## Introduction to Modern Government

*A Common Core-Aligned Lesson Plan to use in your Classroom*

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**The activity**

Students will define terms through a gallery walk and class discussion (remember). Students will practice analyzing information in secondary texts and connect insights gained to understanding the text as a whole (analyze).

This activity is great for community building, social studies, US history, cultural studies, mental toughness, and classroom culture.

**Students will**

- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.4
- Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1

**Here’s what you do**

**Resources needed:**

- 7 Pieces of large poster paper each with a different vocabulary/principle of government word on it
- Colored markers
- Projector with video and sound
- Space for students to work
- Copies of *song lyrics*
- Board
- Citation video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tZdSCHIdQU0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tZdSCHIdQU0)

**Approximate Time:**

- 1 hour
Instructions

1) Pre activity:

a) Academic Vocabulary:
   - Checks and balances
   - Popular sovereignty
   - Separation of powers
   - Federalism
   - Republicanism
   - Limited government

Additional Vocabulary:
   - Resolution
   - Constitution
   - Democracy
   - Revolution
   - Institution
   - Ballot

*Note: Spend time on any word students may be unfamiliar with. Be prepared to share definition, etymology etc.

b) Quotes:

   - "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed..." ~Declaration of Independence, United States of America, 1776

   - "In the government of this commonwealth, the legislative department shall never exercise the executive and judicial powers, or either of them: the executive shall never exercise the legislative and judicial powers, or either of them: the judicial shall never exercise the legislative and executive powers, or either of them: to the end it may be a government of laws and not of men." ~Massachusetts Constitution, Part the First, Article XXX, 1780
c) **Objectives and Essential Questions:**

- Before class begins, write the essential question and objectives on the board.
  - Essential Question: What does the US government do?
  - Objective: I will determine the meaning of the seven principles that define the United States government.
- Before class begins, prepare the video presentation and hang the seven poster papers backwards (so each principle is NOT visible) around the room.
- Classroom management tip: Have work on the board for when students arrive to settle in

2) **Motivation/Anticipatory Activity:**

- Begin class by watching the 7 principles rap
  - Step 1: Pass out rap lyrics
  - Step 2: Instruct students to highlight the seven principles while following along
  - Step 3: Watch Video
- Explain the objective.
- Have a student leader/volunteer flip all the poster papers around so the seven principles become visible. Students self-check their rap lyrics to make sure the highlighted the correct principles.

3) **Activity:**

- “Gallery walk” through vocabulary focusing on key concepts of political, social, and economic aspects of history. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.4
  - Step 1: Split students into 7 groups, one for each principle of government poster paper.
  - Step 2: Instruct students/groups to write their definitions, pictures, example etc. of the word. (2-3 minutes)
  - Step 3: Have student groups rotate to another paper with a different principle/concept and observe what their classmates wrote. (2-3 minutes)
• Classroom management tip: Play a song during this time, when the song ends groups know to be quiet and wait for next instructions.

4) Discussion:

• Generate discussion by having every student in each group find a word, picture or definition written by the previous group (5 minutes). Focus on having students identify the evidence to support their conclusions. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1

• Questions:
  ➢ What do you notice?
  ➢ Why might this have been added?
  ➢ Does this image, picture, or definition help you understand the vocabulary? Why or why not?
  ➢ Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not?
  ➢ What evidence can you site to support your conclusion(s)?
  ➢ How did the rap lyrics help or didn't help with your understanding of the vocabulary word.
  ➢ What is an example in life? Does anyone else have an example?

• Continue to rotate groups and repeat step 6 until all groups have added/written on every principle paper. (15 minutes). Students return to their original paper and observe all that has been added. (2-3 minutes)

• While at their original paper, have every student in each group make a connection or generate a question based on all the information. (2-3 minutes)

• Have every student share their connection or question and generate a discussion. Write questions down to come back to later or pose to the group and answer with a discussion. Dig deeper into connections by asking students to elaborate further and explain more.
5) **Project:**
- The original team members chunk and synthesize all the information to create/determine the final class definition and image of the principle. (5 minutes)
- Each group puts final definition and image on a plain white 8.5 x 11 paper.
- Collect the 7 papers and photocopy a packet for each student in the entire class.
- Have students return to their seats and pass out rap lyrics. Re-watch. (3 minutes)
- Explain that tomorrow (or during the next class) students will pick a principle to further research and create a presentation on. (2 minutes)
- Exit Ticket – Students write a short summary (1-2 sentences) in their journals about 1 of the seven principles that they learned about. (1-2 minutes)

6) **Evidence of Success (Formative Assessments):**
- Soft Skills: Daily behavior, participation, and work completed.
- Content: Vocabulary, principles of government
- Social: Relationships: informal assessment of how students work together in cooperative groups and with staff
- +Work Readiness/HiSet Prep: Application: Demonstrate transitioning/transfering of concepts learned to some other area of life

**Differentiated Instruction**

- **Rigor:** Students work at their own pace and at their own level (scaffold); Follow modifications and accommodations on IEPs and 504s
- **Life Skills:** Technology, social, work readiness
- **Core Abilities:** Communication, responsibility, critical thinking
- **Integration:** History/LA, leadership, could include: PSR, CD
- **Key Skills:** implications, ideas in context, applying to new contexts
- **Classroom management tip:** Have different leveled work, expectations for beginners, emerging skills, and students with mastery

**Success Tips**

- Be flexible
- Admonish students that they are smart, capable, learners.