



Golden Eagle Charter School

American Government Learning Targets

Students explain the fundamental principles and moral values of American Democracy
1. Analyze the influence of ancient Greek, Roman, English, and leading European political thinkers on the development of American government.
2. Explain how the U.S. Constitution reflects a balance between promotion of the public good and protecting individual rights.
3. Describe the systems of separated and shared powers, the role of organized interests (<i>Federalist Paper Number 10</i>), checks and balances (<i>Federalist Paper Number 51</i>), the importance of an independent judiciary (<i>Federalist Paper Number 78</i>), enumerated powers, rule of law, federalism, and civilian control of the military.
Students understand the scope and limits of rights and obligations as democratic citizens.
4. Discuss the meaning and importance of each of the rights guaranteed under the Bill of Rights and how each is secured (e.g., freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, petition, privacy).
5. Explain how economic rights are secured and their importance to the individual and to society (e.g., the right to acquire, use, transfer, and dispose of property; right to choose one's work; right to join or not join labor unions; copyright and patent).
6. Understand the obligations of civic-mindedness, including voting, being informed on civic issues, volunteering and performing public service, and serving in the military or alternative service.
7. Explain how one becomes a citizen of the United States.
Students analyze the roles of the three branches of government.
8. Discuss Article I of the Constitution as it relates to the legislative branch, including eligibility for office and lengths of terms of representatives and senators; election to office; the roles of the House and Senate in impeachment proceedings; the role of the vice president; the enumerated legislative powers; and the process by which a bill becomes a law.
9. Explain the process through which the Constitution can be amended.
10. Identify their current representatives in the legislative branch of the national government.
11. Discuss Article II of the Constitution as it relates to the executive branch, including eligibility for office and length of term, election to and removal from office, the oath of office, and the enumerated executive powers.
12. Discuss Article III of the Constitution as it relates to judicial power, including the selection and confirmation of judges, length of terms, and the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court.
Students Review landmark Supreme Court interpretations of the constitution and its amendments.
13. Understand the changing interpretations of the Bill of Rights over time,

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including interpretations of the basic freedoms (religion, speech, press, petition, and assembly) articulated in the First Amendment and the due process and equal-protection-of-the-law clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment.

14. Explain the controversies that have resulted over changing interpretations of civil rights, and the constitution, including those in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, *Brown v. Board of Education*, *Miranda v. Arizona*, *Marbury vs. Madison*, *U.S. v. Nixon*, among others.

Students examine issues regarding campaigns for national, state, and local elective offices.

15. Analyze the origin, development, and role of political parties, noting those occasional periods in which there was only one major party or were more than two major parties.

16. Discuss the history of the nomination process for presidential candidates and the increasing importance of primaries in general elections.

17. Evaluate the roles of polls, campaign advertising, and the controversies over campaign funding.

18. Analyze the trends in voter turnout, reapportionment and redistricting, and the function of the Electoral College.

19. Describe the means that citizens use to participate in the political process (e.g., voting, campaigning, lobbying, filing a legal challenge, demonstrating, petitioning, picketing, running for political office, referendums, recall elections)).

Students analyze and compare the powers and procedures of the national, state, tribal and local governments.

20. Explain how conflicts between levels of government and branches of government are resolved.

21. Identify the major responsibilities and sources of revenue for state and local governments.

22. Understand the structure and function of the local court system.

23. Compare the processes of lawmaking at each of the three levels of government.

24. Discuss the Ninth and Tenth Amendments and interpretations of the extent of the federal government's power.

25. Understand the scope of presidential power and decision making through examination of case studies such as the Cuban Missile Crisis, passage of Great Society legislation, War Powers Act, Gulf War, and Bosnia.

Students evaluate the influence of the Media on Political life.

26. Discuss the meaning and importance of a free and responsible press.

27. Describe the roles of broadcast, print, electronic media, and the internet as a means of communication in American politics

Students analyze the characteristics and development of different political systems across time.

28. Compare the various ways in which power is distributed and shared in: feudalism, mercantilism, socialism, fascism, totalitarianism, communism, monarchies, parliamentary systems.

29. Investigate a revolutionary movement, outside of the U.S., in the modern era.

30. Identify forms of illegitimate power that twentieth-century dictators used to gain and hold office and the conditions and interests that supported them.