
Rule of Law • Impact on government power and implementation of laws/policies	• Explain how the rule of law limits government power and propose one action citizens can take to ensure it is upheld in their community.
Constitutional Foundations • Articles I-III • Full Faith and Credit clause • Interstate Commerce clause • Necessary and Proper clause (Elastic) • Supremacy clause • Bill of Rights	• Compare the Full Faith and Credit Clause to the Interstate Commerce Clause and predict how they influence cooperation among states. • Use the Necessary and Proper Clause to justify or oppose a proposed federal law. • Analyze how the Supremacy Clause affects state laws and suggest an example of when citizens might challenge a state law. • Identify one right from the Bill of Rights and explain how citizens can protect it when threatened.

Constitutional Change and Legal Continuity • Formal amendment process • Informal amendments ○ Judicial interpretation ○ Legislative action ○ Executive	• Create a plan for advocating a constitutional amendment using the formal amendment process. • Research how judicial interpretation has informally changed the Constitution and describe how citizens might respond to that change. • Explain how a law passed by Congress, such as the War Powers Resolution, informally changed the Constitution. • Investigate how a presidential executive order informally changed how the Constitution is applied and debate how that change affects citizens.
Powers of Government and Legal Limits • Delegated powers: enumerated (expressed), implied, inherent • Concurrent powers • Reserved powers • Powers denied to government	• Classify a real or hypothetical government action as enumerated, implied, reserved, or denied power and propose how citizens could respond if the government exceeds its authority.
The Judicial Branch • Types of federal courts: Supreme, district, appellate, special • Appointment of federal judges • Civil vs. criminal cases • Judicial activism vs. judicial restraint	• Investigate how a federal court protected someone's rights and name a way citizens can support that court's role. • Explain why the appointment of federal judges matters to the rule of law and identify a way citizens can influence the selection process. • Distinguish between civil and criminal cases and propose how citizens can participate responsibly in each type. • Debate whether judicial activism or judicial restraint better serves democracy and recommend which approach citizens should support.
Supreme Court Decisions Reinforcing Rule of Law • <i>U.S. v. Nixon</i> (1974) • <i>District of Columbia v. Heller</i> (2008)	• Assess the impact of <i>U.S. v. Nixon</i> on executive power and propose how citizens can respond to similar cases. • Analyze <i>District of Columbia v. Heller</i> and recommend actions citizens can take to balance gun rights and public safety.

DOK/Cognitive Complexity Example:

Content/Topic	Low	Medium	High
Popular Sovereignty	What is popular sovereignty?	Popular sovereignty is not explicitly mentioned in the constitution. Can you provide examples of this principle at work?	How does the process for amending the Constitution reflect the idea of popular sovereignty, and what are some potential challenges associated with the process?

Possible Terminology to Support Teaching Informed Participation:

- advocate
- collaborate
- contribute
- decide
- engage
- implement
- organize
- participate
- prioritize
- recommend
- represent
- respond
- strategize
- support
- volunteer
- vote

Example Question/Sentence Stems:

- How would you apply your knowledge of _____ to make a decision about _____?
- What steps would you take to engage in _____ effectively?
- Explain how participating in _____ can influence _____.
- How would you prioritize actions to address _____ in your community?
- What strategies could you use to advocate for _____ at the local or national level?
- How does informed participation in _____ contribute to _____?

Standard 3 Overview: The Political Process

Standard 3: Demonstrate an understanding of the political process in determining and shaping public policy and the political climate in the United States.

Topics At a Glance	Enduring Understanding
Key Concept: The Political Process • 3.ER: Public Policy and Policymaking • 3.IN: Impact of Public Opinion and Political Ideology on Public Policy • 3.CC: Role of Linkage Institutions • 3.IP: The Electoral Process and its Impact on Government	American political beliefs are shaped by an understanding of 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 which results in multiple avenues for influence on the policy making process.

Standard 3 Course Theme:

The theme identified for Standard 3 is as follows:

Identified Course Theme	Description
Process of Law	The Process of Law theme encourages the study of the creation, execution, and interpretation of law in the United States political system. Founding principles guide the public policies developed to address new challenges and issues. By design, effective governmental decision making at the local, state, national, and global levels is a complex process that involves compromise and consensus building.

USG.3.ER:

Describe the policy making process in the American constitutional government.

This indicator was developed to encourage inquiry into public policy as a result of interactions among various stakeholders, institutions, and processes. This indicator also promotes inquiry into how public policy is made at all levels of government and how investigations of these policy networks in domestic, economic, and foreign policy shows relationships to federalism, the impact of interest groups, parties, and elections.

Topic: Public Policy and Policymaking

Possible Questions for Inquiry:

- How do formal government processes and stakeholders interact to shape public policy?
- How do public opinion and the media shape policy outcomes?

Content	Sample Tasks
The Policy-Making Process • Stages • Levels of government and federalism	• Explain how agenda setting is connected to later stages of policymaking, such as policy adoption or implementation. • Describe how federalism affects which level of government is responsible for creating, funding, or enforcing a specific public policy.
Linkage Institutions • Media • Interest groups ○ Lobbying and lobbyists ○ Iron triangles • Political parties • Elections	• Analyze how media coverage can influence both public opinion and the policy agenda of government officials. • Show how lobbying connects interest groups to the policy-making decisions of legislators or executive agencies. • Describe how iron triangles illustrate long-term relationships among congressional committees, bureaucratic agencies, and interest groups in policy making. • Explain how political party platforms influence the policies promoted by elected officials once in office. • Evaluate how election outcomes and changes in control of government institutions can affect the direction of public policy.

Measuring Public Opinion - Scientific polls - Sampling/sampling error - type and format of questions Influences on Opinion - Political socialization - Political ideology - Media and messaging	- Analyze how scientific polls allow policymakers to use public opinion data when setting agendas or making policy decisions. - Assess how sampling error can affect the accuracy of polls and influence policymakers' interpretation of public opinion. - Discuss how the wording or format of poll questions can shape the public opinion data used by policymakers. - Determine how political socialization influences individuals' views on public policy and political participation. - Explain how political ideology connects citizens' beliefs to their support for specific government policies. - Describe the relationship between media messaging and shifts in public opinion on policy issues.
Political Participation - Voting - Contacting representatives - Donating money - Campaigning - Protesting, petition, and assembly	- Explain how voting in local, state, or federal elections allows citizens to influence public policy outcomes. - Describe how contacting elected officials connects individual citizens to the policy-making process. - Analyze how campaign donations influence elections, thereby impacting public policy priorities. - Determine how campaigning for a candidate helps shape both election outcomes and policy agendas. - Trace how protests, petitions, and assembly connect public opinion to government policy responses.
Types of Policy - Defense - Domestic - Economic - Foreign - Social	- Explain how distinct types of public policy (defense, domestic, economic, foreign, social) may involve different government institutions and stakeholders. - Describe how media, interest groups, or public opinion may influence policy making differently depending on the policy area.

DOK/Cognitive Complexity Example:

Content/Topic	Low	Medium	High
Policy Making Process	What is a filibuster and how can it be ended?	Compare the rules for debate in the House and the Senate.	Predict how eliminating the filibuster in the Senate could impact the policy making process.

Possible Terminology to Support Teaching Establish Relationships:

- associated
- cause
- comparison
- connection
- contrast
- correlation
- difference
- effect
- impact
- influence
- interaction
- link
- outcome
- relationship
- result
- sequence
- similarity

Example Question/Sentence Stems:

- Explain how _____ relates to _____ and why that relationship is significant.
- Describe how _____ influenced _____ and what that influence reveals.
- Compare _____ and _____, by explaining how they are connected.
- Explain how _____ and _____ interact to shape _____.
- Analyze how changes in _____ affected _____ over time.
- Explain how _____ demonstrates the connection between _____ and _____.

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 which affect public policy over time.

This indicator was developed to encourage inquiry into the variety of beliefs that individual citizens hold about their government, their leaders, and the United States political system in general and how those beliefs are formed and evolve over time. The indicator also promotes inquiry into how citizen beliefs about government are shaped by a variety of factors and ultimately leads to political ideologies that shape and influence public debates and choices in the American constitutional government.

Topic: Impact of Public Opinion and Political Ideology on Public Policy

Possible Questions for Inquiry:

- How have American core values influenced political trends and movements over time?
- How has the American political system evolved from the days of the Federalists and Anti-federalists?

Content	Sample Tasks
American Political Culture	• Assess how a shared belief (i.e., support for democracy, individual rights, or limited government) reflects American political culture.
Core American Values	• Interpret how the principle of liberty can lead to differing ideological positions on government regulation. • Recognize how equality and individualism together create tension in public policy debates. • Analyze how pluralism reflects changing demographics and influences political discourse.
Political Socialization • Influences such as family, education, peers, media, religion, geography, and demographic characteristics	• Determine how family, media, and education shape individuals' beliefs about government. • Interpret how changing demographic characteristics can lead to shifts in political attitudes across generations.

Public Opinion Interpreting trends over time	Interpret trends in public opinion data to draw conclusions about changes in American’s political beliefs over time.
Ideological Trends - Political spectrum - Conservative - Liberal - Interventionist - Nationalist - Populist	- Assess how shifts along the political spectrum reflect evolving American core values over time. - Interpret how changes in American demographics have influenced shifts in conservative and liberal beliefs along the political spectrum. - Determine how interventionist ideology draws on American founding principles/core values. - Analyze how nationalist ideology interacts with core values like democracy and justice. - Investigate why populist movements emerge during periods of economic or demographic change.

DOK/Cognitive Complexity Example:

Content/Topic	Low	Medium	High
Historical Trends in Policy	What is foreign policy?	Why is foreign policy important for a nation’s security and economic interests?	How have changes in American demographics and core values influenced citizens’ beliefs about foreign policy, and have those changes positively or negatively impacted U.S. public policy?

Possible Terminology to Support Teaching Interpret:

- analyze
- assess
- attribute
- classify
- decode
- deduce
- evaluate
- examine
- identify
- infer
- interpret
- investigate
- justify
- observe
- scrutinize
- synthesize
- trace
- verify

Example Question/Sentence Stems:

- What does the evidence from _____ suggest about _____?
- How does the perspective in _____ influence the interpretation of _____?
- Explain what _____ reveals about _____ and why that matters.
- Analyze the meaning of _____ in the context of _____.
- What conclusions can you draw from _____ based on the data provided?
- How does bias in _____ affect the interpretation of _____?

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.

This indicator was developed to encourage inquiry into the organizations and mechanisms that allow citizens to indirectly organize and communicate their interests and concerns which influence the public agenda and public policy.

Topic: Role of Linkage Institutions

Possible Questions for Inquiry:

- Why do linkage institutions play a key role in shaping public agenda and public opinion in the United States?
- How have changes in media over time influenced its role in shaping public opinion and the public agenda?

Content	Sample Tasks
Media • Role as a linkage institution (i.e., agenda-setting/gatekeeper, scorekeeper, watchdog) • Media bias • News framing and selection • Concentration of media outlets • Impact of digital and social media	• Clarify how the media connects citizens to public issues and government actions as a key linkage institution. • Illustrate how agenda-setting by the media influences which issues receive public attention. • Explain how media bias can influence how an issue is presented to the public and prioritized on the public agenda. • Describe how news framing and story selection shape public understanding of an issue. • Convey the impacts of concentrated media ownership with impacts of diverse media ownership on agenda setting. • Conclude how digital and social media have changed the speed or reach of agenda setting.

Interest Groups • Types (i.e., economic, ideological, public, single-issue) • Functions • Strategies (lobbying, litigation, grassroots mobilization, campaign support)	• Compare two types of interest groups and explain how each attempts to influence the public agenda. • Describe how interest groups represent citizens' concerns and communicate them to government officials. • Explain how interest group functions contribute to shaping public discussion around policy issues. • Debate how interest group strategies such as lobbying or grassroots mobilization help place issues on the public agenda. • Summarize how interest groups use campaign support or litigation to increase attention to an issue.
Political Parties • Functions • Alignment and realignment • Third parties and issue parties	• Explain how political parties function as linkage institutions by organizing voters and promoting issues. • Describe how party fundraising supports parties' ability to promote issues to the public. • Discuss how party structure affects how parties communicate priorities to voters. • Summarize how party alignment or realignment can shift which issues receive national attention. • Assess how third or issue parties can influence the public agenda even if they do not win elections.
How Linkage Institutions Shape Public Opinion	• Explain the purpose of public opinion polling in helping linkage institutions understand and respond to public priorities. • Describe how sampling and question wording can affect poll results and shape how linkage institutions interpret public priorities. • Discuss how poll results can influence agenda setting by media, interest groups, or political parties. • Summarize how repeated messaging by linkage institutions can shape public opinion over time.

How Linkage Institutions Shape the Public Agenda	• Conclude why linkage institutions prioritize certain issues in political discourse. • Describe how issue framing helps determine how the public understands a political issue. • Summarize how media and interest groups mobilize public pressure around an issue. • Explain how visibility and public demand can influence policymakers' attention to an issue.
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DOK/Cognitive Complexity Example:

Content/Topic	Low	Medium	High
Media Influence	Why is having a free press essential in a democratic government?	Why did the Framers choose to protect the press? Do you think this is still relevant today and should be preserved?	Analyze how the growth of social media has changed the way people consume news and information and evaluate its overall impact on citizens' participation in the political process.

Possible Terminology to Support Teaching Communicate and Conclude:

- articulate
- argue
- assert
- clarify
- conclude
- convey
- critique
- elaborate
- explain
- express
- formulate
- illustrate
- justify
- negotiate
- persuade
- propose
- summarize

Example Question/Sentence Stems:

- Present an argument that supports _____ using evidence from _____.
- How would you justify _____ as a solution to _____?
- Summarize your position on _____ and explain how you reached that conclusion.
- What counterarguments might challenge _____, and how would you respond?
- Explain how your conclusion about _____ is supported by _____.
- Propose an alternative to _____ and defend your reasoning.

USG.3.IP:

Explain how the electoral process works in federal elections and the effects those elections have on U.S. government.

This indicator was developed to encourage inquiry into how to gauge the fairness and effectiveness of the electoral process in the U.S. and the outcomes elections have on the U.S. government. This indicator was also developed to prompt inquiry into the historic struggles over the extension of suffrage and the impact of federal policies on campaigning and electoral rules.

Topic: The Electoral Process and its Impact on Government

Possible Questions for Inquiry:

- What is the impact of federal policies on campaigning and electoral rules?
- How does the structure of the federal electoral process affect voter participation and election outcomes?

Content	Sample Tasks
• Purpose and structure of federal elections • Constitutional amendments expanding suffrage ○ Fifteenth Amendment ○ Nineteenth Amendment ○ Twenty-Third Amendment ○ Twenty-Fourth Amendment ○ Twenty-Sixth Amendment • Historic struggles for voting rights ○ Civil Rights Movement ○ Voting Rights Act of 1965	• Evaluate how the purpose and structure of federal elections influence citizen participation and propose one way to increase engagement. • Analyze how the Fifteenth, Nineteenth, Twenty-Third, Twenty-Fourth, and Twenty-Sixth Amendments collectively shaped modern voter demographics and suggest a policy to address remaining gaps in suffrage. • Investigate the roles of the Civil Rights Movement and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 in expanding voting rights, then recommend a current policy to protect those gains.

Federal Electoral Process • Stages of federal elections ○ Primaries: open vs. closed ○ Caucuses ○ Party conventions ○ General election ○ Electoral College • Off-Year Elections (<i>impact on governance</i>) • Campaign strategies ○ Swing states ○ Balancing the ticket	• Compare open and closed primaries and argue which system better promotes fair representation for voters. • Evaluate whether the caucus provides a fair and effective way for citizens to participate in selecting presidential candidates. • Assess the impact of party conventions on candidate selection and propose a reform to make the process more transparent. • Examine how the Electoral College effects campaign strategies and recommend whether it should be reformed or replaced. • Analyze how off-year elections influence governance and propose a strategy promoting citizen engagement during these cycles. • Evaluate the role of swing states in shaping national campaign strategies and suggest one way to reduce their disproportionate influence. • Explain what “balancing the ticket” means and suggest a strategy parties could use to ensure their candidate selections better reflect voter interests.
Voter Participation and Barriers • Registration requirements • Gerrymandering • Voter ID laws • Non-voting (eligible voters)	• Investigate how registration requirements, gerrymandering, and voter ID laws impact voter participation and propose a solution to decrease barriers. • Evaluate why many eligible voters choose not to participate in elections and determine how this affects informed participation in the electoral process.
Campaign Finance and Regulation • Sources of Campaign Finance: hard money, soft money, Political Action Committees (PACs) • Major Legislation: Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA), Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 (BCRA or the McCain-Feingold Act) • Role of Federal Election Commission (FEC)	• Assess the influence of campaign finance sources on electoral fairness and recommend a reform to reduce undue influence. • Evaluate the effectiveness of FECA and BCRA in regulating campaign finance and propose an update to address modern challenges. • Analyze the role of the Federal Election Commission (FEC) in enforcing election laws and suggest one improvement to strengthen its oversight.

• <i>Buckley v. Valeo</i> (1976) • <i>Citizens United v. FEC</i> (2010)	• Examine the impact of <i>Buckley v. Valeo</i> and <i>Citizens United v. FEC</i> on campaign finance and propose a constitutional amendment or law to balance free speech with fairness.
Impact on U.S. Government • Shifts in party control and governance • Changes in agendas	• Analyze how shifts in party control after federal elections affect policy outcomes and propose a citizen action plan to influence future priorities. • Investigate a recent federal election and explain how its outcome changed governance at the national level, then propose a way for citizens to respond to those changes.

DOK/Cognitive Complexity Example:

Content/Topic	Low	Medium	High
Voting Rights	Explain how the Nineteenth Amendment expanded participation in federal elections.	Explain how the Twenty-fourth Amendment made it easier to vote in federal elections and why that matters today.	Explain how the Civil Rights Movement changed the electoral process and recommend an action citizens can take to protect those voting rights today.

Possible Terminology to Support Teaching Informed Participation:

- advocate
- collaborate
- contribute
- decide
- engage
- implement
- organize
- participate
- prioritize
- recommend
- represent
- respond
- strategize
- support
- volunteer
- vote

Example Question/Sentence Stems:

- How would you apply your knowledge of _____ to make a decision about _____?
- What steps would you take to engage in _____ effectively?
- Explain how participating in _____ can influence _____.
- How would you prioritize actions to address _____ in your community?
- What strategies could you use to advocate for _____ at the local or national level?
- How does informed participation in _____ contribute to _____?

Standard 4 Overview: Citizenship

Standard 4: Demonstrate an understanding of the rights and responsibilities associated with citizenship in the United States.

Topics At a Glance	Enduring Understanding
Key Concept: Citizenship • 4.ER: Immigration and Citizenship • 4.IN: Conflicting Rights and Responsibilities (Civil Liberties and Civil Rights) • 4.CC: Expansion of Individual Rights • 4.IP: Civic Participation and Responsible Public Discourse	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.

Standard 4 Course Theme:

The theme identified for Standard 4 is as follows:

Identified Course Theme	Description
Civic Engagement	The Civic Engagement theme encourages the study of and the importance of active participation in the constitutional democracy of the United States. Active civic engagement reflects personal values and a society's prioritization of civil rights and responsibilities. American constitutional democracy functions upon the key ideas of balance of powers, the establishment of government by the consent of the governed, and federalism. These principles guide governmental leaders in creating and enforcing laws that support fundamental American political values.

USG.4.ER:

Describe the criteria and process for immigration to and citizenship in the U.S. and explain how the U.S. has expanded and limited the concept of citizenship over time.

This indicator was developed to encourage inquiry into how individuals become citizens in the U.S. and how the U.S. has expanded and limited citizenship over time. Further, examination promotes inquiry into the rights and responsibilities held by citizens of the U.S.

Topic: Immigration and Citizenship

Possible Question for Inquiry:

- How does becoming a U.S. citizen affect an individual's rights and civic responsibilities in a constitutional democracy?

Content	Sample Tasks
Natural-Born Citizens • “Law of the Soil” (jus soli) • Birth to an American parent (jus sanguinis)	• Explain how birthright citizenship is connected to the Fourteenth Amendment. • Compare jus soli and jus sanguinis as pathways to citizenship.
Naturalized Citizens • Naturalization process • Dual citizenship	• Identify key requirements of the naturalization process and explain how they signal expectations of civic responsibility. • Explore how dual citizenship connects national identity to globalization.
Loss of Citizenship • Expatriation • Denaturalization	• Summarize how expatriation differs from denaturalization in terms of voluntariness and legal consequences. • Conclude why a government might permit or deny the loss of citizenship.

Eligibility/Criteria for Immigration • Visa categories ○ family-based ○ employment-based ○ refugee/asylum • Quotas and preference systems	• Identify criteria for immigration and explain their importance. • Define the major U.S. visa categories and explain how they reflect the nation’s immigration policies over time. • Compare family-based and employment-based visas to show how each shapes immigration patterns. • Assess how U.S. refugee and asylum policies relate to U.S. constitutional principles. • Evaluate how quotas and preference systems affect access to immigration opportunities.
Expansion and Limitation of Citizenship Over Time • Fourteenth Amendment • Immigration quotas and restrictions ○ Chinese Exclusion Act 1882 ○ Immigration Act of 1924 • Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 (Snyder Act) • Civil Rights Movement • Voting Rights Act	• Compare how the Fourteenth Amendment changed the concept of citizenship compared to earlier practices. • Trace how U.S. immigration policies changed over time in response to social and economic needs. • Examine the impact of the Chinese Exclusion Act on U.S. immigration policy and national identity. • Explain how immigration quotas limit citizenship opportunities for certain groups. • Evaluate how the Snyder Act changed the legal status of Native Americans and how it fully expanded their citizenship rights. • Analyze how the Civil Rights Movement influenced the expansion of citizenship rights in the U.S. • Describe how the Voting Rights Act expanded the rights of U.S. citizens and changed the government’s role in protecting access to participation.
• Rights of citizens ○ voting • Responsibilities of citizens ○ jury duty ○ civic participation	• Explain how voting rights granted through U.S. citizenship connect individual rights to representative government. • Analyze how jury duty functions as a responsibility and supports the principle of equal justice under law. • Explore how civic participation strengthens democratic institutions and preserves constitutional government.

DOK/Cognitive Complexity Example:

Content/Topic	Low	Medium	High
Citizenship	Explain why one pathway to U.S. citizenship may be more accessible than another.	Compare and contrast the rights granted to citizens of the United States to non-citizens, such as those with visas.	Analyze how the process of becoming a U.S. citizen affects the rights individuals can exercise compared to non-citizens.

Possible Terminology to Support Teaching Establish Relationships:

- associated
- cause
- comparison
- connection
- contrast
- correlation
- difference
- effect
- impact
- influence
- interaction
- link
- outcome
- relationship
- result
- sequence
- similarity

Example Question/Sentence Stems:

- Explain how _____ relates to _____ and why that relationship is significant.
- Describe how _____ influenced _____ and what that influence reveals.
- Compare _____ and _____, by explaining how they are connected.
- Explain how _____ and _____ interact to shape _____.
- Analyze how changes in _____ affected _____ over time.
- Explain how _____ demonstrates the connection between _____ and _____.

USG.4.IN:

Distinguish between various economic, personal, and political rights of citizens in the U.S., and how these rights can sometimes conflict with each other.

This indicator was developed to encourage inquiry into the rights the Constitution protects and the responsibilities citizens have through active participation to ensure those rights for themselves and future generations. This indicator also promotes inquiry into how the Constitution of the United States, Bill of Rights, and additional amendments emphasize liberty and individual rights and how these rights often conflict with each other.

Topic: Conflicting Rights and Responsibilities (Civil Liberties and Civil Rights)

Possible Question for Inquiry:

- How have Supreme Court rulings extended and limited individual rights over time?

Content	Sample Tasks
Types of Rights • Personal rights • Political rights • Economic rights • Property rights • Privacy rights	• Investigate which amendments in the Bill of Rights protect personal freedoms and which amendments involve civic participation. • Analyze how the Constitution and laws protect people's rights to work, own property, and make agreements. • Use holdings from two cases to determine how the Court's interpretation of rights changes over time. • Explain how the right to privacy has been interpreted as a personal right by analyzing constitutional principles and at least one Supreme Court case.

Constitutional Foundations of Rights • Bill of Rights (1791) ○ Freedom of Speech ■ <i>Gitlow v. New York</i> (1925) ○ Free Exercise clause ○ Establishment clause • Thirteenth Amendment (1865) • Fourteenth Amendment (1868) ○ Due Process clause ■ <i>Plessy v. Ferguson</i> (1896) ○ Citizenship clause ■ <i>Dred Scott v. Sandford</i> (1857) • Fifteenth Amendment (1870)	• Determine the specific rights guaranteed in the Bill of Rights and explain how these amendments expand or protect individual liberty. • Investigate how <i>Gitlow v. New York</i> changed the application of First Amendment free speech protections through the Fourteenth Amendment. • Examine the Free Exercise Clause and Establishment Clause by analyzing <i>Wisconsin v. Yoder</i> (1972) and <i>Engel v. Vitale</i> (1962) to explain how religious rights can come into conflict in real-world situations. • Explain how the Thirteenth Amendment ended slavery and analyze why this amendment was foundational to later expansions of civil rights. • Analyze the Fourteenth Amendment’s Due Process Clause by examining <i>Plessy v. Ferguson</i> to explain how the Court’s interpretation affected individual rights and equality under the law. • Compare <i>Dred Scott v. Sandford</i> with the Citizenship Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to explain how constitutional amendments redefined citizenship and civil rights. • Conclude how the Fifteenth Amendment expanded voting rights and how <i>South Carolina v. Katzenbach</i> (1966) demonstrates the federal government’s role in protecting those rights.
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Civil Rights and Civil Liberties • Civil liberties • Civil rights • De facto vs. de jure discrimination ◦ <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> (1954)	• Use Supreme Court cases and federal legislation to determine how civil rights and civil liberties have been expanded or limited over time and explain factors that contributed to those changes. • Distinguish between civil rights and civil liberties by analyzing examples and explaining why each example fits a category. • Deduce how different types of discrimination can affect citizens' rights and create conflict between constitutional principles. • Interpret the significance of <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> in expanding civil rights and contrast it with <i>Plessy v. Ferguson</i>.
Limits on Rights • Clear and Present Danger • Time/place/manner restrictions on speech • Libel and slander • Public safety • Equal opportunity • Ex post facto laws • Bills of attainder • Suspension of habeas corpus	• Examine how the Supreme Court's "clear and present danger" standard in <i>Schenck v. U.S.</i> (1919) impacted free speech. • Evaluate whether time, place, and manner restrictions on speech uphold or limit First Amendment rights. • Analyze examples of libel and slander to determine how limits on speech protect individuals from harm. • Determine how equal opportunity can conflict with other rights by using an example, like affirmative action. • Conclude the meaning of ex post facto laws by explaining why the Constitution prevents the government from punishing people for actions that were legal when they occurred. • Interpret the idea of bills of attainder by explaining why the Constitution does not allow the government to punish people without trial. • Use Article I of the Constitution to explain what the writ of habeas corpus is and why it protects individual liberty.
Examples of Rights in Conflict • Free speech vs. public safety • Privacy vs. security	• Analyze a scenario where free speech and public safety conflict and propose a constitutional resolution using established legal principles. • Compare how the Court balances privacy rights and security concerns in the context of government surveillance.

DOK/Cognitive Complexity Example:

Content/Topic	Low	Medium	High
Bill of Rights	Identify the rights guaranteed in the Bill of Rights in the U.S. Constitution.	Which of the ten amendments in the Bill of Rights do you find most imperative towards preserving personal freedoms and why?	Do you think the Bill of Rights adequately protects our liberties? Which amendment do you feel is most critical in your own life and why?

Possible Terminology to Support Teaching Interpret:

- analyze
- assess
- attribute
- classify
- decode
- deduce
- evaluate
- examine
- identify
- infer
- interpret
- investigate
- justify
- observe
- scrutinize
- synthesize
- trace
- verify

Example Question/Sentence Stems:

- What does the evidence from _____ suggest about _____?
- How does the perspective in _____ influence the interpretation of _____?
- Explain what _____ reveals about _____ and why that matters.
- Analyze the meaning of _____ in the context of _____.
- What conclusions can you draw from _____ based on the data provided?
- How does bias in _____ affect the interpretation of _____?

USG.4.CC:

Analyze contemporary issues and governmental responses at various levels in terms of how they have provided equal protection under the law and equal access to society's opportunities and public facilities.

This indicator was developed to encourage inquiry into how individual rights have evolved through social movements, constitutional provisions, and landmark legislation. Further investigation prompts inquiry into how marginalized Americans have struggled and continue to push for equality and expanded rights.

Topic: Expansion of Individual Rights

Possible Questions for Inquiry:

- Why have government actions and policies emerged to address equal access to rights and opportunities in the U.S.?
- How have social movements influenced government responses aimed at expanding equal protection under the law?

Content	Sample Tasks
Amendments • Bill of Rights ○ Free Exercise clause ○ Establishment clause • Thirteenth Amendment • Fourteenth Amendment ○ Due Process clause ○ Equal Protection clause • Fifteenth Amendment	• Assess how the Free Exercise and Establishment Clauses influence debates over religious policies in public schools and institutions, and discuss whether these policies ensure equal access for everyone. • Articulate how the Thirteenth Amendment laid the foundation for future equal-protection efforts and how its legacy influences contemporary rights debates. • Describe how the Fourteenth Amendment's Due Process and Equal Protection clauses apply to modern school disciplinary policies and criminal-justice practices, and conclude whether these policies ensure fair and equal treatment for all people. • Analyze how the Fifteenth Amendment has been applied through federal laws and court rulings and explain whether these efforts have ensured equal voting access for marginalized groups.

Nineteenth Amendment	Explain how the Nineteenth Amendment expanded women's voting rights and conclude how it strengthened equal access in the electoral process.
Standards used for Denying or Expanding Rights - Clear and present danger test - Time/place/manner restrictions on speech - Public safety/national security - Libel or Slander	- Assess if the criteria used to justify limiting rights are applied consistently. - Discuss whether the clear and present danger test is still relevant in regulating speech on social media platforms during times of national security threats. - Evaluate whether time, place, and manner restrictions on protests during a national emergency balance public safety with First Amendment rights. - Explain how libel and slander laws limit harmful speech and conclude how these limits balance freedom of expression with protecting individual rights.
Major Legislation Expanding or Limiting Rights - Civil Rights Act of 1964 - De jure discrimination - De facto discrimination - Voting Rights Act of 1965 - Title I - Title IX - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	- Describe how the Civil Rights Act helps protect equal access to public places, jobs, and schools, and decide which area is the most enforced today. - Explain how Jim Crow laws created legal discrimination and how unfair practices still exist today, and conclude how both have challenged equal protection and equal access. - Evaluate the effectiveness of the Voting Rights Act in addressing recent state-level voter ID laws and their impact on marginalized communities. - Summarize what Title I protects and conclude how it helps ensure fairness and equal rights for citizens in the U.S. - Analyze how Title IX has been applied to contemporary debates and judge whether current interpretations expand or restrict equal access. - Discuss how IDEA supports students with disabilities during virtual learning and decide whether it has provided equal educational opportunities.

Social Movements and Advocacy for Expanded Rights • Civil rights • Women’s rights • Disability rights • Individual/Collective action by marginalized groups	• Trace a movement (e.g., civil, women’s, or disability rights) and assess its impact on legislation. • Analyze how the Civil Rights Movement continues to influence contemporary advocacy for reform and conclude which strategies have been most effective. • Examine the role of women’s rights movements in shaping recent legislation on workplace equality and determine their overall effectiveness. • Explain how the disability rights movement influenced governmental actions to provide equal protection under the law and conclude how it expand access to public facilities and opportunities. • Evaluate how actions, such as protests, lawsuits, or organizing by marginalized groups, have shaped government efforts to expand equal protection and access.
Contemporary Equal Protection and Access Issues • Voting access • Educational access • Public accommodations • Accessibility for people with disabilities • Policing and equal protection	• Examine recent voting policies and determine whether they have expanded or restricted equal access to the ballot box. • Analyze disparities in school funding or resources and judge whether current policies ensure equal educational opportunities for all students. • Evaluate how anti-discrimination laws affect access to public accommodations today and assess whether these protections are effectively enforced. • Assess the extent to which accessibility laws have improved access for individuals with disabilities and decide whether remaining barriers violate principles of equal protection. • Review recent reforms or policies related to policing and conclude whether they promote equal protection under the law for all communities.

DOK/Cognitive Complexity Example:

Content/Topic	Low	Medium	High
Civil Rights Movement	Who was Martin Luther King Jr?	Analyze the impact Martin Luther King Jr. had on the Civil Rights Movement and conclude how his leadership advanced equal protection and access?	Analyze how “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” and the “I Have a Dream” speech influenced federal civil rights legislation and conclude which message had the greater impact on expanding equal access.

Possible Terminology to Support Teaching Communicate and Conclude:

- articulate
- argue
- assert
- clarify
- conclude
- convey
- critique
- elaborate
- explain
- express
- formulate
- illustrate
- justify
- negotiate
- persuade
- propose
- summarize

Example Question/Sentence Stems:

- Present an argument that supports _____ using evidence from _____.
- How would you justify _____ as a solution to _____?
- Summarize your position on _____ and explain how you reached that conclusion.
- What counterarguments might challenge _____, and how would you respond?
- Explain how your conclusion about _____ is supported by _____.
- Propose an alternative to _____ and defend your reasoning.

USG.4.IP:

Describe and evaluate the ways citizens can participate in the political process at the local, state, national, and global levels.

This indicator was developed to encourage inquiry into the responsibilities associated with citizenship in the United States and the importance of those responsibilities in a democratic society. This indicator also promotes inquiry into the function of civic participation in addressing public issues and the importance of discussing issues and making judgments with balanced information, evidence, civility, respect, and fairness.

Topic: Civic Participation and Responsible Public Discourse

Possible Questions for Inquiry:

- How can citizens use facts and respectful discussion to decide how and when to take action on public issues?
- How can citizens examine public issues and choose effective ways to participate in a democracy?

Content	Sample Tasks
Informed Civic Participation • Civic inquiry and discourse	• Compare two short sources on the same civic issue (such as recycling rules or school policies) and identify one point of agreement and one difference. • Use information from a news article or chart to interpret a reason people might disagree about a public issue. • Engage in a class discussion on a civic issue and respond to a classmate's opinion using evidence. • Develop an evidence-based position on a civic issue and describe how information from sources influenced your thinking.

Duties and Responsibilities of Citizenship • Legal duties (e.g., obeying laws, paying taxes, jury duty) • Civic responsibilities that support democracy (e.g., staying informed, voting, volunteerism, advocacy)	• Explain how a legal duty of citizens, such as obeying laws or serving on a jury, supports a democratic society and affects the community. • Read a short scenario about jury duty and evaluate how citizen participation affects fairness in the justice system. • Use a current public issue to explain how staying informed helps citizens make responsible decisions. • Investigate how voting helps citizens influence government decisions and explain one reason people choose to vote. • Analyze how volunteerism helps address community needs and supports democratic values.
Citizen Participation in the Political Process • Local level • State and national levels • Global level • Political campaigns • Formulation of a plan to change a law • Using petitions and grassroots movements	• Investigate how attending town or city council meetings influences local decision-making and propose strategies to increase citizen participation. • Compare methods of lobbying at the state and national levels and determine which approaches are most effective in influencing policy. • Research a global advocacy campaign and assess its impact on international policy or cooperation. • Analyze how citizens can participate in political campaigns and judge how campaign activities influence elections and public policy. • Use evidence to explain how contacting an elected official can affect policy at the state or national level. • Develop a plan outlining how citizens could work to change a law using petitions, advocacy, or grassroots organizing. • Examine a petition or grassroots advocacy effort and evaluate how it is designed to influence public opinion or lawmaking. • Explore how historical grassroots movements influenced national legislation and apply those strategies to a current civic issue.

DOK/Cognitive Complexity Example:

Content/Topic	Low	Medium	High
Jury Duty	What is jury duty?	Why is serving on a jury important for sustaining democracy, and what evidence supports this idea?	Investigate how jury duty reflects the principle of civic virtue and propose a plan to increase citizen participation in jury service, using evidence from at least two credible sources.

Possible Terminology to Support Teaching Informed Participation:

- advocate
- collaborate
- contribute
- decide
- engage
- implement
- organize
- participate
- prioritize
- recommend
- represent
- respond
- strategize
- support
- volunteer
- vote

Example Question/Sentence Stems:

- How would you apply your knowledge of _____ to make a decision about _____?
- What steps would you take to engage in _____ effectively?
- Explain how participating in _____ can influence _____.
- How would you prioritize actions to address _____ in your community?
- What strategies could you use to advocate for _____ at the local or national level?
- How does informed participation in _____ contribute to _____?

Appendix A

United States Government 2020 Alignment Guide Expository Narratives **Expository Narrative for Standard 1: Foundations of Democracy**

The fundamental historical and philosophical principles and ideas that led to the development of the American constitutional democracy. Learners will complete inquiry into the origins and varying styles of government, the purpose of government in a democracy, and the historical and philosophical origins of the American constitutional government. Additionally, the analysis of the founding documents and principles and major debates and compromises that led to the creation, formation, and ratification of the Constitution and the American constitutional democracy is necessary in order to become informed citizens with the ability to participate in their government. Upon mastering these principles and fundamental values, the learners will investigate and communicate their importance and apply them to abstract and real-world situations while providing the foundation for subsequent learning in this course.

As learners progress through the ideas of the ancient societies, Enlightenment thinkers, and various other philosophies, it is important to encourage inquiry into the founding documents and principles that led to the creation and design of the American constitutional democracy along with the role debates played in the shaping of our country.

In a democracy, an inherent conflict exists between the rights of individuals and the well-being of the larger group. Constitutional principles and fundamental values often lead to conflicts in society, as reflected in the ideas of liberty and authority, justice and equality, and individual rights versus the common good. In theory, agreement exists concerning fundamental values and principles. However, in practice, disagreements over the meaning of these principles and values are still present. As citizens of the United States are keepers of their own rights and the rights of others, either through individual or collective action, it is imperative that an informed citizenry comprehend the Constitution as a living document, capable of being altered and interpreted differently over time as needed, and that these changes may impact them personally. However, an understanding of the fundamental values of America's constitutional democracy and their reflection in the principles of the United States Constitution is necessary to carry on the American idea of constitutional government. While the Constitution guarantees the rights of the people within the United States, the enjoyment of those rights comes with responsibilities to ensure their strength and endurance and continue to help shape American society in the spirit of the historical and philosophical principles that led to the current American constitutional democracy.

Expository Narrative for Standard 2: Government Structure

Possessing an understanding of the structure and functions of government at all levels in the United States is an important component of being a productive citizen. This standard addresses the powers of government enumerated in Articles I-III of the Constitution with the ultimate goal of the learners understanding the setup of the three branches of government. In addition, students should grasp the concept of federalism and division of powers through inquiries into how power and responsibility are distributed, shared, and limited based on the U.S. Constitution as well as how their state and local governments' function. Finally, students should understand the importance of the rule of law as a major founding and guiding principle in the American Republic.

Expository Narrative for Standard 3: The Political Process

The executive, legislative, and judicial branches all play a role in creating domestic, foreign, defense, economic, social, and other political policies, but these policies are not created in a vacuum, without input and influence from the American citizenry and other organizations. While the officials of the U.S. government, whether elected or appointed, have their own ideas of what policies must be enacted to carry out the agendas of the U.S. Government, these officials are ultimately held accountable by the American electorate and must pay particular attention to public opinion on each of the policies and the needs of the nation. Therefore, the measurement of public opinion and the ability to understand and this opinion are important factors in the success of governmental policies and the government as a whole. Elections, interest groups, the media, and personal contacts all reflect public opinion, but do not provide accurate measures of it. The most reliable measure of public opinion is scientifically conducted opinion polls. The type of poll, sampling techniques, type, and format of questions all impact the media's report of public opinion data that can impact elections and policy debates.

Expository Narrative for Standard 4: Citizenship

United States citizenship can be of great value to those who possess it and certainly to those who seek it, and it is the responsibility of all Americans to understand their rights and how the law works in order to receive the full benefits of their citizenship and to actively participate in the American political process to ensure those rights for themselves and future generations. Through inquiry into the criteria and processes for immigration and citizenship in the United States, and the changes to these immigration policies over time, the learners will begin to describe and evaluate ways in which these citizens can participate in the political process both within the United States and abroad. Upon understanding what it means to be a citizen in the United States, further inquiry is needed regarding the various economic, personal, and political rights and liberties citizens possess in the United States, how these rights and liberties can conflict with each other, and the

government's roles and responsibilities in providing equal protection under the law and equal access to society's opportunities and public facilities.

Civic engagement is important to the health of a democratic nation. Well-functioning democracies are highly dependent on the active political participation of their citizens. The type and level of political participation, or involvement in activities designed to influence public policy and leadership, is an important issue of democratic government these governments require large-scale participation of its citizens as means of ensuring that its policies, structures, and leaders are actively serving the needs and interests of its citizens. While voting remains the most widespread form of political participation in the United States, individuals also participate in a variety of other political or civic activities. These activities could include work on community affairs, participation in political campaigns, or attending public meetings or councils. Citizens can also participate in social movements that sometimes take place outside the established channels, such as demonstrations, picket lines, and marches.

The study of American Government is not limited to the study of the Constitution and politics, but it also encompasses participation in classrooms, schools, neighborhoods, groups, and organizations. Inquiry into the responsibilities associated with citizenship in the United States and the importance of those responsibilities in a democratic society is also imperative. Part of becoming a fully functioning, self-advocating member of society is learning to make contributions in these areas by discussing issues and making choices and judgments with information and evidence, civility and respect, and overall concern for fair procedures. The American constitutional democracy affords individuals numerous opportunities to participate in the political process, monitor elected officials, and hold government accountable for their actions, but knowledge of the foundations of our American democracy, history, and principles is required for productive civic engagement. Civic engagement should take the form of not only the study of how others participate, but also an active commitment to practicing participation and taking informed action.