

Ocean Academy Charter School  
Curriculum Guide  
Grade 8 - Social Studies



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OCEAN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL Social Studies Curriculum	
Content Area: Social Studies	
Course Title: Social Studies-Civics	
Grade Level: Grade 8	
Unit Title	Pacing Guide in Days
<b>Civics MP3 &amp; MP4</b> <b>Diversity and Inclusion</b> <b>LGBTQ and Disabilities</b> <b>Climate Change</b> <b>Amistad</b> <b>Holocaust/Genocide</b> <b>NJAAPL</b>	
<u>Unit 1 -Foundation Concepts and Principles - Civics</u>	22 days
<u>Unit 2 - Founding Documents - Civics</u>	22 days
<u>Unit 3 -The Constitution , American Ideals and the American Experience</u> <b>Holocaust/Genocide</b> <b>Diversity and Inclusion</b>	23 days
<u>Unit 4 -Role of the Citizen</u>	23 days

OCEAN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL Civics Unit 1
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**Content Area: Social Studies: Civics Unit 1**

**Unit Title: Civics: Foundation Concepts and Principles**

**Duration: 22 Days**

**Target Course/Grade Level: Grade 8**

**Introduction/Unit Focus:**

In this unit, students will explore the core ideas that form the foundation of American government and civic life. Unlike many nations, the United States was established based on a set of guiding principles: freedom, equality, justice, and the rule of law. These ideals continue to shape the interactions between citizens, civic values, and government institutions.

Through inquiry and discussion, students will examine how individuals and institutions work together to balance personal freedoms with the needs of the wider community. They will analyze how civic ideals such as liberty, responsibility, and the common good are reflected in democratic processes and government structures.

Students will also explore the challenges of living in a diverse society, learning to recognize the effects of bias and prejudice, and the importance of open-minded dialogue and respect for differing perspectives. As part of this process, students will build skills in media literacy, conflict resolution, and collaborative problem-solving.

Ultimately, this unit will help students understand how civic life functions in a constitutional democracy and empower them to take informed, thoughtful action in their communities.

**Disciplinary Concepts for the Unit**

**Standard 9.1 Personal Financial Literacy**

This standard outlines the important fiscal knowledge, habits, and skills that must be mastered in order for students to make informed decisions about personal finance. Financial literacy is an integral component of a student's college and career readiness, enabling students to achieve fulfilling, financially-secure, and successful careers.

**Standard 9.2 Career Awareness, Exploration, Preparation and Training**

This standard outlines the importance of being knowledgeable about one's interests and talents, and being well informed about postsecondary and career options, career planning, and career requirements.

**Standard 9.4 Life Literacies and Key Skills**

This standard outline key literacies and technical skills such as critical thinking, global and cultural awareness, and technology literacy\* that are critical for students to develop to live and work in an interconnected global economy.

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**Standard 8.1 Computer Science**

Computer Science outlines a comprehensive set of concepts and skills, such as data and analysis, algorithms and programming, and computing systems.

**Standard 8.2 Design Thinking**

Technology, outlines the technological design concepts and skills essential for technological and engineering literacy. The framework design includes Engineering Design, Ethics and Culture, and the Effects of Technology on the Natural world among the disciplinary concepts

**Amistad Law: N.J.S.A. 18A 52:16A-88** Every board of education shall incorporate the information regarding the contributions of African-Americans to our country in an appropriate place in the curriculum of elementary and secondary school students.

**Holocaust Law: N.J.S.A. 18A:35-28** Every board of education shall include instruction on the Holocaust and genocides in an appropriate place in the curriculum of all elementary and secondary school pupils. The instruction shall further emphasize the personal responsibility that each citizen bears to fight racism and hatred whenever and wherever it happens.

**Diversity and Inclusion: C.18A:35-4.36a** Curriculum to include instruction on diversity and inclusion.

The instruction shall:

- (1) highlight and promote diversity, including economic diversity, equity, inclusion, tolerance, and belonging in connection with gender and sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, disabilities, and religious tolerance;
- (2) examine the impact that unconscious bias and economic disparities have at both an individual level and on society as a whole; and
- (3) encourage safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments for all students regardless of race or ethnicity, sexual and gender identities, mental and physical disabilities, and religious beliefs.

**Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI)**

Ensures that the contributions, history, and heritage of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) are included in the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSL) for Social Studies in kindergarten through Grade 12 (P.L.2021, c.416).

**21st Century Themes and Skills**

“Twenty-first century themes and skills” means themes such as global awareness; financial, economic, business, and entrepreneurial literacy; civic literacy; health literacy; learning and innovation skills, including creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, and communication and collaboration; information, media, and technology skills; and life and career skills, including flexibility. Career readiness, life literacies, and key skills education provides students with the necessary skills to make informed career and financial decisions,

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engage as responsible community members in a digital society, and to successfully meet the challenges and opportunities in an interconnected global economy.”

**Focus Standards (Major Standards)** <https://www.nj.gov/education/cccs>

**Content Standards: New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Social Studies**

6.1 U.S. History: America in the World: All students will acquire knowledge and skills to think analytically about how past and present interactions of people, cultures, and the environment shape the American heritage. Such knowledge and skills enable students to make informed decisions that reflect fundamental rights and core democratic values as productive citizens in local, national, and global communities.

6.3 Active Citizenship in the 21st Century: All students will acquire the skills needed to be active, informed citizens who value diversity and promote cultural understanding by working collaboratively to address the challenges that are inherent in living in an interconnected world

**Content Standards: New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Social Studies**

In a democratic government, there are multiple processes by which individuals can influence the creation of rules, laws, and public policy.

6.3.8.CivicsPR.4: Use evidence and quantitative data to propose or defend a public policy related to climate change.

Core Idea

Performance Expectations

Political and civil institutions impact all aspects of people’s lives.

**Diversity and Inclusion**

6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.a: Cite evidence to evaluate the extent to which the leadership and decisions of early administrations of the national government met the goals established in the Constitution.

6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.b: Evaluate the effectiveness of the fundamental principles of the Constitution (i.e., consent of the governed, rule of law, federalism, limited government, separation of powers, checks and balances, and individual rights) in establishing a federal

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	<p>government that allows for growth and change over time.</p> <p>6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.c: Distinguish the powers and responsibilities of citizens, political parties, interest groups, and the media in a variety of governmental and nongovernmental contexts</p>
<p>Governments have different structures which impact development (expansion) and civic participation.</p> <p><b>Amistad</b> <b>Diversity and Inclusion</b></p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.d: Use data and other evidence to determine the extent to which demographics influenced the debate on representation in Congress and federalism by examining the New Jersey and Virginia plans.</p>
<p>Members of society have the obligation to become informed of the facts regarding public issues and to engage in honest, mutually respectful discourse to advance public policy solutions. <b>Diversity and Inclusion</b></p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsPD.3.a: Cite evidence to determine the role that compromise played in the creation and adoption of the Constitution and Bill of Rights.</p>
<p>The United States system of government is designed to realize the ideals of liberty, democracy, limited government, equality under the law and of opportunity, justice, and property rights.</p> <p><b>Diversity and Inclusion</b> <b>LGBTQ and Disabilities</b> <b>Amistad</b></p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsDP.3.a: Use primary and secondary sources to assess whether or not the ideals found in the Declaration of Independence were fulfilled for women, African Americans, and Native Americans during this time period.</p>
<p>Fundamental rights are derived from the inherent worth of each individual and include civil, political, social, economic, and cultural rights.</p> <p><b>Diversity and Inclusion</b> <b>LGBTQ and Disabilities</b> <b>Amistad</b></p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsHR.4.a: Examine sources from a variety of perspectives to describe efforts to reform education, women’s rights, slavery, and other issues during the Antebellum period.</p>
<p>Social and political systems have protected and denied human rights (to varying degrees) throughout time.</p> <p><b>Diversity and Inclusion</b></p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsHR.3.b: Evaluate the impact of the institution of slavery on the political and economic expansion of the United States.</p>

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<p>LGBTQ and Disabilities Amistad NJAAPI Holocaust and Genocide</p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsHR.3.c: Construct an argument to explain how the expansion of slavery violated human rights and contradicted American ideals</p>
<p>A national economy includes studying the changes in the amounts and qualities of human capital, physical capital, and natural resources.</p> <p>Diversity and Inclusion LGBTQ and Disabilities Amistad NJAAPI</p>	<p>6.1.8.EconNE.4.b: Analyze how technological innovations affected the status and social class of different groups of people and explain the outcomes that resulted.</p>

**New Jersey Student Learning Standards: Interdisciplinary Connections**  
<https://www.nj.gov/education/cccs>

**Reading History**

RI.CR.8.1. Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections (including informational text features such as charts, graphs, and diagrams) that strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what an informational text says explicitly, as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.CI.8.2. Determine a central idea of an informational text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments

RI.IT.8.3. Analyze how particular elements of a text interact (e.g., how contexts influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events) across multiple text types, including across literary and informational texts.

L.KL.8.2. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

- A. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.
- B. Gather vocabulary knowledge when selecting a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
- C. Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).

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RI.TS.8.4. Analyze and explain how an author organizes, develops and presents ideas, establishes a point of view or builds supporting arguments through text structure.

RI.MF.8.6. Evaluate the choices made (by the authors, directors, or actors) when presenting an idea in different mediums and the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) to address a question or solve a problem.

RI.CT.8.8. Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) two or more informational texts that provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.

### Writing in History, Science and Technical Subjects

W.AW.8.1. Write arguments on discipline-specific content (e.g., social studies, science, technical subjects, English/Language Arts) to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- A. Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue, acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- B. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.
- C. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- D. Establish and maintain a formal or academic style, approach, and form.
- E. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

W.IW.8.2. Write informative/explanatory texts (including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes) to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

- A. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; and organize ideas, concepts, and information, using text structures (e.g., definition, classification, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, etc.) and text features (e.g., headings, graphics, and multimedia) when useful to aid in comprehension.
- B. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
- C. Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
- D. Use precise language and domain/grade-level- specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- E. Establish and maintain a formal style/academic style, approach, and form.
- F. Provide a concluding statement or section (e.g., sentence, part of a paragraph, paragraph, or multiple paragraphs) that synthesizes the information or explanation presented

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W.WP.8.4. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; seeking out assistance, models, sources or feedback to improve understanding or refine final products; focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

W.WR.8.5. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

W.SE.8.6. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

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<b>New Jersey Student Learning Standards: Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills</b>	
<b>Core Ideas</b>	<b>Performance Expectations (Identified with Standard Number and statement)</b>
<p><b>Civic Financial Responsibility</b> The potential for building and using personal wealth includes responsibility to the broader community and an understanding of the legal rights and responsibilities of being a good citizen.</p>	<p>9.1.8.CR.4 Examine the implications of legal and ethical behaviors when making financial decisions.</p>
<p><b>Global and Cultural Awareness:</b>Awareness of and appreciation for cultural differences is critical to avoid barriers to productive and positive interaction</p>	<p>9.4.8.GCA.1 Model how to navigate cultural differences with sensitivity and respect (e.g., 1.5.8.C1a).</p> <p>9.4.8.GCA.2 Demonstrate openness to diverse ideas and perspectives through active discussions to achieve a group goal</p>
<p><b>Information and Media Literacy:</b></p> <p>Increases in the quantity of information available through electronic means have heightened the need to check sources for possible distortion, exaggeration, or misrepresentation.</p>	<p>9.4.8.IML.1 Critically curate multiple resources to assess the credibility of sources when searching for information.</p> <p>9.4.8.IML.7:Use information from a variety of sources, contexts, disciplines, and cultures for a specific purpose (e.g., 1.2.8.C2a, 1.4.8.CR2a, 2.1.8.CHSS/IV.8.AI.1, W.5.8, 6.1.8.GeoSV.3.a, 6.1.8.CivicsDP.4.b, 7.1.NH. IPRET.8)</p>
<b>New Jersey Student Learning Standards: Computer Science and Design Thinking</b>	
<b>Core Ideas</b>	<b>Performance Expectations (Identified with Standard Number and Statement)</b>
<b>Interaction of Technology and Humans</b>	
<p>Technology interacts with society, sometimes bringing about changes in a society’s economy, politics, and culture, and often leading to the creation of new needs and wants. New needs and wants may create strains on local economies and workforces. Improvements in technology are intended to make</p>	<p>8.2.8.ITH.2 Compare how technologies have influenced society over time</p>

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the completion of tasks easier, safer, and/or more efficient	
<b>New Jersey Student Learning Standards: <a href="#">Climate Change Mandate</a></b>	
<b>Core Ideas</b>	<b>Performance Expectations (Identified with Standard Number and Statement)</b>
In a democratic government, there are multiple processes by which individuals can influence the creation of rules, laws, and public policy.	6.3.8.CivicsPR.4: Use evidence and quantitative data to propose or defend a public policy related to climate change.

Knowledge & Skills
<p><b>Unit Learning Targets (Objectives):</b> <i>Students will be able to...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Examine how bias, opinion, and stereotypes can influence media and public perception.</li> <li>➤ Identify how prejudice affects individuals, communities, and society as a whole.</li> <li>➤ Demonstrate respectful listening and consider perspectives that differ from their own.</li> <li>➤ Analyze the benefits and challenges of living in a culturally diverse society.</li> <li>➤ Work with others to develop peaceful solutions to conflicts.</li> <li>➤ Understand how individual or group actions can have both intended and unintended effects.</li> <li>➤ Take informed action to challenge injustice or unfair treatment.</li> </ul> <p><b>Unit Enduring Understandings:</b> <i>Students will know...</i> <i>Students will understand that...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Citizens and government must work together to protect both individual rights and the needs of the community.</li> <li>➤ Civic ideals such as freedom, justice, and equality can sometimes be in tension with one another and require balance.</li> <li>➤ Government institutions are designed to reflect and support both the common good and individual liberty.</li> <li>➤ In a diverse democracy, people must engage respectfully and critically to uphold civic values.</li> </ul> <p><b>Unit Essential Question(s):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ How do citizens, civic values, and government institutions work together to support both individual rights and the common good?</li> </ul>

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**Topic 1: Human Rights**

Time Frame: 3 days

Over the course of three lessons, students will examine the origins, meaning, and protection of natural or human rights. These rights such as life, liberty, and property are considered fundamental and universal, grounded in long-standing moral, philosophical, and religious traditions that affirm the dignity of every individual.

Students will explore how Enlightenment thinkers like John Locke helped shape modern understandings of natural rights, and how those ideas directly influenced founding American documents such as the Declaration of Independence. A key focus will be on how governments are formed to protect these rights, particularly through the principle of “consent of the governed,” which holds that government power comes from the people.

Guided by essential questions such as “*What are natural rights?*”, “*How do they reflect human dignity?*”, and “*How can government protect these rights?*”, students will think critically about the role of individuals and institutions in upholding human rights in a democratic society.

**Vocabulary**

- A. Consent of the governed
- B. Dignity
- C. Due Process
- D. English Bill of Rights
- E. Human Rights
- F. Inalienable Liberty
- G. Magna Carta
- H. Natural Rights
- I. Property
- J. Rule of Law
- K. Social contract

**Lessons, Activities and Resources**

- What are natural/human rights?
- NJ Center for Civic Education: What are natural/human rights?
- See five-minute video summarizing John Locke’s “revolutionary” ideas about natural rights from the Fraser Institute
- How did the idea of human rights develop?
- Youth for Human Rights: The Background of Human Rights?
- For students who are proficient readers, consider this lesson submitted by a successful middle school civics teacher on the evolution of specific human rights from the Magna

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Carta to the founding of the American colonies: The Magna Carta and Asserting Human Rights in the American Colonies.

- Analyze The Peoples Ancient and Just Liberties, as presented in William Penn’s trial. What section of Magna Carta did he invoke? How was his trial instrumental in creating the colony of Pennsylvania? What influence did the Magna Carta have on Penn’s creation of government in Pennsylvania as evident in The Frame of the Government of the Province of Pennsylvania?
- Why did Thomas Jefferson change Locke’s “right to life, liberty and property,” to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” in the Declaration of Independence? Why is the consent of the governing body important to protect human rights?
- National Archives: Declaration of Independence: A Transcription | National Archives
- Bill of Rights Institute: Declaration of Independence and Understanding Rights Lesson
- See the Universal Declaration of Human Rights at or Facing History lesson on Human Rights

## Topic 2: Why Do We Need Government?

Timeframe: One week

Over the course of this week, students will explore the fundamental question: *Why do we need government, and what makes it legitimate?* Beginning with the idea of a “state of nature,” a world without rules or authority, students will consider what life might be like without an organized system to resolve conflicts, protect rights, or maintain social order. They will learn that throughout history, governments have developed to provide structure, safety, and stability, often requiring individuals to give up certain freedoms in exchange for peace and security, a concept known as the social contract.

Students will analyze how governments gain legitimacy through the consent of the governed, the rule of law, and the protection of individual rights. They’ll also examine the difference between power (the ability to control) and authority (the right to control), and explore where authority comes from and why its use must be limited and accountable. The concept of rule of law, the idea that no one is above the law, is presented as a cornerstone of legitimate governance and a safeguard against the abuse of power.

Through an investigation of different forms of government, students will compare their structures and weigh their strengths and weaknesses. From dictatorships built on raw power to

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democracies rooted in shared values and individual freedoms, students will evaluate how each system approaches the balance between social order and personal liberty.

Drawing connections to the Declaration of Independence, students will identify the core purposes of government as defined by the nation's founders: to protect rights, promote the common good, and operate with the people's consent. By the end of the week, students will understand that while governments may take many forms, their legitimacy relies on how well they uphold justice, protect freedoms, and earn the trust of the people they serve.

**Vocabulary**

- A. Authority
- B. Autocracy
- C. Consent of the governed
- D. Democracy
- E. Dictatorship
- F. Government
- G. Individual rights
- H. Legitimate
- I. Monarchy
- J. Oligarchy
- K. Order
- L. Popular Sovereignty
- M. Power
- N. Republic
- O. Rule of Law
- P. State of Nature

**Lessons, Activities and Resources**

- What would life be like in a state of nature? Why do we need a government?
- Center for Civic Education: Why do we need a government
- iCivics: Why Government? Hobbes & Locke philosophy Lesson
- C-Span
- Conclude: We need government and authority:
  - To protect the weak from the strong
  - To protect individual rights
  - To provide order and safety
  - To settle arguments
  - To ensure that benefits and burdens are fairly shared
- What is the difference between power and authority?
- Center for Civic Education: Why Do We Need Authority?
- NJ Center for Civic Education: Power and Authority
- What is "consent of the governed" and how is it demonstrated?

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- Center for Civic Education: How Does Government Secure Natural Rights?
- NJ Center for Civic Education: What does “consent of the governed” mean?
- Center for Civic Education - What is Democracy?. This lesson is a simple introduction at an accessible reading level for lower middle school grades.
- What forms can governments take? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each form of government?
- NJ Center for Civic Education: Comparing Forms of government
- Common Sense: Forms of Government Lesson: Anarchy, Monarchy, Dictatorship, Oligarchy, Republic, Democracy
- What is the “rule of law” and why is it necessary for authority to be legitimate?
- New Jersey Courts: What is the Rule of Law?
- Facing History: The Rule of Law and Why it Matters
- iCivics: Rule of Law & What it might be like without it Lesson

### Topic 3: The Common Good and Civic Virtue

Timeframe: One week

During this week-long topic, students will explore how the concepts of civic virtue and the common good are essential to the survival and success of a democratic society. They will consider the central idea that in a democracy, individuals are not just free to pursue personal goals, but also bear responsibility for the welfare of their community. This balance between personal liberty and collective responsibility lies at the heart of the social contract, an agreement between the people and their government to give up certain freedoms in order to protect the rights and interests of all.

Students will examine how the Founders of the United States drew inspiration from classical republics of ancient Greece and Rome, adopting the idea that a strong republic requires citizens to demonstrate civic virtue. This means putting the common good, or general welfare of the community, above personal interests. Civic virtue involves actions such as voting, staying informed, volunteering, and participating respectfully in public life.

Through discussions and analysis, students will define and reflect on the meaning of civic virtue, social contract, and the common good, and evaluate how these concepts influence the functioning of government and society. They will consider how individual rights can be limited at times to protect the collective well-being, and why this trade-off is necessary in a functioning democracy.

Ultimately, students will understand that civic virtue is the glue that holds a democratic society together. Without citizens who are willing to act for the benefit of others and uphold shared values, democracy cannot endure.

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**Vocabulary**

- A. Civic Virtue
- B. Classical Republics
- C. Common Good
- D. Individual Rights
- E. Liberty
- F. Order
- G. Social Contract

**Lessons, Activities and Resources**

- What ideas from the classical republics about the need for civic virtue did the Founders adopt?
- Center for Civic Education: Commitment to the Common Good (60-sec. podcast)
- National Constitution Center: Civic Virtue and Why it Matters (article)
- Center for Civic Education: Common Welfare and Civic Virtue Lesson
- Center for Civic Education: Civic Virtue Makes Republican Rule Possible (podcast)
- What is the social contract?
- iCivics John Locke and the Social Contract Mini-lesson
- NJ Center for Civic Education: Social contract
- How do we promote the common good?
- NJ Center for Civic Education: What is the “common good”?
- Facing History: How Can We Make Choices that Promote The Common Good?

**Topic 4: American Ideals**

Timeframe: One week

In this week-long topic, students will examine the core ideals that serve as the foundation of the American political system. These ideals such as liberty, equality, justice, and democracy form the basis of the American social contract, as outlined in the Constitution and other founding documents. Students will explore how these shared values reflect the aspirations of a representative government and define the purpose and limits of government power.

Throughout the week, students will consider the distinction between ideals and the practices or institutions that attempt to carry them out. While institutions may change and practices may fall short, the ideals remain constant, providing a standard against which the nation measures its progress. Students will identify where these ideals are expressed in the

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Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights, and how they continue to guide democratic life in the United States.

By the end of this topic, students will understand that American Ideals are not tied to any one political viewpoint, but represent a shared national identity. Though citizens may differ in how these ideals should be interpreted or implemented, they remain essential to maintaining a functioning democracy. These principles are what bind Americans together and define the “American experiment” in self-government.

**Vocabulary**

- A. Consent of the Governed
- B. Domestic Tranquility
- C. Equality
- D. Freedom/Liberty
- E. Ideals
- F. Justice
- G. Limited Government
- H. Property
- I. Property Rights
- J. Religious Tolerance
- K. Rights
- L. Rule of Law

**Lessons, Activities and Resources**

- What are ideals? What are practices?
- American Ideals and Practices Flashcard
- What are American Ideals?
- Bill of Rights Institute: America’s Civic Values
- Facing History: Exploring Individual and American Identity
- Where do we find our “American Ideals” in our founding documents?
- Link to Constitution at <https://constitutioncenter.org/media/files/constitution.pdf>
- Choices: Ideals in US Founding Documents
- NJ Center for Civic Education: Using American Ideals to Teach About Controversial Issues and Elections. This lesson will have students identify American ideals located in our founding documents. It is useful preparation for teaching about controversial issues and elections, focusing the lesson on adherence to the ideals expressed in the Constitution and /or Declaration of Independence.

**Topic 5: Civil Discourse and Conflict Resolution**

Timeframe: One week

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In this one-week topic, students will explore how conflict is a natural and sometimes unavoidable part of life in a diverse society, and how democratic systems rely on peaceful, respectful strategies to address and resolve those conflicts. Emphasis will be placed on understanding the importance of civil discourse and the role that active listening and respect for differing viewpoints play in maintaining a healthy democracy.

Students will examine common sources of conflict, both in society and in personal relationships, and will explore how government institutions, especially courts and legal systems, are designed to provide peaceful, fair mechanisms for resolution. Beyond formal systems, students will also learn practical skills for addressing disagreement in their own lives, such as empathetic communication, active listening, and seeking common ground.

Throughout the week, students will reflect on why a functioning democracy depends on the ability to engage in civil, informed debate, even among those with opposing views. They will consider strategies for incorporating multiple perspectives into conversations and understand how mutual respect strengthens communities. By the end of the topic, students will better appreciate the role that peaceful conflict resolution and open dialogue play in preserving democratic ideals.

**Vocabulary**

- A. Active Listening
- B. Avoidance
- C. Civil Discourse
- D. Compromise
- E. Conflict
- F. Ideology
- G. Litigation
- H. Mediation
- I. Negotiation
- J. Perspectives
- K. Positions
- L. Pride
- M. Respect

**Lessons, Activities and Resources**

- What are the sources of conflict? How are conflicts resolved? How can conflicts be resolved peacefully?
- NJ Center for Civic Education: How can conflicts be resolved peacefully?
- NPR: Conflict and its Resolution
- What strategies can help to encourage civil discourse regarding controversial issues?
- Your Classroom rules, for example: Mr. Savino's Controversial Topic Discussion Guidelines
- Kid's health.org: Teacher's Guide to Conflict/Resolution Grades 6-8

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- New York Times: Talking Across Divides: 10 Ways to Encourage Civil Classroom Conversation On Difficult Issues
- NJ Center for Civic Education: How can conflicts be resolved peacefully?
- Constitutional Rights Foundation: Civil Conversation and Roleplays Curriculum Library
- What strategies can help incorporate multiple perspectives into civil discourse?
- Learning for Justice: Perspectives For a Diverse America (Identity, Diversity, Justice and Action)
- Facing History: Fostering Civil Discourse
- Story Corps Active Listening Activity
- Why is respect for diverse perspectives a crucial component of civil discourse?
- Choices: Values and Public policy

### Topic 6: Elections

Timeframe: Three weeks

Over the course of three weeks, students will examine the vital role that voting and elections play in a democratic republic. At the heart of a representative democracy is the idea of "consent of the governed," and elections are the primary way that citizens express that consent. Through voting, the public chooses individuals to make political decisions on their behalf and help shape policies that serve the common good.

This topic will also focus on the rights and responsibilities that come with voting, including understanding who is eligible to vote in New Jersey and what civic duties elected representatives are expected to uphold. Students will explore how elections not only determine leadership but also serve as a platform for debating ideas and policies, making them both essential and inherently controversial.

To participate meaningfully in the political process, citizens must be able to think critically about what they read and hear. Students will learn how to evaluate the credibility of information, recognize bias, and analyze political messaging. They will also develop strategies for assessing candidates for public office based on evidence, qualifications, and policy positions. By the end of this topic, students will understand that voting is not just a right, it is a responsibility that requires informed and thoughtful engagement.

#### Vocabulary

- A. Accuracy
- B. Confirmation Bias
- C. Consent of the governed
- D. Controversy
- E. Distracting news

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- F. Elected representatives
- G. Evaluate
- H. Fabricated news
- I. Facts
- J. Media
- K. Mock Election
- L. Reliable
- M. Responsibilities
- N. Right to Vote
- O. Sources

**Lessons, Activities and Resources**

- Why is voting important?
- iCivics: Voting Matters
- What are voting requirements in New Jersey?
- NJ State Dept.--Elections
- How do elections work?
- Center for Civic Education: Becoming A Voter
- iCivics: The Electoral Process
- NJ State Dept.--Elections
- Center for Civic Education : Being an informed voter
- Who represents me?
- iCivics: Who Represents Me? Webquest
- C-Span: Researching your members of the House of Representatives
- What are the responsibilities of elected representatives?
- Edsitement: The President's Roles and Responsibilities
- How can you determine the accuracy of what you read and view (Media Literacy)?
- NJ Center for Civic Education: Media Literacy
- Learning for Justice: Digital and Civic Literacy
- International Federation of Library Associations chart: How to Spot Fake News
- Facing History: Media Literacy
- FactCheck.org at <https://www.factcheck.org/> a nonpartisan, nonprofit "consumer advocate" for voters that aims to reduce the level of deception and confusion in U.S. politics by monitoring the factual accuracy of what is being said in TV ads, debates, speeches, interviews, etc.
- How can you evaluate candidates for positions of authority
- How well do a political party's views conform with your values? Pew Research political party affiliation quiz
- Center for Civic Education: How can you choose people for positions of authority?
- iCivics: How can we evaluate candidates for positions of authority?

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Instructional Plan	
Suggested Activities	Resources/Texts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ DBQs and Mini-DBQs</li> <li>➤ Argumentative Writing Task: Make an argument about a Constitutional Issue or an issue related to a violation of US Citizens might be viewed as a violation of human rights.</li> <li>➤ Explanatory/Informative Writing Task</li> <li>➤ Summarize the Strengths and Weaknesses of the Constitution</li> <li>➤ Making connections between current and past events - cause and effect</li> </ul>	<p>Curriculum development Resources/Instructional Materials/Equipment Needed /Teacher Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Textbook: Discovering Our Past: United States History: The Early Years</li> <li>➤ Britannica LaunchPacks</li> <li>➤ Atlas of United States History</li> <li>➤ Graphic organizers</li> <li>➤ Supplemental Readings</li> <li>➤ Relevant Video Clips</li> <li>➤ American Heritage Primary Source Library</li> <li>➤ Integration of current events from relevant sources</li> <li>➤ Library of Congress</li> <li>➤ ABC-CLIO (Primary Sources)</li> </ul> <p><b>Primary Sources</b> National Archives Native American Heritage: Library of Congress ABC-CLIO (Primary Sources) Rutgers Center for Civics Education</p>
Evidence of Student Learning	
<p><b>Formative Assessments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Thought Bubble - what the Mill Girls were thinking</li> <li>➤ Political Cartoons - Andrew Jackson</li> <li>➤ Mini Debate - Impact of Cotton Gin</li> <li>➤ Observations</li> <li>➤ Questioning</li> <li>➤ Discussion</li> <li>➤ Exit/Admit Slips</li> <li>➤ Learning/Response Logs</li> <li>➤ Graphic Organizers</li> <li>➤ Peer/Self Assessments</li> <li>➤ Practice Presentations</li> <li>➤ Visual Representations</li> </ul>	

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- Kinesthetic Assessments
- Constructive Quizzes
- Think Pair Share
- As I See It
- Homework
- Class work
- Teacher observation
- Group participation
- Notebook assessment
- Project presentations
- Class discussions
- Do Now
- Varied journal prompts, spelling or vocabulary lists
- Anchor activities
- Choice of review activities
- Homework options
- Flexible grouping
- Varied computer programs
- Multiple learning intelligence
- Use of graphic organizers
- Think-Pair-Share by readiness, interest and/or learning profile
- Games to practice mastery of information and skill
- Multiple levels of questioning
- Jigsaw
- Multiple Texts
- Alternative Assessments
- Modified Assessments
- Open Ended Activities/ Assessments

**Summative Assessments:**

- Factory vs. Plantation - identify the changes occurring in the US during the Industrial Revolution, list differences and similarities, analyze how differences led to war
- Analyze primary sources - Indian Removal Act & Trail of Tears
- Journal/diary/letter from natives
- Worcester v. Georgia
- Chart immigration - include number of people, where they came from and reasons for leaving
- Create an Underground Railroad Game - board game, comprehension questions, real problems slaves encountered
- Lesson Quizzes
- Chapter Assessment

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- Bio Cube Project for influential Native Americans and influential American Inventors.
- Westward Expansion Timeline Project
- 19 Century Inventions Advertising Project
- End of unit / chapter tests.
- End of term / semester tests.
- Mid-unit quizzes
- All evaluations may contain some or all: Multiple choice, true/false, short answer, essay, and visual identification and description questions.

**Benchmark Assessments:**

- Unit tests, research based writing assignments, and final exam.
- Teacher-created pre-assessments and post-assessments
- Textbook generated pre and post assessments
- Teacher created Benchmark Assessments
- DBQs
- Common Grade Level Subject Assessments
- LinkIt! Assessments Data/Test Score Analysis

**Alternative Assessments**

- Independent reading and inquiry
- Self-selected reading materials/vocabulary
- Varied pacing
- Differentiated instruction
- Student-teacher goal setting
- Whole to part and part to whole explanations
- Varied computer programs
- Varied supplemental materials
- Stations and workshops
- Student choice (assessment options)
- Notes provided by teacher
- Graphic organizers
- Scaffold assignments
- Student choice/option assessment
- Student TED Talk
- Unit Project
- Socratic Seminar
- Silent Seminar
- Discussion Board (Google Classroom)

**Performance Tasks:**

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- (When appropriate) This type of task demonstrates students transfer of learning and application to a performance task. Think about what you want the students to be able to do at the end of the unit.
  - Digital Portfolio Review

**Suggested Options for Differentiation and Modifications**

**Special Education**

- Follow all IEP modifications.
- Use visuals, diagrams, timelines, and multimedia resources.
- Provide guided notes, graphic organizers, and study guides.
- Pre-teach and review vocabulary and key concepts.
- Offer leveled texts or simplified versions of primary sources.
- Provide small-group or one-on-one instruction.
- Assign supportive lab/learning partners or peer tutors.
- Offer preferential seating.
- Read aloud directions or key passages.
- Allow extended time on projects, essays, and assessments.
- Accept oral, dictated, or technology-assisted responses.
- Reduce or modify assignment/test length.
- Provide access to large-print, Braille, or digital text with audio supports.
- Allow use of scribes, text-to-speech, or augmentative communication devices.

**Students with 504 Plans**

- Follow the 504 plan.
- Provide extended time for assignments and assessments.
- Offer small-group or quiet testing environments.
- Provide preferential seating.
- Accept oral or dictated responses.
- Provide large-print, Braille, or digital texts with assistive technology.
- Allow use of scribes or communication devices.

**Students at Risk of School Failure**

- Provide extended time and break tasks into smaller steps.

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- Reduce the number of questions or workload when appropriate.
- Provide copies of teacher notes, outlines, or guided reading questions.
- Pre-teach and reinforce key vocabulary and concepts.
- Assign peer or teacher support for note-taking and projects.
- Provide preferential seating and structured routines.
- Offer frequent teacher check-ins and feedback.
- Use real-world connections and current events to increase engagement.

### **Gifted and Talented**

- Ask higher-order, open-ended questions to promote critical thinking.
- Provide opportunities for independent inquiry and research projects.
- Offer enrichment texts, primary sources, and historical documents for deeper analysis.
- Encourage simulations, debates, and mock trials.
- Allow choice in projects, assessments, and presentations.
- Group flexibly for inquiry projects and problem-solving tasks.
- Integrate cross-curricular activities (ELA for persuasive writing, math for data analysis).
- Provide leadership opportunities such as facilitating discussions or mentoring peers.
- Encourage reflection, peer teaching, and authentic presentations.

### **Multilingual Learners**

- Collaborate with ESL/MLL specialists.
- Provide small-group instruction and partner support.
- Pre-teach and revisit vocabulary with visuals, cognates, and realia (maps, artifacts, political cartoons).
- Use bilingual glossaries, graphic organizers, and labeled diagrams.
- Scaffold reading of primary sources with summaries or side-by-side translations when possible.
- Provide sentence frames, discussion stems, and writing templates.
- Allow extended time and oral presentations instead of written responses.
- Use digital supports (translation tools, captioned videos, read-aloud technology).

### **Diversity and Inclusion**

- Integrate diverse voices, cultures, and perspectives into lessons and primary sources.

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- Provide alternative project formats (visual, oral, digital).
- Use visuals, timelines, and maps alongside text.
- Use clear academic language and avoid slang/idioms.
- Collaborate with cultural liaisons, language specialists, and support staff.
- Establish classroom norms for respectful debate and discussion.
- Provide sufficient wait time for responses.
- Foster strong school-family connections and invite families to contribute cultural perspectives.

**Low Prep Strategies**

Varied journal prompts, spelling or vocabulary lists : Students are given a choice of different journal prompts, spelling lists or vocabulary lists depending on level of proficiency/assessment results.

Anchor activities: Anchor activities provide meaningful options for students when they are not actively engaged in classroom activities (e.g., when they finish early, are waiting for further directions, are stumped, first enter class, or when the teacher is working with other students). Anchors should be directly related to the current learning goals.

Choices of books: Different textbooks or novels (often at different levels) that students are allowed to choose from for content study or for literature circles.

Choices of review activities: Different review or extension activities are made available to students during a specific section of the class (such as at the beginning or end of the period).

Homework options: Students are provided with choices about the assignments they complete as homework. Or, students are directed to specific homework based on student needs.

Student-teacher goal setting: The teacher and student work together to develop individual learning goals for the student.

Flexible grouping: Students might be instructed as a whole group, in small groups of various permutations (homogeneous or heterogeneous by skill or interest), in pairs or individuals. Any small groups or pairs change over time based on assessment data.

Varied computer programs: The computer is used as an additional center in the classroom, and students are directed to specific websites or software that allows them to work on skills at their level.

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Multiple Intelligence or Learning Style options: Students select activities or are assigned an activity that is designed for learning a specific area of content through their strong intelligence (verbal-linguistic, interpersonal, musical, etc.)

Varying scaffolding of same organizer: Provide graphic organizers that require students to complete various amounts of information. Some will be more filled out (by the teacher) than others.

Think-Pair-Share by readiness, interest, and/or learning profile: Students are placed in pre-determined pairs, asked to think about a question for a specific amount of time, then are asked to share their answers first with their partner and then with the whole group.

Mini workshops to re-teach or extend skills: A short, specific lesson with a student or group of students that focuses on one area of interest or reinforcement of a specific skill.

Orbitals: Students conduct independent investigations generally lasting 3-6 weeks. The investigations “orbit” or revolve around some facet of the curriculum.

Games to practice mastery of information and skill: Use games as a way to review and reinforce concepts. Include questions and tasks that are on a variety of cognitive levels.

Multiple levels of questions: Teachers vary the sorts of questions posed to different students based on their ability to handle them. Varying questions is an excellent way to build the confidence (and motivation) of students who are reluctant to contribute to class discourse. Note: Most teachers would probably admit that without even thinking about it they tend to address particular types of questions to particular students. In some cases, such tendencies may need to be corrected. (For example, a teacher may be unknowingly addressing all of the more challenging questions to one student, thereby inhibiting other students’ learning and fostering class resentment of that student.)

### **High Prep Strategies**

Cubing: Designed to help students think about a topic or idea from many different angles or perspectives. The tasks are placed on the six sides of a cube and use commands that help support thinking (justify, describe, evaluate, connect, etc.). The students complete the task on the side that ends face up, either independently or in homogenous groups.

Tiered assignment/ product: The content and objective are the same, but the process and/or the products that students must create to demonstrate mastery are varied according to the students’ readiness level.

Independent studies: Students choose a topic of interest that they are curious about and want to discover new information on. Research is done from questions developed by the student and/or teacher. The researcher produces a product to share learning with classmates.

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4MAT: Teachers plan instruction for each of four learning preferences over the course of several days on a given topic. Some lessons focus on mastery, some on understanding, some on personal involvement, and some on synthesis. Each learner has a chance to approach the topic through preferred modes and to strengthen weaker areas.

Stations/ Learning Centers: A station (or simply a collection of materials) that students might use independently to explore topics or practice skills. Centers allow individuals or groups of students to work at their own pace. Students are constantly reassessed to determine which centers are appropriate for students at a particular time, and to plan activities at those centers to build the most pressing skills.

Tape recorded materials at different levels: Books on tape are purchased or (created by the teacher) so that students can listen to the book being read aloud to them while they follow along in the text. This is often done at a listening station, where tapes of books/information on various reading levels are available.

Choice Boards: Work assignments are written on cards that are placed in hanging pockets. By asking students to select a card from a particular row of pockets, the teacher targets work toward student needs yet allows student choice.

### Supplemental Resources

**Instructional Resources:**

- iCivic
- Discovering our Past: History of the United States

**Supplemental Resources:**

- Rutgers Center for Civics Instruction
- EdPuzzle
- CommonLit

**Intervention Resources:**

- Audio version of text
- Video exploration
- Review Games

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<b>OCEAN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL Unit 2 Overview</b>	
<b>Content Area: Social Studies: Civics Unit 2</b>	
<b>Unit Title: Civics: Foundation Concepts and Principles</b>	<b>Duration: 22 Days</b>
<b>Target Course/Grade Level: Grade 8</b>	
<b>Introduction/Unit Focus:</b>	
<p>This unit provides an in-depth exploration of the fundamental ideas and principles that form the foundation of the United States government. Unlike many other nations, which were often established through conquest or monarchy, America was uniquely founded on a set of shared ideals such as liberty, justice, and equality that continue to unite its citizens across diverse backgrounds. These core values serve as the guiding principles behind the country's constitutional democracy.</p> <p>Throughout this unit, students will investigate how these foundational concepts influenced the creation of the U.S. Constitution and how the document organizes government power to protect individual freedoms while promoting the common good. They will analyze the balance between personal rights and societal responsibilities, and how this balance is maintained through democratic processes and institutions.</p> <p>By understanding these key ideas, students will gain insight into the rationale behind the government's structure, including the separation of powers, checks and balances, and the rule of law. They will also explore the ways in which citizens participate in democracy and contribute to the ongoing effort to uphold the nation's ideals.</p> <p>This unit encourages students to connect historical principles to contemporary civic life, helping them recognize their role in sustaining democracy and making informed decisions as active citizens. In doing so, students will develop a deeper appreciation for the unique nature of American government and the ideals that continue to shape the nation's identity.</p>	
<b>Disciplinary Concepts for the Unit</b>	
<p><b>Standard 9.1 Personal Financial Literacy</b> This standard outlines the important fiscal knowledge, habits, and skills that must be mastered in order for students to make informed decisions about personal finance. Financial literacy is an integral component of a student's college and career readiness, enabling students to achieve fulfilling, financially-secure, and successful careers.</p>	

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Standard 9.2 Career Awareness, Exploration, Preparation and Training

This standard outlines the importance of being knowledgeable about one's interests and talents, and being well informed about postsecondary and career options, career planning, and career requirements.

Standard 9.4 Life Literacies and Key Skills

This standard outline key literacies and technical skills such as critical thinking, global and cultural awareness, and technology literacy\* that are critical for students to develop to live and work in an interconnected global economy.

Standard 8.1 Computer Science

Computer Science outlines a comprehensive set of concepts and skills, such as data and analysis, algorithms and programming, and computing systems.

Standard 8.2 Design Thinking

Technology, outlines the technological design concepts and skills essential for technological and engineering literacy. The framework design includes Engineering Design, Ethics and Culture, and the Effects of Technology on the Natural world among the disciplinary concepts

**Amistad Law: N.J.S.A. 18A 52:16A-88** Every board of education shall incorporate the information regarding the contributions of African-Americans to our country in an appropriate place in the curriculum of elementary and secondary school students.

**Holocaust Law: N.J.S.A. 18A:35-28** Every board of education shall include instruction on the Holocaust and genocides in an appropriate place in the curriculum of all elementary and secondary school pupils. The instruction shall further emphasize the personal responsibility that each citizen bears to fight racism and hatred whenever and wherever it happens.

**Diversity and Inclusion: C.18A:35-4.36a** Curriculum to include instruction on diversity and inclusion.

The instruction shall:

- (1) highlight and promote diversity, including economic diversity, equity, inclusion, tolerance, and belonging in connection with gender and sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, disabilities, and religious tolerance;
- (2) examine the impact that unconscious bias and economic disparities have at both an individual level and on society as a whole; and
- (3) encourage safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments for all students regardless of race or ethnicity, sexual and gender identities, mental and physical disabilities, and religious beliefs.

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**Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI)**

Ensures that the contributions, history, and heritage of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) are included in the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLs) for Social Studies in kindergarten through Grade 12 (P.L.2021, c.416).

**21st Century Themes and Skills**

“Twenty-first century themes and skills” means themes such as global awareness; financial, economic, business, and entrepreneurial literacy; civic literacy; health literacy; learning and innovation skills, including creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, and communication and collaboration; information, media, and technology skills; and life and career skills, including flexibility. Career readiness, life literacies, and key skills education provides students with the necessary skills to make informed career and financial decisions, engage as responsible community members in a digital society, and to successfully meet the challenges and opportunities in an interconnected global economy.”

**Focus Standards (Major Standards)** <https://www.nj.gov/education/cccs>

**Content Standards: New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Social Studies**

6.1 U.S. History: America in the World: All students will acquire knowledge and skills to think analytically about how past and present interactions of people, cultures, and the environment shape the American heritage. Such knowledge and skills enable students to make informed decisions that reflect fundamental rights and core democratic values as productive citizens in local, national, and global communities.

6.3 Active Citizenship in the 21st Century: All students will acquire the skills needed to be active, informed citizens who value diversity and promote cultural understanding by working collaboratively to address the challenges that are inherent in living in an interconnected world

In a democratic government, there are multiple processes by which individuals can influence the creation of rules, laws, and public policy.

6.3.8.CivicsPR.4: Use evidence and quantitative data to propose or defend a public policy related to climate change.

**Core Idea**

**Performance Expectations**

Political and civil institutions impact all aspects of people’s lives.

**Diversity and Inclusion**

6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.a: Cite evidence to evaluate the extent to which the leadership and decisions of early administrations of the national government met the goals established in the Constitution.  
6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.b: Evaluate the effectiveness of the fundamental principles

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	<p>of the Constitution (i.e., consent of the governed, rule of law, federalism, limited government, separation of powers, checks and balances, and individual rights) in establishing a federal government that allows for growth and change over time. 6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.c: Distinguish the powers and responsibilities of citizens, political parties, interest groups, and the media in a variety of governmental and nongovernmental contexts</p>
<p>Governments have different structures which impact development (expansion) and civic participation. Amistad Diversity and Inclusion</p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.d: Use data and other evidence to determine the extent to which demographics influenced the debate on representation in Congress and federalism by examining the New Jersey and Virginia plans.</p>
<p>Members of society have the obligation to become informed of the facts regarding public issues and to engage in honest, mutually respectful discourse to advance public policy solutions. Diversity and Inclusion</p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsPD.3.a: Cite evidence to determine the role that compromise played in the creation and adoption of the Constitution and Bill of Rights.</p>
<p>The United States system of government is designed to realize the ideals of liberty, democracy, limited government, equality under the law and of opportunity, justice, and property rights. Diversity and Inclusion LGBTQ and Disabilities Amistad</p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsDP.3.a: Use primary and secondary sources to assess whether or not the ideals found in the Declaration of Independence were fulfilled for women, African Americans, and Native Americans during this time period.</p>
<p>Fundamental rights are derived from the inherent worth of each individual and include civil, political, social, economic, and cultural rights. Diversity and Inclusion LGBTQ and Disabilities Amistad</p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsHR.4.a: Examine sources from a variety of perspectives to describe efforts to reform education, women’s rights, slavery, and other issues during the Antebellum period.</p>
<p>Social and political systems have protected and denied human rights (to varying degrees) throughout time.</p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsHR.3.b: Evaluate the impact of the institution of slavery on the political</p>

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<p>Diversity and Inclusion LGBTQ and Disabilities Amistad NJAAPI Holocaust and Genocide</p>	<p>and economic expansion of the United States. 6.1.8.CivicsHR.3.c: Construct an argument to explain how the expansion of slavery violated human rights and contradicted American ideals</p>
<p>A national economy includes studying the changes in the amounts and qualities of human capital, physical capital, and natural resources. Diversity and Inclusion LGBTQ and Disabilities Amistad NJAAPI</p>	<p>6.1.8.EconNE.4.b: Analyze how technological innovations affected the status and social class of different groups of people and explain the outcomes that resulted.</p>

<u>Core Idea</u>	<u>Performance Expectations</u>
<p>Political and civil institutions impact all aspects of people’s lives. Diversity and Inclusion</p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.a: Cite evidence to evaluate the extent to which the leadership and decisions of early administrations of the national government met the goals established in the Constitution. 6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.b: Evaluate the effectiveness of the fundamental principles of the Constitution (i.e., consent of the governed, rule of law, federalism, limited government, separation of powers, checks and balances, and individual rights) in establishing a federal government that allows for growth and change over time. 6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.c: Distinguish the powers and responsibilities of citizens, political parties, interest groups, and the media in a variety of governmental and nongovernmental contexts</p>
<p>Governments have different structures which impact development (expansion) and civic participation. Amistad Diversity and Inclusion</p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.d: Use data and other evidence to determine the extent to which demographics influenced the debate on representation in Congress and federalism by examining the New Jersey and Virginia plans.</p>

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<p>Members of society have the obligation to become informed of the facts regarding public issues and to engage in honest, mutually respectful discourse to advance public policy solutions.</p> <p><b>Diversity and Inclusion</b></p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsPD.3.a: Cite evidence to determine the role that compromise played in the creation and adoption of the Constitution and Bill of Rights.</p>
<p>The United States system of government is designed to realize the ideals of liberty, democracy, limited government, equality under the law and of opportunity, justice, and property rights.</p> <p><b>Diversity and Inclusion</b> <b>LGBTQ and Disabilities</b> <b>Amistad</b></p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsDP.3.a: Use primary and secondary sources to assess whether or not the ideals found in the Declaration of Independence were fulfilled for women, African Americans, and Native Americans during this time period.</p>
<p>Fundamental rights are derived from the inherent worth of each individual and include civil, political, social, economic, and cultural rights.</p> <p><b>Diversity and Inclusion</b> <b>LGBTQ and Disabilities</b> <b>Amistad</b></p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsHR.4.a: Examine sources from a variety of perspectives to describe efforts to reform education, women’s rights, slavery, and other issues during the Antebellum period.</p>
<p>Social and political systems have protected and denied human rights (to varying degrees) throughout time.</p> <p><b>Diversity and Inclusion</b> <b>LGBTQ and Disabilities</b> <b>Amistad</b> <b>NJAAPI</b> <b>Holocaust and Genocide</b></p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsHR.3.b: Evaluate the impact of the institution of slavery on the political and economic expansion of the United States.</p> <p>6.1.8.CivicsHR.3.c: Construct an argument to explain how the expansion of slavery violated human rights and contradicted American ideals</p>
<p>A national economy includes studying the changes in the amounts and qualities of human capital, physical capital, and natural resources.</p> <p><b>Diversity and Inclusion</b> <b>LGBTQ and Disabilities</b> <b>Amistad</b> <b>NJAAPI</b></p>	<p>6.1.8.EconNE.4.b: Analyze how technological innovations affected the status and social class of different groups of people and explain the outcomes that resulted.</p>

**Primary Interdisciplinary Connections: English Language Arts**  
**New Jersey Student Learning Standards: Interdisciplinary Connections**  
<https://www.nj.gov/education/cccs>

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**Reading History**

RI.CR.8.1. Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections (including informational text features such as charts, graphs, and diagrams) that strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what an informational text says explicitly, as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.CI.8.2. Determine a central idea of an informational text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments

RI.IT.8.3. Analyze how particular elements of a text interact (e.g., how contexts influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events) across multiple text types, including across literary and informational texts.

L.KL.8.2. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

- D. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.
- E. Gather vocabulary knowledge when selecting a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
- F. Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).

RI.TS.8.4. Analyze and explain how an author organizes, develops and presents ideas, establishes a point of view or builds supporting arguments through text structure.

RI.MF.8.6. Evaluate the choices made (by the authors, directors, or actors) when presenting an idea in different mediums and the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) to address a question or solve a problem.

RI.CT.8.8. Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) two or more informational texts that provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.

**Writing in History, Science and Technical Subjects**

W.AW.8.1. Write arguments on discipline-specific content (e.g., social studies, science, technical subjects, English/Language Arts) to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- F. Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue, acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- G. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.
- H. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

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- I. Establish and maintain a formal or academic style, approach, and form.
- J. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

W.IW.8.2. Write informative/explanatory texts (including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes) to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

- G. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; and organize ideas, concepts, and information, using text structures (e.g., definition, classification, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, etc.) and text features (e.g., headings, graphics, and multimedia) when useful to aid in comprehension.
- H. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
- I. Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
- J. Use precise language and domain/grade-level- specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- K. Establish and maintain a formal style/academic style, approach, and form.
- L. Provide a concluding statement or section (e.g., sentence, part of a paragraph, paragraph, or multiple paragraphs) that synthesizes the information or explanation presented

W.WP.8.4. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; seeking out assistance, models, sources or feedback to improve understanding or refine final products; focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

W.WR.8.5. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

W.SE.8.6. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

**New Jersey Student Learning Standards: Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills**

**Core Ideas**

**Performance Expectations (Identified with Standard Number and statement)**

**Civic Financial Responsibility**  
The potential for building and using personal wealth includes responsibility to the broader community and an

9.1.8.CR.4 Examine the implications of legal and ethical behaviors when making financial decisions.

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<p>understanding of the legal rights and responsibilities of being a good citizen.</p>	
<p><b>Global and Cultural Awareness:</b>Awareness of and appreciation for cultural differences is critical to avoid barriers to productive and positive interaction</p>	<p>9.4.8.GCA.1 Model how to navigate cultural differences with sensitivity and respect (e.g., 1.5.8.C1a). 9.4.8.GCA.2 Demonstrate openness to diverse ideas and perspectives through active discussions to achieve a group goal</p>
<p><b>Information and Media Literacy:</b> Increases in the quantity of information available through electronic means have heightened the need to check sources for possible distortion, exaggeration, or misrepresentation.</p>	<p>9.4.8.IML.1 Critically curate multiple resources to assess the credibility of sources when searching for information. 9.4.8.IML.7:Use information from a variety of sources, contexts, disciplines, and cultures for a specific purpose (e.g., 1.2.8.C2a, 1.4.8.CR2a, 2.1.8.CHSS/IV.8.AI.1, W.5.8, 6.1.8.GeoSV.3.a, 6.1.8.CivicsDP.4.b, 7.1.NH. IPRET.8)</p>
<p><b>New Jersey Student Learning Standards: Computer Science and Design Thinking</b></p>	
<p><b>Core Ideas</b></p>	<p><b>Performance Expectations (Identified with Standard Number and Statement)</b></p>
<p><b>Interaction of Technology and Humans</b></p>	
<p>Technology interacts with society, sometimes bringing about changes in a society’s economy, politics, and culture, and often leading to the creation of new needs and wants. New needs and wants may create strains on local economies and workforces. Improvements in technology are intended to make the completion of tasks easier, safer, and/or more efficient</p>	<p>8.2.8.ITH.2 Compare how technologies have influenced society over time</p>
<p>Social and Emotional Learning New Jersey SEL</p> <p>Competencies and Sub-Competencies Social and emotional learning (SEL) involves the process through which children and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. The purpose of the SEL competencies is to provide schools with guidelines for integrating SEL across grades and subject areas.</p>	

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**New Jersey Student Learning Standards: Climate Change Mandate**

Core Ideas	Performance Expectations (Identified with Standard Number and Statement)
In a democratic government, there are multiple processes by which individuals can influence the creation of rules, laws, and public policy.	6.3.8.CivicsPR.4: Use evidence and quantitative data to propose or defend a public policy related to climate change.

**Knowledge and Skills**

**Unit Learning Targets:**

*Students will be able to...*

- Explain the key ideals and principles that influenced the founding of the United States government.
- Describe how the U.S. Constitution organizes government power to balance individual rights with the common good.
- Analyze the roles of separation of powers, checks and balances, and the rule of law in maintaining a constitutional democracy.
- Identify the ways citizens participate in democratic processes and the importance of civic engagement.
- Evaluate how foundational American ideals continue to shape government and society today.
- Connect historical concepts of government to current issues and the responsibilities of citizens.
- Demonstrate an understanding of how democratic institutions protect freedoms while promoting order and justice.

**Topic 1: Historical Foundations of the American Republic**

This topic explores how the founding documents of the United States: the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights express and establish core American ideals. It begins by examining the historical events and ideas that led to the writing of the Declaration of Independence, including the Founders' beliefs about government and the concept of popular sovereignty, which holds that the authority of government comes from the consent of the governed. The topic also investigates why the Constitution was created to address the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation and how it structures government power to prevent abuses.

Students will study the Constitution's organization of government, focusing on the separation of powers among the three branches and the system of checks and balances that ensures no

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single branch becomes too powerful. The role of democratic norms and values in supporting the functioning of democracy will be discussed, including the character traits the Founders expected from elected and appointed officials. Students will also explore the main purposes of government as outlined in the Preamble and consider how the Constitution promotes economic development.

Through this exploration, students will understand that the Constitution and Bill of Rights create a framework that balances government authority with individual rights. They will also learn how ongoing debates about individual rights, state versus federal power, and democratic practices have shaped the political and economic institutions of the United States. This topic emphasizes the importance of citizens and leaders adhering to democratic norms to sustain a healthy democracy.

**Vocabulary**

- A. Articles of Confederation
- B. Checks and balances
- C. Constitution
- D. Popular sovereignty
- E. Separation of Powers
- F. The Enlightenment

**Lessons, Activities and Resources**

- How did the Magna Carta influence the founders and American government?
- The National Archives: Magna Carta. A very brief introduction to the Magna Carta can be found at Magna Carta - National Archives . Teachers can find useful content for their own
- planning at The American Legacy of the Magna Carta. This text is more detailed and may be
- applicable for high school students.
- How did Enlightenment ideas influence America's founding documents?
- iCivics min-lesson: Enlightenment Ideas that influenced American political thinkers
- Why was the Declaration of Independence Written?
- Declaring the Grievances: NEH Edsitement
- Lesson Plan: Declare the Causes: The Declaration of Independence
- National Archives: What does the Declaration of Independence say?
- National Archives: Excerpts from the Declaration of Independence
- Declaring Independence:
- Lesson Plan: The Argument of the Declaration of Independence
- Close Reading: <https://teachinghistory.org/teaching-materials/ask-a-master-teacher/21770>
- National Archives: To Sign or Not to Sign

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- NJ Center for Civic Education: Could the American Revolution have been avoided?
- Articles of Confederation
- iCivics Lesson: Wanted: A Just Right Government
- NEH EDSITEment: The Road to the Constitutional Convention Constitution
- iCivics Lesson: Constitution Day Lesson Plan
- Why was the Constitution written? How is it structured? What does it do? How can it be changed? Civics Webquest: The Constitution: Rules for Running a Country
- The question of representation: NJ Center for Civic Education: New Jersey and the Federal Convention
- National Constitution Center: To Sign or Not to Sign
- Bill of Rights
- iCivics Lesson: You've Got Rights!
- iCivics Game: Do I Have a Right?

## **Topic 2: The Legislative Branch**

This topic focuses on the role and structure of the legislative branch in the United States government. It begins by exploring why the Founders established three separate branches of government and considers whether the legislative branch should still be viewed as “first among equals” compared to the executive and judicial branches. Students will examine the powers, responsibilities, and limits of Congress, understanding how it functions as the primary lawmaking body of the federal government.

The topic also highlights Congress’s important role as the connection between the American people and the federal government, representing the diverse interests of citizens from across the nation. Students will learn about the multiple roles members of Congress must play, including lawmakers, politicians, and servants to their constituents. Additionally, the topic acknowledges that state and local legislatures carry out many similar functions at different levels of government.

Throughout the week, students will consider how the powers of Congress are balanced and how safeguards exist to prevent the abuse of authority within the legislative branch. This exploration helps students understand the importance of Congress in shaping laws and policies that affect everyday life while maintaining accountability to the people.

### **Vocabulary**

- A. Bicameral Legislation
- B. Checks and Balances
- C. Congress
- D. House of Representatives

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E. Senate

**Lessons, Activities and Resources**

- Why do we have three branches of government?
- House of Representatives: Branches of Government | [house.gov](http://house.gov)
- How do the three branches of government interact? Separation of Powers and Checks and Balances
- NEH EDSITEment: Balancing the Three Branches
- National Archives: Checks and Balances in Action and Separation of Powers or Shared Powers
- The Legislative Process: How does a bill become a law?
- iCivics: Legislative Branch
- National Archives: Congress in Article I of the Constitution and The Legislative Process: Congress at Work
- ERIC: Legislative Lobbying Simulation
- How many representatives should each state have?
- NJ Center for Civic Education: New Jersey and the Federal Convention

**Topic 3: The Executive Branch**

This topic examines the powers and responsibilities of the President of the United States, focusing on how the government can balance effective leadership with protections against the misuse of presidential power. Students will explore the constitutional roles and qualifications of the President and investigate how the authority of the executive branch has expanded since the nation's founding. The topic addresses ongoing debates about the limits of presidential power and how different presidents have interpreted and stretched their office's authority over time.

Students will also learn about the President's Cabinet, a group of top advisors who play a significant role in shaping decisions that impact the country. The electoral process for choosing a president will be discussed, including controversies surrounding recent elections. Additionally, this topic highlights that state and local governments have executive offices with responsibilities similar to those of the President, helping students understand how executive power functions at various levels of government.

Throughout the week, students will consider ways to protect against abuse of presidential authority while ensuring that the executive branch can effectively lead and administer the government. This exploration offers insight into the balance between strong leadership and accountability in American democracy.

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**Vocabulary**

- A. Cabinet
- B. Electoral College
- C. Electors
- D. President
- E. Veto
- F. Vice-President

**Lessons, Activities and Resources**

- The power and role of the Executive Branch
- iCivics
- Executive Branch
- A Very Big Branch
- Executive Command
- NJ Center for Civic Education: What are the qualifications for president?
- NJ Center for Civic Education: The Electoral College
- National Constitution Center
- Investigating the Executive Departments
- Separation of Powers: NEH EDSITEment: Balancing Three Branches at Once: Our System of Checks and Balances

**Topic 4: The Judicial Branch**

This topic explores how the Constitution seeks to guarantee that all citizens are treated equally under the law, focusing on the role of the judicial branch in upholding this principle. Students will learn about the creation of the Supreme Court, its jurisdiction, and the process for appointing federal judges. The topic also covers the importance of the lower federal courts, which form the foundation of the federal judicial system.

Central to this discussion is the concept of judicial review, the power of the courts to interpret the Constitution and overturn laws or actions that conflict with it. Students will examine how judicial review has expanded over time and how it shapes important legal decisions that impact the nation for years to come.

Throughout the week, students will consider the challenges involved in ensuring equality before the law and discuss ways to protect against the misuse of power and authority within the judicial system. This topic highlights the essential role the courts play in maintaining checks and balances within the U.S. government and safeguarding citizens' rights.

**Vocabulary**

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- A. Supreme Court
- B. Judicial Review
- C. Justices
- D. Opinions
- E. Moot Court

**Lessons, Activities and Resources**

- Separation of Powers
- EDSITEment: Balancing the Three Branches
- How does Judicial Review Function?
- U.S. Courts About the Supreme Court | United States Courts
- Library of Congress: Marbury v. Madison
- Judicial Branch
- iCivics
- Judicial Branch
- Court Quest Extension Pack Teacher's Guide (including ML Supports)
- EDSITEment
- The Supreme Court: The Judicial Power of the United States

**Topic 5: Federalism**

This topic focuses on federalism as a fundamental aspect of the United States government's structure. Students will explore what federalism means and how it operates by dividing powers between the national government and the states. They will learn which powers are specifically delegated to the national government, which are reserved for the states, and how some powers are shared.

Students will also examine the significance of the Supremacy Clause and how the Constitution balances the interests of individual citizens and states while maintaining a strong national government. The topic includes a historical perspective on how federalism has evolved over time and encourages students to consider the advantages and challenges federalism presents in today's society.

By the end of this week, students will understand how federalism supports national unity while allowing states to manage local issues, making it a key element in the functioning of the U.S. government.

**Vocabulary**

- A. Delegated powers
- B. Federalism

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C. Supremacy Clause

**Lessons, Activities and Resources**

- What is Federalism? How does it work? Powers delegated to the federal government and powers reserved to the states.
- iCivics: The “Federal” in Federalism
- National Archives: Understanding Federalism
- Federalism and Separation of Powers
- National Constitution Center: Federalism
- <https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/learning-material/federalism>
- Supremacy Clause and implicit powers
- History.com: McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)
- How has federalism changed over time?
- ThoughtCo.: Types of federalism
- Carnegie Council: Energy Policy

**Topic 6: Bill of Rights and Amendment Process**

This topic explores the importance of the Bill of Rights in the United States Constitution and its role in protecting fundamental human rights. Students will consider whether the Constitution alone was sufficient to safeguard individual freedoms or if the addition of the Bill of Rights was necessary. They will also learn about the amendment process, including why the founders intentionally made it a challenging process, and discuss whether the Constitution should be viewed as a “living document” that can evolve over time.

The topic covers key protections found in the Bill of Rights, such as the guarantees of personal freedoms and the principle of limited government. Students will examine specific clauses like the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, which prevents state governments from infringing on rights granted by the national government, and the Establishment Clause, which creates a separation between church and state. They will also explore the Free Exercise Clause, which protects religious beliefs but not actions that break laws or threaten safety.

Additionally, students will study the rights to free speech and a free press, which are designed to protect even unpopular opinions, as well as the rights to peaceful assembly and petition, allowing citizens to express their views to public officials. Throughout the week, students will develop an understanding of how these rights form the foundation of American freedoms and contribute to the nation’s commitment to individual liberty and justice.

**Vocabulary**

- A. Amendment
- B. Anti-Federalists

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- C. Bill of Rights
- D. Federalists
- E. Ratify

**Lessons, Activities and Resources**

- Was a Bill of Rights necessary?
- iCivics: Federalists and Antifederalists views
- NJ Center for Civic Education: Federalists and AntiFederalists
- Center for Civic Education: Antifederalists and AntiFederalist Response (Federalist
- Constituting America: Why did James Madison change his mind?
- How does the Bill of Rights protect rights?
- National Constitution Center: Eight basic facts about the Bill of Rights
- National Archives: The Bill of Rights: What Does it Say?
- Bill of Rights Institute: Explains each amendment
- What rights does the Bill of Rights protect?
- iCivics Lesson: You've Got Rights!
- iCivics Game: Do I Have a Right?
- iCivics: Do I Have a Right? Extension Pack
- iCivics: Amendment Mini-Lesson
- How is the Constitution Amended?
- U.S. Senate: Amending the Constitution
- Why did the Founders make it difficult to amend the Constitution?
- National Park Service: Amending the Constitution

**Instructional Plan**

<b>Instructional Plan</b>	
<b>Suggested Activities</b>	<b>Resources/Texts</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ DBQs and Mini-DBQs</li> <li>➤ Argumentative Writing Tasks</li> <li>➤ Explanatory/Informative Writing Tasks</li> <li>➤ Making connections between current and past events - cause and effect</li> <li>➤ Analyze economic differences</li> <li>➤ Identify Economic Contributions of Women</li> <li>➤ Create a multimedia presentation</li> </ul>	Curriculum development Resources/Instructional Materials/Equipment Needed /Teacher Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Graphic organizers</li> <li>➤ Supplemental Readings</li> <li>➤ Relevant Video Clips</li> <li>➤ American Heritage Primary Source Library</li> <li>➤ Integration of current events from relevant sources</li> <li>➤ Library of Congress</li> <li>➤ ABC-CLIO (Primary Sources)</li> </ul>

### Evidence of Student Learning

#### Formative Assessments:

- Thought Bubble - what the Mill Girls were thinking
- Political Cartoons - Andrew Jackson
- Mini Debate - Impact of Cotton Gin
- Observations
- Questioning
- Discussion
- Exit/Admit Slips
- Learning/Response Logs
- Graphic Organizers
- Peer/Self Assessments
- Practice Presentations
- Visual Representations
- Kinesthetic Assessments
- Constructive Quizzes
- Think Pair Share
- As I See It
- Homework
- Class work
- Teacher observation
- Group participation
- Notebook assessment
- Project presentations
- Class discussions
- Do Now
- Varied journal prompts, spelling or vocabulary lists
- Anchor activities
- Choice of review activities
- Homework options
- Flexible grouping
- Varied computer programs
- Multiple learning intelligence
- Use of graphic organizers
- Think-Pair-Share by readiness, interest and/or learning profile
- Games to practice mastery of information and skill

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- Multiple levels of questioning
- Jigsaw
- Multiple Texts
- Alternative Assessments
- Modified Assessments
- Open Ended Activities/ Assessments

**Summative Assessments:**

- Factory vs. Plantation - identify the changes occurring in the US during the Industrial Revolution, list differences and similarities, analyze how differences led to war
- Analyze primary sources - Indian Removal Act & Trail of Tears
- Journal/diary/letter from natives
- Worcester v. Georgia
- Chart immigration - include number of people, where they came from and reasons for leaving
- Create an Underground Railroad Game - board game, comprehension questions, real problems slaves encountered
- Lesson Quizzes
- Chapter Assessment
- Bio Cube Project for influential Native Americans and influential American Inventors.
- Westward Expansion Timeline Project
- 19 Century Inventions Advertising Project
- End of unit / chapter tests.
- End of term / semester tests.
- Mid-unit quizzes
- All evaluations may contain some or all: Multiple choice, true/false, short answer, essay, and visual identification and description questions.

**Benchmark Assessments:**

- Unit tests, research based writing assignments, and final exam.
- Teacher-created pre-assessments and post-assessments
- Textbook generated pre and post assessments
- Teacher created Benchmark Assessments
- DBQs
- Common Grade Level Subject Assessments
- LinkIt! Assessments Data/Test Score Analysis

**Alternative Assessments**

- Independent reading and inquiry
- Self-selected reading materials/vocabulary
- Varied pacing
- Differentiated instruction

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- Student-teacher goal setting
- Whole to part and part to whole explanations
- Varied computer programs
- Varied supplemental materials
- Stations and workshops
- Student choice (assessment options)
- Notes provided by teacher
- Graphic organizers
- Scaffold assignments
- Student choice/option assessment
- Student TED Talk
- Unit Project
- Socratic Seminar
- Silent Seminar
- Discussion Board (Google Classroom)

**Performance Tasks:**

- (When appropriate) This type of task demonstrates students transfer of learning and application to a performance task. Think about what you want the students to be able to do at the end of the unit.
  - Portfolio Review
  - Webquest

**Suggested Options for Differentiation and Modifications**

**Special Education**

- Follow all IEP modifications.
- Use visuals, diagrams, timelines, and multimedia resources.
- Provide guided notes, graphic organizers, and study guides.
- Pre-teach and review vocabulary and key concepts.
- Offer leveled texts or simplified versions of primary sources.
- Provide small-group or one-on-one instruction.
- Assign supportive lab/learning partners or peer tutors.
- Offer preferential seating.
- Read aloud directions or key passages.
- Allow extended time on projects, essays, and assessments.
- Accept oral, dictated, or technology-assisted responses.
- Reduce or modify assignment/test length.

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- Provide access to large-print, Braille, or digital text with audio supports.
- Allow use of scribes, text-to-speech, or augmentative communication devices.

**Students with 504 Plans**

- Follow the 504 plan.
- Provide extended time for assignments and assessments.
- Offer small-group or quiet testing environments.
- Provide preferential seating.
- Accept oral or dictated responses.
- Provide large-print, Braille, or digital texts with assistive technology.
- Allow use of scribes or communication devices.

**Students at Risk of School Failure**

- Provide extended time and break tasks into smaller steps.
- Reduce the number of questions or workload when appropriate.
- Provide copies of teacher notes, outlines, or guided reading questions.
- Pre-teach and reinforce key vocabulary and concepts.
- Assign peer or teacher support for note-taking and projects.
- Provide preferential seating and structured routines.
- Offer frequent teacher check-ins and feedback.
- Use real-world connections and current events to increase engagement.

**Gifted and Talented**

- Ask higher-order, open-ended questions to promote critical thinking.
- Provide opportunities for independent inquiry and research projects.
- Offer enrichment texts, primary sources, and historical documents for deeper analysis.
- Encourage simulations, debates, and mock trials.
- Allow choice in projects, assessments, and presentations.
- Group flexibly for inquiry projects and problem-solving tasks.
- Integrate cross-curricular activities (ELA for persuasive writing, math for data analysis).
- Provide leadership opportunities such as facilitating discussions or mentoring peers.
- Encourage reflection, peer teaching, and authentic presentations.

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### **Multilingual Learners**

- Collaborate with ESL/MLL specialists.
- Provide small-group instruction and partner support.
- Pre-teach and revisit vocabulary with visuals, cognates, and realia (maps, artifacts, political cartoons).
- Use bilingual glossaries, graphic organizers, and labeled diagrams.
- Scaffold reading of primary sources with summaries or side-by-side translations when possible.
- Provide sentence frames, discussion stems, and writing templates.
- Allow extended time and oral presentations instead of written responses.
- Use digital supports (translation tools, captioned videos, read-aloud technology).

### **Diversity and Inclusion**

- Integrate diverse voices, cultures, and perspectives into lessons and primary sources.
- Provide alternative project formats (visual, oral, digital).
- Use visuals, timelines, and maps alongside text.
- Use clear academic language and avoid slang/idioms.
- Collaborate with cultural liaisons, language specialists, and support staff.
- Establish classroom norms for respectful debate and discussion.
- Provide sufficient wait time for responses.
- Foster strong school-family connections and invite families to contribute cultural perspectives.

### **Low Prep Strategies**

Varied journal prompts, spelling or vocabulary lists : Students are given a choice of different journal prompts, spelling lists or vocabulary lists depending on level of proficiency/assessment results.

Anchor activities: Anchor activities provide meaningful options for students when they are not actively engaged in classroom activities (e.g., when they finish early, are waiting for further directions, are stumped, first enter class, or when the teacher is working with other students). Anchors should be directly related to the current learning goals.

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Choices of books: Different textbooks or novels (often at different levels) that students are allowed to choose from for content study or for literature circles.

Choices of review activities: Different review or extension activities are made available to students during a specific section of the class (such as at the beginning or end of the period).

Homework options: Students are provided with choices about the assignments they complete as homework. Or, students are directed to specific homework based on student needs.

Student-teacher goal setting: The teacher and student work together to develop individual learning goals for the student.

Flexible grouping: Students might be instructed as a whole group, in small groups of various permutations (homogeneous or heterogeneous by skill or interest), in pairs or individuals. Any small groups or pairs change over time based on assessment data.

Varied computer programs: The computer is used as an additional center in the classroom, and students are directed to specific websites or software that allows them to work on skills at their level.

Multiple Intelligence or Learning Style options: Students select activities or are assigned an activity that is designed for learning a specific area of content through their strong intelligence (verbal-linguistic, interpersonal, musical, etc.)

Varying scaffolding of same organizer: Provide graphic organizers that require students to complete various amounts of information. Some will be more filled out (by the teacher) than others.

Think-Pair-Share by readiness, interest, and/or learning profile: Students are placed in pre-determined pairs, asked to think about a question for a specific amount of time, then are asked to share their answers first with their partner and then with the whole group.

Mini workshops to re-teach or extend skills: A short, specific lesson with a student or group of students that focuses on one area of interest or reinforcement of a specific skill.

Orbitals: Students conduct independent investigations generally lasting 3-6 weeks. The investigations “orbit” or revolve around some facet of the curriculum.

Games to practice mastery of information and skill: Use games as a way to review and reinforce concepts. Include questions and tasks that are on a variety of cognitive levels.

Multiple levels of questions: Teachers vary the sorts of questions posed to different students based on their ability to handle them. Varying questions is an excellent way to build the confidence (and motivation) of students who are reluctant to contribute to class discourse.

Note: Most teachers would probably admit that without even thinking about it they tend to

address particular types of questions to particular students. In some cases, such tendencies may need to be corrected. (For example, a teacher may be unknowingly addressing all of the more challenging questions to one student, thereby inhibiting other students' learning and fostering class resentment of that student.)

### High Prep Strategies

**Cubing:** Designed to help students think about a topic or idea from many different angles or perspectives. The tasks are placed on the six sides of a cube and use commands that help support thinking (justify, describe, evaluate, connect, etc.). The students complete the task on the side that ends face up, either independently or in homogenous groups.

**Tiered assignment/ product:** The content and objective are the same, but the process and/or the products that students must create to demonstrate mastery are varied according to the students' readiness level.

**Independent studies:** Students choose a topic of interest that they are curious about and want to discover new information on. Research is done from questions developed by the student and/or teacher. The researcher produces a product to share learning with classmates.

**4MAT:** Teachers plan instruction for each of four learning preferences over the course of several days on a given topic. Some lessons focus on mastery, some on understanding, some on personal involvement, and some on synthesis. Each learner has a chance to approach the topic through preferred modes and to strengthen weaker areas.

**Stations/ Learning Centers:** A station (or simply a collection of materials) that students might use independently to explore topics or practice skills. Centers allow individuals or groups of students to work at their own pace. Students are constantly reassessed to determine which centers are appropriate for students at a particular time, and to plan activities at those centers to build the most pressing skills.

**Tape recorded materials at different levels:** Books on tape are purchased or (created by the teacher) so that students can listen to the book being read aloud to them while they follow along in the text. This is often done at a listening station, where tapes of books/information on various reading levels are available.

**Choice Boards:** Work assignments are written on cards that are placed in hanging pockets. By asking students to select a card from a particular row of pockets, the teacher targets work toward student needs yet allows student choice.

### Supplemental Resources

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**Instructional Resources:**

- iCivic
- Discovering our Past: History of the United States

**Supplemental Resources:**

- Rutgers Center for Civics Instruction
- EdPuzzle
- CommonLit

**Intervention Resources:**

- Audio version of text
- Video exploration
- Review Games

**OCEAN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL  
Unit 3 Overview**

**Content Area: Social Studies: Civics**

**Unit Title: Civics: The Constitution, American Ideals and the American Experience**

**Duration: 23 Days**

**Target Course/Grade Level: Grade 8**

**Introduction/Unit Focus:**

This unit focuses on exploring the ongoing journey of the United States in living up to its foundational American ideals. Central to our study will be the Preamble of the Constitution, which outlines the core goals and purposes of the government. Students will begin by examining these goals to understand the vision the Founders had for the nation.

Throughout the unit, students will trace how these constitutional goals have been pursued throughout American history. They will analyze both the successes and the challenges faced by early citizens in working toward these ideals. This historical exploration will reveal how concepts such as justice, domestic tranquility, and the promotion of the general welfare have evolved over time.

A key part of this investigation will involve evaluating how each American ideal has expanded to become more inclusive, reflecting the nation's growth toward greater equality and fairness for all its people. Students will consider the ways in which different groups and movements have contributed to making these ideals more accessible and meaningful.

As the unit progresses, students will be encouraged to think critically about current issues and ongoing struggles related to fulfilling the promise of these ideals. They will be invited to

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identify areas where the nation still needs to grow in order to move closer to the goal of a “more perfect union.” This unit challenges students to see American ideals not as fixed endpoints, but as evolving goals that require continuous effort and active citizenship. Through this exploration, students will gain a deeper appreciation for the dynamic nature of American democracy and their role in shaping its future.

### Disciplinary Concepts for the Unit

#### Standard 9.1 Personal Financial Literacy

This standard outlines the important fiscal knowledge, habits, and skills that must be mastered in order for students to make informed decisions about personal finance. Financial literacy is an integral component of a student’s college and career readiness, enabling students to achieve fulfilling, financially-secure, and successful careers.

#### Standard 9.2 Career Awareness, Exploration, Preparation and Training

This standard outlines the importance of being knowledgeable about one’s interests and talents, and being well informed about postsecondary and career options, career planning, and career requirements.

#### Standard 9.4 Life Literacies and Key Skills

This standard outline key literacies and technical skills such as critical thinking, global and cultural awareness, and technology literacy\* that are critical for students to develop to live and work in an interconnected global economy.

#### Standard 8.1 Computer Science

Computer Science outlines a comprehensive set of concepts and skills, such as data and analysis, algorithms and programming, and computing systems.

#### Standard 8.2 Design Thinking

Technology, outlines the technological design concepts and skills essential for technological and engineering literacy. The framework design includes Engineering Design, Ethics and Culture, and the Effects of Technology on the Natural world among the disciplinary concepts

**Amistad Law: N.J.S.A. 18A 52:16A-88** Every board of education shall incorporate the information regarding the contributions of African-Americans to our country in an appropriate place in the curriculum of elementary and secondary school students.

**Holocaust Law: N.J.S.A. 18A:35-28** Every board of education shall include instruction on the Holocaust and genocides in an appropriate place in the curriculum of all elementary and secondary school pupils. The instruction shall further emphasize the personal responsibility that each citizen bears to fight racism and hatred whenever and wherever it happens.

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**Diversity and Inclusion:** C.18A:35-4.36a Curriculum to include instruction on diversity and inclusion.

The instruction shall:

- (1) highlight and promote diversity, including economic diversity, equity, inclusion, tolerance, and belonging in connection with gender and sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, disabilities, and religious tolerance;
- (2) examine the impact that unconscious bias and economic disparities have at both an individual level and on society as a whole; and
- (3) encourage safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments for all students regardless of race or ethnicity, sexual and gender identities, mental and physical disabilities, and religious beliefs.

**Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI)**

Ensures that the contributions, history, and heritage of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) are included in the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLs) for Social Studies in kindergarten through Grade 12 (P.L.2021, c.416).

**21st Century Themes and Skills**

“Twenty-first century themes and skills” means themes such as global awareness; financial, economic, business, and entrepreneurial literacy; civic literacy; health literacy; learning and innovation skills, including creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, and communication and collaboration; information, media, and technology skills; and life and career skills, including flexibility. Career readiness, life literacies, and key skills education provides students with the necessary skills to make informed career and financial decisions, engage as responsible community members in a digital society, and to successfully meet the challenges and opportunities in an interconnected global economy.”

**Content Standards: New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Social Studies**

**Focus Standards (Major Standards) <https://www.nj.gov/education/cccs>**

**Content Standards: New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Social Studies**

6.1 U.S. History: America in the World: All students will acquire knowledge and skills to think analytically about how past and present interactions of people, cultures, and the environment shape the American heritage. Such knowledge and skills enable students to make informed decisions that reflect fundamental rights and core democratic values as productive citizens in local, national, and global communities.

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6.3 Active Citizenship in the 21st Century: All students will acquire the skills needed to be active, informed citizens who value diversity and promote cultural understanding by working collaboratively to address the challenges that are inherent in living in an interconnected world.

Core Idea	Performance Expectations
<p>Political and civil institutions impact all aspects of people’s lives. <b>Diversity and Inclusion</b></p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.a: Cite evidence to evaluate the extent to which the leadership and decisions of early administrations of the national government met the goals established in the Constitution. 6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.b: Evaluate the effectiveness of the fundamental principles of the Constitution (i.e., consent of the governed, rule of law, federalism, limited government, separation of powers, checks and balances, and individual rights) in establishing a federal government that allows for growth and change over time. 6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.c: Distinguish the powers and responsibilities of citizens, political parties, interest groups, and the media in a variety of governmental and nongovernmental contexts</p>
<p>Governments have different structures which impact development (expansion) and civic participation. <b>Amistad</b> <b>Diversity and Inclusion</b></p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.d: Use data and other evidence to determine the extent to which demographics influenced the debate on representation in Congress and federalism by examining the New Jersey and Virginia plans.</p>
<p>Members of society have the obligation to become informed of the facts regarding public issues and to engage in honest, mutually respectful discourse to advance public policy solutions. <b>Diversity and Inclusion</b></p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsPD.3.a: Cite evidence to determine the role that compromise played in the creation and adoption of the Constitution and Bill of Rights.</p>
<p>The United States system of government is designed to realize the ideals of liberty, democracy, limited government, equality under the law and of opportunity, justice, and property rights.</p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsDP.3.a: Use primary and secondary sources to assess whether or not the ideals found in the Declaration of Independence were fulfilled for women,</p>

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<p><b>Diversity and Inclusion</b> <b>LGBTQ and Disabilities</b> <b>Amistad</b></p>	<p>African Americans, and Native Americans during this time period.</p>
<p>Fundamental rights are derived from the inherent worth of each individual and include civil, political, social, economic, and cultural rights. <b>Diversity and Inclusion</b> <b>LGBTQ and Disabilities</b> <b>Amistad</b></p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsHR.4.a: Examine sources from a variety of perspectives to describe efforts to reform education, women’s rights, slavery, and other issues during the Antebellum period.</p>
<p>Social and political systems have protected and denied human rights (to varying degrees) throughout time. <b>Diversity and Inclusion</b> <b>LGBTQ and Disabilities</b> <b>Amistad</b> <b>NJAAPI</b> <b>Holocaust and Genocide</b></p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsHR.3.b: Evaluate the impact of the institution of slavery on the political and economic expansion of the United States. 6.1.8.CivicsHR.3.c: Construct an argument to explain how the expansion of slavery violated human rights and contradicted American ideals</p>
<p>A national economy includes studying the changes in the amounts and qualities of human capital, physical capital, and natural resources. <b>Diversity and Inclusion</b> <b>LGBTQ and Disabilities</b> <b>Amistad</b> <b>NJAAPI</b></p>	<p>6.1.8.EconNE.4.b: Analyze how technological innovations affected the status and social class of different groups of people and explain the outcomes that resulted.</p>

**Primary Interdisciplinary Connections: English Language Arts**

**Reading History**

RI.CR.8.1. Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections (including informational text features such as charts, graphs, and diagrams) that strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what an informational text says explicitly, as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.CI.8.2. Determine a central idea of an informational text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments

RI.IT.8.3. Analyze how particular elements of a text interact (e.g., how contexts influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events) across multiple text types, including across literary and informational texts.

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L.KL.8.2. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

- G. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.
- H. Gather vocabulary knowledge when selecting a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
- I. Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).

RI.TS.8.4. Analyze and explain how an author organizes, develops and presents ideas, establishes a point of view or builds supporting arguments through text structure.

RI.MF.8.6. Evaluate the choices made (by the authors, directors, or actors) when presenting an idea in different mediums and the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) to address a question or solve a problem.

RI.CT.8.8. Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) two or more informational texts that provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.

**Writing in History, Science and Technical Subjects**

W.AW.8.1. Write arguments on discipline-specific content (e.g., social studies, science, technical subjects, English/Language Arts) to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- K. Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue, acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- L. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.
- M. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- N. Establish and maintain a formal or academic style, approach, and form.
- O. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

W.IW.8.2. Write informative/explanatory texts (including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes) to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

- M. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; and organize ideas, concepts, and information, using text structures (e.g., definition, classification, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, etc.) and text features (e.g., headings, graphics, and multimedia) when useful to aid in comprehension.
- N. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.

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- O. Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
- P. Use precise language and domain/grade-level- specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- Q. Establish and maintain a formal style/academic style, approach, and form.
- R. Provide a concluding statement or section (e.g., sentence, part of a paragraph, paragraph, or multiple paragraphs) that synthesizes the information or explanation presented

W.WP.8.4. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; seeking out assistance, models, sources or feedback to improve understanding or refine final products; focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

W.WR.8.5. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

W.SE.8.6. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

<b>New Jersey Student Learning Standards: <a href="#">Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills</a></b>	
<b>Core Ideas</b>	<b>Performance Expectations (Identified with Standard Number and statement)</b>
<b>Personal Financial Literacy</b>	
<b>Civic Financial Responsibility</b>	
Individuals can use their talents, resources, and abilities to give back	9.1.8.CR.2: Compare various ways to give back through strengths, passions, goals, and other personal factors
The potential for building and using personal wealth includes responsibility to the broader community and an understanding of the legal rights and responsibilities of being a good citizen.	9.1.8.CR.4: Examine the implications of legal and ethical behaviors when making financial decisions.
<b>Financial Psychology</b>	
An individual’s values and emotions will influence the ability to modify financial behavior (when appropriate), which will impact one’s financial well-being.	9.1.8.FP.2: Evaluate the role of emotions, attitudes, and behavior (rational and irrational) in making financial decisions.

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<p><b>Information and Media Literacy</b> Increases in the quantity of information available through electronic means have heightened the need to check sources for possible distortion, exaggeration, or misrepresentation Sources of information are evaluated for accuracy and relevance when considering the use of information.</p>	<p>9.4.8.IML.1 Critically curate multiple resources to assess the credibility of sources when searching for information 9.4.8.IML.2 Identify specific examples of distortion, exaggeration, or misrepresentation of information. 9.4.8.IML.7 Use information from a variety of sources, contexts, disciplines, and cultures for a specific purpose (e.g., 1.2.8.C2a, 1.4.8.CR2a, 2.1.8.CHSS/IV.8.AI.1, W.5.8, 6.1.8.GeoSV.3.a, 6.1.8.CivicsDP.4.b, 7.1.NH.IPRET.8).</p>
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<b>New Jersey Student Learning Standards: <u>Computer Science and Design Thinking</u></b>	
<b>Core Ideas</b>	<b>Performance Expectations (Identified with Standard Number and Statement)</b>
<b>Computer Science and Design</b>	
<p><b>Impact of Computing</b> Advancements in computing technology can change individuals' behaviors. Society is faced with trade-offs due to the increasing globalization and automation that computing brings.</p>	<p>8.1.8.IC.1 Compare the trade-offs associated with computing technologies that affect an individual's everyday activities and career options.</p>
<p><b>Interaction of Technology and Humans</b> Decisions to develop new technology are driven by societal and cultural opinions and demands that differ from culture to culture.</p>	<p>8.2.8.ITH.1: Explain how the development and use of technology influences economic, political, social, and cultural issues.</p>

<p><b>Ethics &amp; Culture</b> The ability to ethically integrate new technologies requires deciding whether to introduce a technology, taking into consideration local resources and the role of culture in acceptance. Consequences of technological use may be different for different groups of people and may change over time. Since technological decisions can have ethical implications, it is essential that individuals analyze issues by gathering evidence from multiple</p>	<p>8.2.12.EC.1: Analyze controversial technological issues and determine the degree to which individuals, businesses, and governments have an ethical role in decisions that are made. 8.2.12.EC.2: Assess the positive and negative impacts of emerging technologies on developing countries and evaluate how individuals, non-profit organizations, and governments have responded. 8.2.12.EC.3: Synthesize data, analyze trends, and draw conclusions regarding the effect of a technology on the individual, culture, society, and environment and share this information with the appropriate audience.</p>
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perspectives and conceiving of alternative possibilities before proposing solutions.	
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**New Jersey Student Learning Standards: [Climate Change Mandate](#)**

In a democratic government, there are multiple processes by which individuals can influence the creation of rules, laws, and public policy.	6.3.8.CivicsPR.4: Use evidence and quantitative data to propose or defend a public policy related to climate change.
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**Knowledge and Skills**

**Unit Learning Targets:**

*Students will be able to...*

- Explain how the Constitution improved upon the Articles of Confederation.
- Understand the principle of “consent of the governed” and the expansion of voting rights.
- Describe the role of the rule of law in limiting government power.
- Define fairness, justice, due process, and equal protection under the law.
- Analyze how individual rights are protected during peace and conflict.
- Explain the importance of habeas corpus and peaceful transfer of power.
- Define liberty and its role in American government.
- Evaluate the balance between individual rights and the common good.
- Recognize the significance of free speech, protest, and religious freedoms in democracy.

**Topic 1: “A More Perfect Union”**

This topic explores how well the United States has upheld the fundamental principles set forth in the Constitution. It begins with an examination of how the Constitution created a stronger and more effective framework for government compared to the earlier Articles of Confederation. Students will consider the ways in which the Constitution helped establish a “more perfect union” by addressing the weaknesses of the previous system.

A major focus will be on the extension of voting rights over time. Originally, the right to vote was limited to a small portion of the population, but as this right expanded to include more groups, it strengthened the principle of “consent of the governed.” This evolution highlights how democracy has grown more inclusive and representative throughout American history.

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The topic also emphasizes the importance of the rule of law in preventing abuses of authority. Students will explore how laws and legal protections help ensure fairness and accountability within the government.

Overall, this study underscores one of America's significant achievements: the successful creation of a government based on a social contract that relies on the active consent of its citizens. By combining political ideals with practical experience, the Founders established a lasting system that continues to evolve toward a more inclusive democracy.

**Vocabulary**

- A. Blessings of Liberty
- B. Checks and Balances
- C. Domestic Tranquility
- D. Franchise
- E. General welfare
- F. Impeachment
- G. Justice
- H. Posterity
- I. Preamble
- J. Rule of Law
- K. Separation of Powers
- L. Sovereignty
- M. Suffrage
- N. Union

**Lessons, Activities and Resources**

- Preamble to the Constitution: "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States..."
- How did the Constitution establish a "more perfect union" than the Articles of Confederation?
- iCivics: The Constitution's Cover Letter Lesson DBQuest
- Edsitement.neh.gov: The Preamble to the Constitution: A Close Reading Lesson
- Activity 1. Questions to form a Government
- Activity 2. Teachers' Guide
- Activity 2. What the Preamble Says (comparison with the Articles of Confederation)
- iCivics game: iCivics America's Founding Preambles DBQuest
- C-Span Lesson Plan: Introduction to the Principles of Democracy
- Video Clip 2: Introduction to the Rule of Law (Video Length-1:17)
- Video Clip 6: Justice Breyer on Democracy (Video Length-4:14)
- Video Clip 7: Rule of Law, Equal Protection and Rights (Video Length-2:40)

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- Introduction to the Principles of Democracy Handout
- How has extending the right to vote supported the concept of the consent of the governed?
- Vocabulary: franchise, suffrage and right to vote
- Expansion of franchise to men in 1830s:
- C-SPAN Classroom: Video Clip: Who Could Vote in the Early United States?
- C-SPAN Classroom The Expansion of Voting Rights charts and video links
- PBS Learning Media: History of U.S. Voting Rights | Things Explained
- Fifteenth Amendment
- PBS Learning Media: The 15th Amendment Challenges the Women’s Movement
- Carrie Chapman Catt
- PBS Learning Media: The 15th Amendment and the Battle Over Voting Rights (PBS Learning Media)
- Women’s Suffrage
- PBS Learning Media: She Resisted: Seneca Falls Convention | The Vote; Strategies of Suffrage | The Vote ; She Resisted: Strategies of Suffrage - Remote Worksheet;
- She Resisted: Strategies of Suffrage - Group Work
- iCivics: Women’s Suffrage: A Movement in the Right Direction Infographic
- C-SPAN Classroom Lesson: Early Women in Congress
- Alice Paul Institute: Who Was Alice Paul?
- The New Jersey Center for Civic Education provides three lessons from the collection of New Jersey lessons in Word format: New Jersey Women (grades 3-5), New Jersey Women You Should Know, and Alice Paul and Women’s Suffrage
- Library of Congress: NJ Women Gain and Lose the Vote (Document image)
- Expanding the right to vote
- Southern Monmouth League of Women Voters “Fight For the Vote” and lesson materials.
- The 26th Amendment
- Should the voting age be lowered?
- State Voting requirements
- How has the rule of law prevented abuse of authority?
- National Constitution Center: U.S. v. Nixon (1974)

**Topic 2 : Establish Justice**

This topic explores the concepts of fairness and justice, which are fundamental reasons people create governments. Although these ideas can be challenging to define precisely, the U.S. Constitution and state constitutions establish court systems to address and decide questions

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related to justice. Central to protecting individual rights is the principle of due process, a core guarantee enshrined in the Constitution.

Due process has two important aspects. Procedural due process requires that government actions follow rules and procedures that are reasonable, fair, and non-arbitrary. Substantive due process ensures that laws themselves do not violate fundamental rights when they are created or interpreted. The Fifth Amendment originally established due process protections at the federal level, while the Fourteenth Amendment extended the guarantee of “equal protection under the law” to apply to state governments as well.

Additionally, equality under the law is an essential part of justice. The Fourteenth Amendment’s equal protection clause helps ensure that individuals receive fair treatment by the government. A related concept is equality of opportunity, which focuses on providing fair chances for all individuals to succeed. Throughout this week, students will examine how the Constitution seeks to “establish justice” and how fairness and equality play crucial roles in shaping a just society.

#### Vocabulary

- A. Affirmative Action
- B. Civil Rights Movement
- C. Due Process
- D. Equality
- E. Fairness
- F. Habeas Corpus
- G. Jim Crow
- H. Segregation

#### Lessons, Activities and Resources

- What is Justice or Fairness?
- Background article: Equality and Justice: History and Ideals – Equal Justice Under Law
- Culture of Dignity.com activity: The Difference between Equality and Equity
- NJ Center for Civic Education: What is fairness or justice?
- To what extent has the United States established justice for all?
- How fairly has the United States treated Native Americans?
- C-Span Classroom Lesson Plan: The Indian Removal Act of 1830
- PBS Learning Media: Trail of Tears: The Cherokee Fight Against Removal; Trail of Tears: Are the Cherokee an Independent Nation? and Worcester v. Georgia | Cherokee Nation
- NJ Center for Civic Education: Cherokee Removal historical role playing activity
- Constitutional Rights Foundation: Choosing a Native American Policy: Simulation Activity
- How fairly has the United States treated African Americans?

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- NEH Edsitement: Slavery and the American Founding; “The Inconsistency Not to be Excused”
- PBS learning Media: Teaching Guide: Exploring American Abolitionism
- 13th Amendment
- Link to Mock Congressional Hearings regarding Reconstruction in Conflict Resolution and U.S. History
- Jim Crow
- C-Span Classroom: Poll Taxes; Literacy Test; Grandfather Clause
- Junior Scholastic: How Barbara Johns Helped End Segregation
- What is “due process” and how does it protect individual rights?
- Justice In The Classroom: Due Process and the Constitution
- NJ Center for Civic Education: What is due process and why is it important?
- What does the 14th Amendment mean by “equal protection under the law”?
- PBS Learning Media: The Reconstruction Amendments
- NJ Center for Civic Education: What does “equal protection” mean?
- Triad Debate: Affirmative Action [law.washington.edu](http://law.washington.edu)

**Topic 3: “. . .insure Domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense. . .”**

This topic examines how the United States balances the need for social order with the protection of individual rights. Citizens expect the government to maintain domestic tranquility, an orderly society grounded in due process and respect for a protected sphere of personal liberty. Democracy highly values the right to privacy, which underpins many specific protections found in the Bill of Rights.

However, the right to privacy and other freedoms have sometimes been limited during times of war when national security concerns conflict with the broader individual rights enjoyed during peace. In these situations, the courts play a crucial role in determining the proper constitutional balance between safeguarding individual liberties and ensuring national security. They also review actions taken by the legislative and executive branches to prevent abuses of power.

A key protection against government overreach is the right of habeas corpus, which prevents arbitrary detentions and abuse of authority. Another essential element of democracy is the peaceful transfer of power, which depends not only on constitutional procedures but also on the active commitment of citizens to uphold a free society and a republican form of government.

Furthermore, any use of force by the government must adhere to constitutional limits. A fundamental pillar of American democracy is a professional, non-political military that swears an oath to support the Constitution. Over the course of this week, students will explore these

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themes to understand the ongoing effort to balance order, liberty, and justice in the United States.

**Vocabulary**

- A. Alien and Sedition Acts
- B. Domestic Tranquility
- C. Habeas Corpus
- D. Liberty
- E. Patriot Act of 2001
- F. Privacy

**Lessons, Activities and Resources**

- What is “domestic tranquility”?
- NJ Center for Civic Education: How do you “ensure domestic tranquility”?
- Privacy rights during war:
- C-SPAN: Schenck v. United States and the Espionage Act
- Bill or Rights Institute: Security, Liberty and the Patriot Act
- What is habeas corpus and why is it important?
- C-SPAN Classroom: The meaning and Origins of Habeas Corpus
- C-SPAN Classroom: The Writ of Habeas Corpus and the Constitution
- How does the Fourth Amendment protect privacy rights?
- New Hampshire Institute for Civics Education: Privacy and the 4th Amendment
- Learning For Justice: What is a Hate Crime?
- NJ State Bar Foundation Law Adventure Competition
- Political stability and peaceful transfer of power
- iCivics: Peaceful Transfer of Power

**Topic 4: “promote. . .the General Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty”**

This topic explores the concept of liberty, a foundational principle the Founders made central to American government. Liberty, in the American system, carries a specific meaning that differs from definitions used in other countries with different governmental structures. The government is designed as a limited system, rooted in social contract theory, where individuals agree to place reasonable limits on their absolute freedom in order to enjoy the greatest possible liberty. Deciding what those limits should be is a key focus of constitutional law and ongoing public debate.

Another critical aspect of this discussion is the balance between individual rights and the general welfare, often referred to as the common good. Democracies must navigate the

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tensions that arise when personal freedoms conflict with societal needs, making the balance between liberty and the common good a central issue in politics and public policy.

Students will also examine the role of freedom of speech, including its importance for sustaining democracy, as well as the challenges posed by social media, such as the spread of propaganda and misinformation. The topic includes exploring the boundaries of free speech, protest, and petition rights.

Additionally, students will explore the constitutional distinctions between the establishment of religion and the free exercise of religion. They will consider how conflicts between religious beliefs and the protection of citizens' rights can be balanced within a pluralistic society.

Overall, this week's focus will guide students through understanding liberty's complexities and its relationship with the common good, free expression, and religious freedom in American democracy.

**Vocabulary**

- A. Assembly
- B. Censorship
- C. Common Good
- D. Establishment Clause
- E. Free Exercise Clause
- F. General Welfare
- G. Individual rights
- H. Libel
- I. Liberty
- J. Petition
- K. Press
- L. Protest
- M. Religion
- N. Sediton
- O. Slander
- P. Social Media
- Q. Speech

**Lessons, Activities and Resources**

- What does "promote the general welfare" mean? How does the government promote the general welfare or common good?
- NJ Center for Civic Education: What is the "general welfare"?
- What is liberty?
- NJ Center for Civic Education: What is "liberty?"
- Why is freedom of expression? Why is it so important? When should it be limited?
- NJ Center for Civic Education: First Amendment Freedom of Expression

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- C-SPAN: Zenger Trial and the Colonial Press
- National Constitution Center The First Amendment Plan of Study
- Newseumed.org: My Five Freedoms
- US Courts: First Amendment Modified Oxford Debates and Scenarios
- TPS: Sedition Act: Should speech ever be restricted?
- Right to Petition and Assemble
- American Bar Association: Right to Petition Lesson Plan
- Freedoms Foundation: Freedom of Petition & Assembly Lesson Plan
- National Constitution Center: Freedom of Assembly & Petition Lesson Plan
- What is the difference between “the establishment of religion” and the “free exercise of religion”?
- How do we balance religious beliefs v. the common good?
- NJ Center for Civic Education: How does the First Amendment protect freedom of religion?
- How can we balance individual rights and the general welfare when these important concepts are in conflict?
- C-SPAN: Individual Liberty and the Common Good

**Evidence of Student Learning**

**Formative Assessments:**

- Thought Bubble - what the Mill Girls were thinking
- Political Cartoons - Andrew Jackson
- Mini Debate - Impact of Cotton Gin
- Observations
- Questioning
- Discussion
- Exit/Admit Slips
- Learning/Response Logs
- Graphic Organizers
- Peer/Self Assessments
- Practice Presentations
- Visual Representations
- Kinesthetic Assessments
- Constructive Quizzes
- Think Pair Share
- As I See It
- Homework
- Class work

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- Teacher observation
- Group participation
- Notebook assessment
- Project presentations
- Class discussions
- Do Now
- Varied journal prompts, spelling or vocabulary lists
- Anchor activities
- Choice of review activities
- Homework options
- Flexible grouping
- Varied computer programs
- Multiple learning intelligence
- Use of graphic organizers
- Think-Pair-Share by readiness, interest and/or learning profile
- Games to practice mastery of information and skill
- Multiple levels of questioning
- Jigsaw
- Multiple Texts
- Alternative Assessments
- Modified Assessments
- Open Ended Activities/ Assessments

**Summative Assessments:**

- Factory vs. Plantation - identify the changes occurring in the US during the Industrial Revolution, list differences and similarities, analyze how differences led to war
- Analyze primary sources - Indian Removal Act & Trail of Tears
- Journal/diary/letter from natives
- Worcester v. Georgia
- Chart immigration - include number of people, where they came from and reasons for leaving
- Create an Underground Railroad Game - board game, comprehension questions, real problems slaves encountered
- Lesson Quizzes
- Chapter Assessment
- Bio Cube Project for influential Native Americans and influential American Inventors.
- Westward Expansion Timeline Project
- 19 Century Inventions Advertising Project
- End of unit / chapter tests.
- End of term / semester tests.
- Mid-unit quizzes

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- All evaluations may contain some or all: Multiple choice, true/false, short answer, essay, and visual identification and description questions.

**Benchmark Assessments:**

- Unit tests, research based writing assignments, and final exam.
- Teacher-created pre-assessments and post-assessments
- Textbook generated pre and post assessments
- Teacher created Benchmark Assessments
- DBQs
- Common Grade Level Subject Assessments
- LinkIt! Assessments Data/Test Score Analysis

**Alternative Assessments**

- Independent reading and inquiry
- Self-selected reading materials/vocabulary
- Varied pacing
- Differentiated instruction
- Student-teacher goal setting
- Whole to part and part to whole explanations
- Varied computer programs
- Varied supplemental materials
- Stations and workshops
- Student choice (assessment options)
- Notes provided by teacher
- Graphic organizers
- Scaffold assignments
- Student choice/option assessment
- Student TED Talk
- Unit Project
- Socratic Seminar
- Silent Seminar
- Discussion Board (Google Classroom)

**Performance Tasks:**

- (When appropriate) This type of task demonstrates students transfer of learning and application to a performance task. Think about what you want the students to be able to do at the end of the unit.
  - Portfolio Review
  - Webquest

### Suggested Options for Differentiation

#### Special Education

- Follow all IEP modifications.
- Use visuals, diagrams, timelines, and multimedia resources.
- Provide guided notes, graphic organizers, and study guides.
- Pre-teach and review vocabulary and key concepts.
- Offer leveled texts or simplified versions of primary sources.
- Provide small-group or one-on-one instruction.
- Assign supportive lab/learning partners or peer tutors.
- Offer preferential seating.
- Read aloud directions or key passages.
- Allow extended time on projects, essays, and assessments.
- Accept oral, dictated, or technology-assisted responses.
- Reduce or modify assignment/test length.
- Provide access to large-print, Braille, or digital text with audio supports.
- Allow use of scribes, text-to-speech, or augmentative communication devices.

#### Students with 504 Plans

- Follow the 504 plan.
- Provide extended time for assignments and assessments.
- Offer small-group or quiet testing environments.
- Provide preferential seating.
- Accept oral or dictated responses.
- Provide large-print, Braille, or digital texts with assistive technology.
- Allow use of scribes or communication devices.

#### Students at Risk of School Failure

- Provide extended time and break tasks into smaller steps.
- Reduce the number of questions or workload when appropriate.
- Provide copies of teacher notes, outlines, or guided reading questions.
- Pre-teach and reinforce key vocabulary and concepts.
- Assign peer or teacher support for note-taking and projects.
- Provide preferential seating and structured routines.

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- Offer frequent teacher check-ins and feedback.
- Use real-world connections and current events to increase engagement.

### **Gifted and Talented**

- Ask higher-order, open-ended questions to promote critical thinking.
- Provide opportunities for independent inquiry and research projects.
- Offer enrichment texts, primary sources, and historical documents for deeper analysis.
- Encourage simulations, debates, and mock trials.
- Allow choice in projects, assessments, and presentations.
- Group flexibly for inquiry projects and problem-solving tasks.
- Integrate cross-curricular activities (ELA for persuasive writing, math for data analysis).
- Provide leadership opportunities such as facilitating discussions or mentoring peers.
- Encourage reflection, peer teaching, and authentic presentations.

### **Multilingual Learners**

- Collaborate with ESL/MLL specialists.
- Provide small-group instruction and partner support.
- Pre-teach and revisit vocabulary with visuals, cognates, and realia (maps, artifacts, political cartoons).
- Use bilingual glossaries, graphic organizers, and labeled diagrams.
- Scaffold reading of primary sources with summaries or side-by-side translations when possible.
- Provide sentence frames, discussion stems, and writing templates.
- Allow extended time and oral presentations instead of written responses.
- Use digital supports (translation tools, captioned videos, read-aloud technology).

### **Diversity and Inclusion**

- Integrate diverse voices, cultures, and perspectives into lessons and primary sources.
- Provide alternative project formats (visual, oral, digital).
- Use visuals, timelines, and maps alongside text.
- Use clear academic language and avoid slang/idioms.
- Collaborate with cultural liaisons, language specialists, and support staff.
- Establish classroom norms for respectful debate and discussion.

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- Provide sufficient wait time for responses.
- Foster strong school-family connections and invite families to contribute cultural perspectives.

### Low Prep Strategies

Varied journal prompts, spelling or vocabulary lists : Students are given a choice of different journal prompts, spelling lists or vocabulary lists depending on level of proficiency/assessment results.

Anchor activities: Anchor activities provide meaningful options for students when they are not actively engaged in classroom activities (e.g., when they finish early, are waiting for further directions, are stumped, first enter class, or when the teacher is working with other students). Anchors should be directly related to the current learning goals.

Choices of books: Different textbooks or novels (often at different levels) that students are allowed to choose from for content study or for literature circles.

Choices of review activities: Different review or extension activities are made available to students during a specific section of the class (such as at the beginning or end of the period).

Homework options: Students are provided with choices about the assignments they complete as homework. Or, students are directed to specific homework based on student needs.

Student-teacher goal setting: The teacher and student work together to develop individual learning goals for the student.

Flexible grouping: Students might be instructed as a whole group, in small groups of various permutations (homogeneous or heterogeneous by skill or interest), in pairs or individuals. Any small groups or pairs change over time based on assessment data.

Varied computer programs: The computer is used as an additional center in the classroom, and students are directed to specific websites or software that allows them to work on skills at their level.

Multiple Intelligence or Learning Style options: Students select activities or are assigned an activity that is designed for learning a specific area of content through their strong intelligence (verbal-linguistic, interpersonal, musical, etc.)

Varying scaffolding of same organizer: Provide graphic organizers that require students to complete various amounts of information. Some will be more filled out (by the teacher) than others.

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Think-Pair-Share by readiness, interest, and/or learning profile: Students are placed in pre-determined pairs, asked to think about a question for a specific amount of time, then are asked to share their answers first with their partner and then with the whole group.

Mini workshops to re-teach or extend skills: A short, specific lesson with a student or group of students that focuses on one area of interest or reinforcement of a specific skill.

Orbitals: Students conduct independent investigations generally lasting 3-6 weeks. The investigations “orbit” or revolve around some facet of the curriculum.

Games to practice mastery of information and skill: Use games as a way to review and reinforce concepts. Include questions and tasks that are on a variety of cognitive levels.

Multiple levels of questions: Teachers vary the sorts of questions posed to different students based on their ability to handle them. Varying questions is an excellent way to build the confidence (and motivation) of students who are reluctant to contribute to class discourse. Note: Most teachers would probably admit that without even thinking about it they tend to address particular types of questions to particular students. In some cases, such tendencies may need to be corrected. (For example, a teacher may be unknowingly addressing all of the more challenging questions to one student, thereby inhibiting other students’ learning and fostering class resentment of that student.)

### High Prep Strategies

Cubing: Designed to help students think about a topic or idea from many different angles or perspectives. The tasks are placed on the six sides of a cube and use commands that help support thinking (justify, describe, evaluate, connect, etc.). The students complete the task on the side that ends face up, either independently or in homogenous groups.

Tiered assignment/ product: The content and objective are the same, but the process and/or the products that students must create to demonstrate mastery are varied according to the students’ readiness level.

Independent studies: Students choose a topic of interest that they are curious about and want to discover new information on. Research is done from questions developed by the student and/or teacher. The researcher produces a product to share learning with classmates.

4MAT: Teachers plan instruction for each of four learning preferences over the course of several days on a given topic. Some lessons focus on mastery, some on understanding, some on personal involvement, and some on synthesis. Each learner has a chance to approach the topic through preferred modes and to strengthen weaker areas.

Stations/ Learning Centers: A station (or simply a collection of materials) that students might use independently to explore topics or practice skills. Centers allow individuals or groups of

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students to work at their own pace. Students are constantly reassessed to determine which centers are appropriate for students at a particular time, and to plan activities at those centers to build the most pressing skills.

Tape recorded materials at different levels: Books on tape are purchased or (created by the teacher) so that students can listen to the book being read aloud to them while they follow along in the text. This is often done at a listening station, where tapes of books/information on various reading levels are available.

Choice Boards: Work assignments are written on cards that are placed in hanging pockets. By asking students to select a card from a particular row of pockets, the teacher targets work toward student needs yet allows student choice.

**Supplemental Resources**

**Instructional Resources:**

- iCivic
- Discovering our Past: History of the United States

**Supplemental Resources:**

- Rutgers Center for Civics Instruction
- EdPuzzle
- CommonLit

**Intervention Resources:**

- Audio version of text
- Video exploration
- Review Games

**OCEAN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL  
Civics Unit 4**

**Content Area: Social Studies: Civics Unit 4**

**Unit Title: Civics: Role of the Citizen**

**Duration: 23 Days**

**Target Course/Grade Level: Grade 8**

**Introduction/Unit Focus:**

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This unit focuses on preparing students to become active, informed, and engaged members of their communities by exploring the rights, responsibilities, and roles of citizenship. While voting is a key responsibility in a democratic society, effective citizenship goes far beyond the ballot box. Students will learn how to interact meaningfully with local, state, and national government institutions, and how to address matters of public policy that impact their daily lives and future occupations.

Understanding citizenship begins with a foundation in key terms and concepts, including the distinctions between citizens, non-citizens, immigrants, and legal aliens. Students will examine how citizenship is legally defined and regulated, how allegiance to a state establishes mutual rights and protections, and how different nations determine who qualifies for citizenship. By comparing the rights and responsibilities of citizens versus non-citizens, students will gain insight into the privileges and duties that come with formal membership in a nation.

Throughout the unit, students will be encouraged to reflect on the meaning of civic ideals such as individuality, the common good, and equality. They will engage in collaborative discussions, conduct research, and complete projects that allow them to define and express their understanding of these values. The unit will also challenge students to recognize prejudice, value cultural diversity, and confront bias and unfair behavior through civil discourse and responsible action.

By the end of the unit, students will not only grasp the legal framework of citizenship but also develop the critical thinking skills, empathy, and communication abilities necessary to participate constructively in a democratic society. They will learn how citizens contribute to balancing individual rights with the needs of the community, resolve conflicts, and make informed decisions in the interest of justice and the common good.

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### **Disciplinary Concepts for the Unit**

#### **Standard 9.1 Personal Financial Literacy**

This standard outlines the important fiscal knowledge, habits, and skills that must be mastered in order for students to make informed decisions about personal finance. Financial literacy is an integral component of a student's college and career readiness, enabling students to achieve fulfilling, financially-secure, and successful careers.

#### **Standard 9.2 Career Awareness, Exploration, Preparation and Training**

This standard outlines the importance of being knowledgeable about one's interests and talents, and being well informed about postsecondary and career options, career planning, and career requirements.

#### **Standard 9.4 Life Literacies and Key Skills**

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This standard outline key literacies and technical skills such as critical thinking, global and cultural awareness, and technology literacy\* that are critical for students to develop to live and work in an interconnected global economy.

#### Standard 8.1 Computer Science

Computer Science outlines a comprehensive set of concepts and skills, such as data and analysis, algorithms and programming, and computing systems.

#### Standard 8.2 Design Thinking

Technology, outlines the technological design concepts and skills essential for technological and engineering literacy. The framework design includes Engineering Design, Ethics and Culture, and the Effects of Technology on the Natural world among the disciplinary concepts

**Amistad Law: N.J.S.A. 18A 52:16A-88** Every board of education shall incorporate the information regarding the contributions of African-Americans to our country in an appropriate place in the curriculum of elementary and secondary school students.

**Holocaust Law: N.J.S.A. 18A:35-28** Every board of education shall include instruction on the Holocaust and genocides in an appropriate place in the curriculum of all elementary and secondary school pupils. The instruction shall further emphasize the personal responsibility that each citizen bears to fight racism and hatred whenever and wherever it happens.

**Diversity and Inclusion: C.18A:35-4.36a** Curriculum to include instruction on diversity and inclusion.

The instruction shall:

- (1) highlight and promote diversity, including economic diversity, equity, inclusion, tolerance, and belonging in connection with gender and sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, disabilities, and religious tolerance;
- (2) examine the impact that unconscious bias and economic disparities have at both an individual level and on society as a whole; and
- (3) encourage safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments for all students regardless of race or ethnicity, sexual and gender identities, mental and physical disabilities, and religious beliefs.

#### **Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI)**

Ensures that the contributions, history, and heritage of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) are included in the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSL) for Social Studies in kindergarten through Grade 12 (P.L.2021, c.416).

#### **21st Century Themes and Skills**

“Twenty-first century themes and skills” means themes such as global awareness; financial,

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economic, business, and entrepreneurial literacy; civic literacy; health literacy; learning and innovation skills, including creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, and communication and collaboration; information, media, and technology skills; and life and career skills, including flexibility. Career readiness, life literacies, and key skills education provides students with the necessary skills to make informed career and financial decisions, engage as responsible community members in a digital society, and to successfully meet the challenges and opportunities in an interconnected global economy.”

**Focus Standards (Major Standards)** <https://www.nj.gov/education/cccs>

**Content Standards: New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Social Studies**

6.1 U.S. History: America in the World: All students will acquire knowledge and skills to think analytically about how past and present interactions of people, cultures, and the environment shape the American heritage. Such knowledge and skills enable students to make informed decisions that reflect fundamental rights and core democratic values as productive citizens in local, national, and global communities.

6.3 Active Citizenship in the 21st Century: All students will acquire the skills needed to be active, informed citizens who value diversity and promote cultural understanding by working collaboratively to address the challenges that are inherent in living in an interconnected world

<u>Core Idea</u>	<u>Performance Expectations</u>
<p>Political and civil institutions impact all aspects of people’s lives. <b>Diversity and Inclusion</b></p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.a: Cite evidence to evaluate the extent to which the leadership and decisions of early administrations of the national government met the goals established in the Constitution. 6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.b: Evaluate the effectiveness of the fundamental principles of the Constitution (i.e., consent of the governed, rule of law, federalism, limited government, separation of powers, checks and balances, and individual rights) in establishing a federal government that allows for growth and change over time. 6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.c: Distinguish the powers and responsibilities of citizens, political parties, interest groups, and the media in a variety of governmental and nongovernmental contexts</p>

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<p>Governments have different structures which impact development (expansion) and civic participation. Amistad Diversity and Inclusion</p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.d: Use data and other evidence to determine the extent to which demographics influenced the debate on representation in Congress and federalism by examining the New Jersey and Virginia plans.</p>
<p>Members of society have the obligation to become informed of the facts regarding public issues and to engage in honest, mutually respectful discourse to advance public policy solutions. Diversity and Inclusion</p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsPD.3.a: Cite evidence to determine the role that compromise played in the creation and adoption of the Constitution and Bill of Rights.</p>
<p>The United States system of government is designed to realize the ideals of liberty, democracy, limited government, equality under the law and of opportunity, justice, and property rights. Diversity and Inclusion LGBTQ and Disabilities Amistad</p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsDP.3.a: Use primary and secondary sources to assess whether or not the ideals found in the Declaration of Independence were fulfilled for women, African Americans, and Native Americans during this time period.</p>
<p>Fundamental rights are derived from the inherent worth of each individual and include civil, political, social, economic, and cultural rights. Diversity and Inclusion LGBTQ and Disabilities Amistad</p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsHR.4.a: Examine sources from a variety of perspectives to describe efforts to reform education, women’s rights, slavery, and other issues during the Antebellum period.</p>
<p>Social and political systems have protected and denied human rights (to varying degrees) throughout time. Diversity and Inclusion LGBTQ and Disabilities Amistad NJAAPI Holocaust and Genocide</p>	<p>6.1.8.CivicsHR.3.b: Evaluate the impact of the institution of slavery on the political and economic expansion of the United States. 6.1.8.CivicsHR.3.c: Construct an argument to explain how the expansion of slavery violated human rights and contradicted American ideals</p>
<p>A national economy includes studying the changes in the amounts and qualities of human capital, physical capital, and natural resources. Diversity and Inclusion LGBTQ and Disabilities</p>	<p>6.1.8.EconNE.4.b: Analyze how technological innovations affected the status and social class of different groups of people and explain the outcomes that resulted.</p>

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Amistad  
NJAAP

**New Jersey Student Learning Standards: Interdisciplinary Connections**  
<https://www.nj.gov/education/cccs>

**Reading History**

RI.CR.8.1. Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections (including informational text features such as charts, graphs, and diagrams) that strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what an informational text says explicitly, as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.CI.8.2. Determine a central idea of an informational text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments

RI.IT.8.3. Analyze how particular elements of a text interact (e.g., how contexts influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events) across multiple text types, including across literary and informational texts.

L.KL.8.2. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

- J. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.
- K. Gather vocabulary knowledge when selecting a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
- L. Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).

RI.TS.8.4. Analyze and explain how an author organizes, develops and presents ideas, establishes a point of view or builds supporting arguments through text structure.

RI.MF.8.6. Evaluate the choices made (by the authors, directors, or actors) when presenting an idea in different mediums and the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) to address a question or solve a problem.

RI.CT.8.8. Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) two or more informational texts that provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.

**Writing in History, Science and Technical Subjects**

W.AW.8.1. Write arguments on discipline-specific content (e.g., social studies, science, technical subjects, English/Language Arts) to support claims with clear reasons and relevant

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evidence.

- P. Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue, acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- Q. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.
- R. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- S. Establish and maintain a formal or academic style, approach, and form.
- T. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

W.IW.8.2. Write informative/explanatory texts (including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes) to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

- S. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; and organize ideas, concepts, and information, using text structures (e.g., definition, classification, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, etc.) and text features (e.g., headings, graphics, and multimedia) when useful to aid in comprehension.
- T. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
- U. Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
- V. Use precise language and domain/grade-level- specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- W. Establish and maintain a formal style/academic style, approach, and form.
- X. Provide a concluding statement or section (e.g., sentence, part of a paragraph, paragraph, or multiple paragraphs) that synthesizes the information or explanation presented

W.WP.8.4. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; seeking out assistance, models, sources or feedback to improve understanding or refine final products; focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

W.WR.8.5. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

W.SE.8.6. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

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<b>New Jersey Student Learning Standards: Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills</b>	
<b>Core Ideas</b>	<b>Performance Expectations (Identified with Standard Number and statement)</b>
<b>Personal Financial Literacy</b>	
<b>Civic Financial Responsibility</b>	
Individuals can use their talents, resources, and abilities to give back	9.1.8.CR.2: Compare various ways to give back through strengths, passions, goals, and other personal factors
The potential for building and using personal wealth includes responsibility to the broader community and an understanding of the legal rights and responsibilities of being a good citizen.	9.1.8.CR.4: Examine the implications of legal and ethical behaviors when making financial decisions.
<b>Financial Psychology</b>	
An individual's values and emotions will influence the ability to modify financial behavior (when appropriate), which will impact one's financial well-being.	9.1.8.FP.2: Evaluate the role of emotions, attitudes, and behavior (rational and irrational) in making financial decisions.
<b>Information and Media Literacy</b> Increases in the quantity of information available through electronic means have heightened the need to check sources for possible distortion, exaggeration, or misrepresentation Sources of information are evaluated for accuracy and relevance when considering the use of information.	9.4.8.IML.1 Critically curate multiple resources to assess the credibility of sources when searching for information 9.4.8.IML.2 Identify specific examples of distortion, exaggeration, or misrepresentation of information. 9.4.8.IML.7 Use information from a variety of sources, contexts, disciplines, and cultures for a specific purpose (e.g., 1.2.8.C2a, 1.4.8.CR2a, 2.1.8.CHSS/IV.8.AI.1, W.5.8, 6.1.8.GeoSV.3.a, 6.1.8.CivicsDP.4.b, 7.1.NH.IPRET.8).
<b>New Jersey Student Learning Standards: Computer Science and Design Thinking</b>	
<b>Core Ideas</b>	<b>Performance Expectations (Identified with Standard Number and Statement)</b>
<b>Impact of Computing</b> Advancements in computing technology can change individuals' behaviors.	8.1.8.IC.2: Describe issues of bias and accessibility in the design of existing technologies.

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<p><b>Interaction of Technology and Humans</b> Economic, political, social and cultural aspects of society drive development of new technological products, processes, and systems.</p>	<p>8.2.8.ITH.1: Explain how the development and use of technology influences economic, political, social, and cultural issues.</p>
<p>Technology interacts with society, sometimes bringing about changes in a society's economy, politics, and culture, and often leading to the creation of new needs and wants. New needs and wants may create strains on local economies and workforces. Improvements in technology are intended to make the completion of tasks easier, safer, and/or more efficient.</p>	<p>8.2.8.ITH.2: Compare how technologies have influenced society over time. 8.2.8.ITH.5: Compare the impacts of a given technology on different societies, noting factors that may make a technology appropriate and sustainable in one society but not in another.</p>
<p><b>Ethics &amp; Culture</b> Technological disparities have consequences for public health and prosperity.</p>	<p>8.2.8.EC.1: Explain ethical issues that may arise from the use of new technologies. 8.2.8.EC.2: Examine the effects of ethical and unethical practices in product design and development.</p>

<b>New Jersey Student Learning Standards: <a href="#">Climate Change Mandate</a></b>	
<b>Core Ideas</b>	<b>Performance Expectations (Identified with Standard Number and Statement)</b>
<p>In a democratic government, there are multiple processes by which individuals can influence the creation of rules, laws, and public policy.</p>	<p>6.3.8.CivicsPR.4: Use evidence and quantitative data to propose or defend a public policy related to climate change.</p>

<b>Knowledge and Skills</b>
<p><b>Unit Learning Targets (Objectives):</b> <i>Students will be able to...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Explain the meaning of civic ideals and express their significance through class discussions, written responses, and creative projects.</li> <li>➤ Define key concepts such as "common good" and "individuality" and explain their importance in a democratic society.</li> <li>➤ Participate in respectful discussions, listening openly to viewpoints different from their own.</li> <li>➤ Analyze how citizens contribute to balancing personal freedoms with the needs of the broader community.</li> </ul>

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- Examine the role of media in shaping public opinion and learn how to identify bias, stereotypes, and differing perspectives.
- Develop strategies for peaceful conflict resolution through group collaboration and problem-solving activities.
- Understand the impact of prejudice and discrimination on individuals and groups, and evaluate how society can respond.
- Recognize and value cultural diversity, while also identifying the potential for misunderstandings in diverse societies.
- Make thoughtful, well-reasoned decisions based on evidence and civic values.
- Accept and support decisions made for the collective benefit of the community.
- Identify how individual and collective actions can lead to both intended and unintended consequences.
- Take appropriate action to challenge unfair treatment or unjust ideas

**Unit Enduring Understandings:**

*Students will know...*

*Students will understand that...*

- Citizenship involves both rights and responsibilities that support the functioning of a democratic society.
- The definitions and conditions of citizenship including immigrant and non-citizen status are determined by the laws and policies of each nation.
- Citizens are granted specific legal protections and have civic duties that non-citizens may not possess.
- Being a good citizen means actively participating in civic life and contributing to the welfare of one's community.
- The relationship between a citizen and their government is based on mutual allegiance and protection.
- Understanding who qualifies as a citizen, and under what conditions, is essential to understanding access to rights, responsibilities, and representation.
- Active and informed citizens play a key role in shaping a society that seeks to balance individual freedoms with the common good.

**Unit Essential Questions:**

- In what ways do citizens, civic values, and government institutions work together to balance individual rights with the needs of the community?

**Topic 1: Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship**

Over the course of this week-long topic, students will examine the meaning and significance of citizenship in the United States. The central focus will be understanding what it means to be a citizen and what distinguishes citizens from non-citizens, such as resident aliens. Students will

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explore how citizenship is legally defined, who qualifies as a citizen by birth or through naturalization, and the legal process immigrants must follow to become citizens. Through this exploration, students will consider questions such as: *What are the essential characteristics of a citizen?* and *What legal rights and civic responsibilities do citizens have that non-citizens do not?*

This topic also introduces students to the idea that citizenship is not just a legal status, but a relationship between the individual and the state, one that involves allegiance from the citizen and protection from the government. Students will learn that nations have the authority to establish the terms under which individuals are recognized as citizens and may also determine the conditions under which citizenship can be revoked or denied. The discussion will highlight the special legal rights and duties citizens have, such as voting, running for public office, and participating in jury duty, privileges that are not always extended to resident aliens or other non-citizens. Through class discussions and activities, students will begin to grasp the role of citizenship in a democratic society and reflect on the responsibilities and privileges that come with it.

**Vocabulary**

- A. Allegiance
- B. Citizenship
- C. Citizen
- D. Immigrant
- E. Legal Permanent Resident
- F. Naturalization
- G. Obligations
- H. Resident Alien
- I. Responsibilities

**Lessons, Activities and Resources**

- What is citizenship? Who is a Citizen? What is Naturalization? What rights and obligations do citizens have?
- iCivics: Citizen me Students create a graphic organizer that diagrams citizen rights and responsibilities at different levels of citizenship--home, school, city, state, and nation. They also learn the sources of their rights and responsibilities at each level.
- NJ Center for Civic Education: What is Citizenship? Who is a Citizen?
- How does an immigrant become a citizen?
- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services: Citizenship and Naturalization in the U.S.
- National Archives: Analyzing Einstein's Citizenship Application; Exploring America's Diversity: Luther Powell; Analyzing Rick Rescorla's Petition for Naturalization

## Topic 2: Local and State Government

During this topic, students will explore how government functions at the local and state levels, with a focus on the structure and responsibilities of New Jersey's governmental systems. The lessons will guide students in understanding the distribution of power between national, state, and local governments under the framework of federalism. Students will consider the question: *How well does federalism balance the need to limit government power with the need for efficient and responsive governance?*

Through this inquiry, students will investigate how laws and policies are developed and enacted at all three levels of government, and they will examine the specific roles played by school boards, municipal governments, counties, and the state legislature. Particular attention will be given to how New Jersey's Constitution grants authority to local governments and school districts, and how these bodies make decisions that directly affect students' daily lives. Students will also analyze how the state's executive, legislative, and judicial branches mirror the federal system in both structure and function, with clearly defined powers and a system of checks and balances.

By the end of the topic, students will gain an appreciation for how local and state governments operate within a federal framework, and how decisions made at these levels have a significant impact on their communities. They will also be encouraged to consider their own role in local civic life and the importance of understanding how government functions where they live.

### Vocabulary

- A. Appellate Court
- B. Civil suit
- C. County commissioners
- D. Defendant
- E. Municipality
- F. Ordinance
- G. Plaintiff
- H. School Board
- I. Trial Court

### Lessons, Activities and Resources

- What is your local government and how can you interact with it?:
- Municipalities: League of Municipalities: Local Government in New Jersey
- Public schools are led by local boards of education: non-paid school board members elected by the community, except for 14 school districts where they are appointed by the municipal government. The local boards of education adopt policies under which the school district operates; oversee the budget; approve the curriculum; hire and evaluate the superintendent; represent the public during contract negotiations; and serve as a communications link between the community and the school system. The

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New Jersey School Boards Association is a statewide organization that supports the efforts of local school boards.

- County Government provides many services, including parks and social services, based in the 21 counties, led by county commissioners.
- State Government:
  - NJ Center for Civic Education: New Jersey’s Powerful Governor
  - NJ Center for Civic Education: New Jersey Legislature
  - NJ Center for Civic Education: New Jersey Judiciary
  - NJ State House Tour and teacher resources
  - State House Express - The Eagleton Institute of Politics offers funding for NJ State House tours by classes.
  - iCivics: Court Quest game has students navigate the differences between the state and federal court systems and identify the types and levels of courts within each system.

### **Topic 3: Public Policy and Civil Society**

Over the course of this week-long topic, students will explore how individuals and civil society contribute to shaping public policy at the local, state, national, and even global levels. They will begin by examining what public policy is: defined as the decisions, commitments, and actions taken by those who hold positions of power in government. Students will learn that public policies often take the form of laws, rules, or regulations that directly impact society.

The role of civil society will be a key area of focus. Civil society includes institutions that operate independently of government, such as the media, nonprofits, voluntary organizations, fraternal groups, and interest groups and serves as a bridge between the public and those in power. Students will investigate how these organizations influence public policy through advocacy, public campaigns, and direct engagement with lawmakers. They will also examine how historically marginalized groups, such as women prior to gaining the right to vote in 1920 and minorities before the Civil Rights Movement, organized and acted to effect significant political and social change despite lacking full political rights.

Throughout the week, students will be encouraged to reflect on their own potential role in civic life. They will consider how individual actions such as contacting elected officials, participating in campaigns, or joining advocacy groups can lead to meaningful change in their communities. The goal is for students to understand that even without holding public office, they have the power and responsibility to influence policy decisions and contribute to the common good.

#### **Vocabulary**

##### **A. Civil Society**

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- B. Interest groups
- C. Public Policy

**Activities and Resources**

- What is public policy? What is civil society? How do individuals and institutions of civil society, such as interest groups, fraternal groups, business groups, etc. influence public policy?
- NJ Center for Civic Education: What is public policy?
- Gettingsmart: Strategies for teaching public policy

**Topic 4: Citizen Action - Identifying a Problem or Issue**

During this week-long topic, students will examine how to identify and evaluate public issues that are appropriate for government action and determine which level of government: local, state, national, or global is most suitable to address them. Through guided inquiry and class discussions, students will reflect on questions such as: What matters to me and why? What types of issues should involve government, and which might be better addressed through civil society or private initiatives? They will explore how to distinguish between personal concerns and broader public issues, using tools like the U.S. and state constitutions to determine whether proposed solutions are constitutionally appropriate.

Students will learn to assess the scope, impact, urgency, and feasibility of various issues, with particular attention to topics that have wide-reaching or long-lasting consequences. Critical global and national concerns, such as climate change, environmental sustainability, and economic justice will be explored as examples of complex challenges that intersect with both human rights and public policy. Students will also be introduced to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a tool to help frame these issues from a global perspective.

An essential part of the week will focus on how groups can reach consensus when determining which public issues to prioritize. Students will practice civil discourse and collaborative decision-making, learning to weigh different perspectives and values in order to arrive at shared goals. They will conduct research, analyze sources, and apply informational literacy skills as they work toward developing a collective understanding of which issues are most critical for civic engagement and government attention.

**Vocabulary**

- A. Duration
- B. Economic justice
- C. Feasibility
- D. Human rights
- E. Intensity
- F. Resources

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G. Scope

**Lessons, Activities and Resources**

- Identifying important issues to be addressed at the local, state, national and/or global level
- NJ Center for Civic Education: Identifying Community Issues
- Newseum: Identifying community issues
- Project Citizen
- Generation Citizen
- Youth-Led Participatory Action Research
- Why are issues involving human rights important? How do issues of economic justice involve human rights?
- Human Rights Educators USA: Service Learning for Human Rights Education
- Why are issues involving climate changes and the environmental issues critical?
- NJ Dept. of Education: NJ Climate Change Education Resources
- Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry: Identifying risks

**Topic 5: Citizen Action - Developing and Proposing a Solution**

During this topic, students will focus on the essential skills needed to influence public policy effectively. They will explore the process of identifying important contemporary issues, conducting thorough research, and determining which branch or agency of government has the authority to act on those issues. Emphasis will be placed on developing critical civic competencies, such as media literacy, digital research, active listening, and the ability to evaluate diverse perspectives and sources.

Students will learn the importance of examining multiple alternative solutions to a single public problem. By comparing options, weighing consequences, and using evidence to support reasoning, they will gain experience in problem-solving and decision-making. The goal is to help students understand that finding the "best" solution often involves compromise, collaboration, and a realistic assessment of what can be implemented through existing governmental structures.

Through this work, students will develop a deeper understanding of how civic engagement is not limited to voting, but includes the ability to advocate for change by presenting well-informed solutions to the right governmental audiences. They will gain experience in creating action plans and strategies for engaging with public officials or agencies to promote meaningful solutions. This process nurtures both practical civic skills and a positive sense of responsibility as active participants in a democratic society.

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**Vocabulary**

- A. Action Plan
- B. Advocating
- C. Alternatives
- D. Bias
- E. Credibility
- F. Government agency
- G. Presentation
- H. Solutions

**Lessons, Activities and Resources**

- How can we identify the appropriate branch or agency of government with authority to address the issue that has been selected?
- NJ Center for Civic Education: Selecting an Issue
- How are digital tools, research skills, media literacy skills and active listening skills used for civic participation? How can I assess the credibility of online or printed information?
- How can I determine whether a source is biased?
- NJ Center for Civic Education: Media Literacy
- NJ Center for Civic Education: Suggested Practices--Active Listening/Civil Discourse
- Why should I carefully consider several alternative solutions? How can I determine what is the best solution to the problem that I have identified?
- NJ Center for Civic Education: Selecting the best solution
- iCivics: Identifying local solutions
- How can I initiate change? What is an action plan?
- NJ Center for Civic Education: How can individuals and groups bring their concerns to public policymakers?
- How can I develop an effective written and/or oral presentation advocating our solution?
- Scholastic: Persuasive letter writing rubric:
- iCivics: Local Solutions Civic Action Plan
- NJ Center for Civic Education: Presenting your class plan

**Topic 6: Civic Participation and Democracy**

Over the course of this topic, students will explore the value of civic engagement and its essential role in sustaining a democratic society. They will consider what happens when citizens fail to participate in local, state, or national government and reflect on how disengagement can weaken democratic systems over time. Through discussion and analysis, students will examine the benefits of active participation, not just for the nation as a whole, but for individuals and communities as well.

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This topic encourages students to think critically about their role as citizens and the responsibilities that come with living in a democratic republic. They will explore how civic involvement, such as voting, volunteering, staying informed, and advocating for change contributes to the evolution of democracy. Additionally, students will reflect on how both past and present individuals have helped shape our political landscape through consistent and meaningful civic action.

By the end of the week, students will understand that democracy is not a static system but a living one that requires ongoing effort and participation. Lifelong engagement and civic responsibility are not only foundational to protecting individual freedoms but are necessary for the continued success of the American democratic experiment.

**Vocabulary**

- A. Benefits
- B. Civic engagement
- C. Civic skills
- D. Cohesiveness
- E. Participation
- F. Reflection

**Lessons, Activities and Resources**

- Reflecting on doing the public policy project
- NJ Center for Civic Education: Student Reflections
- What are the benefits to individuals of participating in the civic life of our country?
- NJ Center for Civic Education: Why should individuals participate in civic life?
- What can individuals do to help ensure that the American experiment with democracy continues? How does civic participation help our democracy evolve? What are the benefits of civic participation in a democracy?
- The New York Times video: The Power to Change the World
- Center for Civic Education video: Project Citizen International Documentary “The World We Want”

Instructional Plan	
Suggested Activities	Resources/Texts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ DBQs and Mini-DBQs</li> <li>➤ Argumentative Writing Tasks</li> <li>➤ Explanatory/Informative Writing Tasks</li> <li>➤ Making connections between current and past events - cause and effect</li> <li>➤ Research Projects</li> </ul>	Curriculum development Resources/Instructional Materials/Equipment Needed /Teacher Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Graphic organizers</li> <li>➤ Supplemental Readings</li> </ul>

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- Relevant Video Clips
- American Heritage Primary Source Library
- Integration of current events from relevant sources
- Library of Congress
- ABC-CLIO (Primary Sources)
- Rutgers Center for Civics

**Evidence of Student Learning**

**Formative Assessments:**

- Thought Bubble - what the Mill Girls were thinking
- Political Cartoons - Andrew Jackson
- Mini Debate - Impact of Cotton Gin
- Observations
- Questioning
- Discussion
- Exit/Admit Slips
- Learning/Response Logs
- Graphic Organizers
- Peer/Self Assessments
- Practice Presentations
- Visual Representations
- Kinesthetic Assessments
- Constructive Quizzes
- Think Pair Share
- As I See It
- Homework
- Class work
- Teacher observation
- Group participation
- Notebook assessment
- Project presentations
- Class discussions
- Do Now
- Varied journal prompts, spelling or vocabulary lists
- Anchor activities
- Choice of review activities
- Homework options

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- Flexible grouping
- Varied computer programs
- Multiple learning intelligence
- Use of graphic organizers
- Think-Pair-Share by readiness, interest and/or learning profile
- Games to practice mastery of information and skill
- Multiple levels of questioning
- Jigsaw
- Multiple Texts
- Alternative Assessments
- Modified Assessments
- Open Ended Activities/ Assessments

**Summative Assessments:**

- Factory vs. Plantation - identify the changes occurring in the US during the Industrial Revolution, list differences and similarities, analyze how differences led to war
- Analyze primary sources - Indian Removal Act & Trail of Tears
- Journal/diary/letter from natives
- Worcester v. Georgia
- Chart immigration - include number of people, where they came from and reasons for leaving
- Create an Underground Railroad Game - board game, comprehension questions, real problems slaves encountered
- Lesson Quizzes
- Chapter Assessment
- Bio Cube Project for influential Native Americans and influential American Inventors.
- Westward Expansion Timeline Project
- 19 Century Inventions Advertising Project
- End of unit / chapter tests.
- End of term / semester tests.
- Mid-unit quizzes
- All evaluations may contain some or all: Multiple choice, true/false, short answer, essay, and visual identification and description questions.

**Benchmark Assessments:**

- Unit tests, research based writing assignments, and final exam.
- Teacher-created pre-assessments and post-assessments
- Textbook generated pre and post assessments
- Teacher created Benchmark Assessments
- DBQs
- Common Grade Level Subject Assessments
- LinkIt! Assessments Data/Test Score Analysis

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**Alternative Assessments**

- Independent reading and inquiry
- Self-selected reading materials/vocabulary
- Varied pacing
- Differentiated instruction
- Student-teacher goal setting
- Whole to part and part to whole explanations
- Varied computer programs
- Varied supplemental materials
- Stations and workshops
- Student choice (assessment options)
- Notes provided by teacher
- Graphic organizers
- Scaffold assignments
- Student choice/option assessment
- Student TED Talk
- Unit Project
- Socratic Seminar
- Silent Seminar
- Discussion Board (Google Classroom)

**Performance Tasks:**

- (When appropriate) This type of task demonstrates students transfer of learning and application to a performance task. Think about what you want the students to be able to do at the end of the unit.
  - Portfolio Review
  - Webquest

**Suggested Options for Differentiation**

**Special Education**

- Follow all IEP modifications.
- Use visuals, diagrams, timelines, and multimedia resources.
- Provide guided notes, graphic organizers, and study guides.
- Pre-teach and review vocabulary and key concepts.
- Offer leveled texts or simplified versions of primary sources.
- Provide small-group or one-on-one instruction.
- Assign supportive lab/learning partners or peer tutors.

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- Offer preferential seating.
- Read aloud directions or key passages.
- Allow extended time on projects, essays, and assessments.
- Accept oral, dictated, or technology-assisted responses.
- Reduce or modify assignment/test length.
- Provide access to large-print, Braille, or digital text with audio supports.
- Allow use of scribes, text-to-speech, or augmentative communication devices.

**Students with 504 Plans**

- Follow the 504 plan.
- Provide extended time for assignments and assessments.
- Offer small-group or quiet testing environments.
- Provide preferential seating.
- Accept oral or dictated responses.
- Provide large-print, Braille, or digital texts with assistive technology.
- Allow use of scribes or communication devices.

**Students at Risk of School Failure**

- Provide extended time and break tasks into smaller steps.
- Reduce the number of questions or workload when appropriate.
- Provide copies of teacher notes, outlines, or guided reading questions.
- Pre-teach and reinforce key vocabulary and concepts.
- Assign peer or teacher support for note-taking and projects.
- Provide preferential seating and structured routines.
- Offer frequent teacher check-ins and feedback.
- Use real-world connections and current events to increase engagement.

**Gifted and Talented**

- Ask higher-order, open-ended questions to promote critical thinking.
- Provide opportunities for independent inquiry and research projects.
- Offer enrichment texts, primary sources, and historical documents for deeper analysis.
- Encourage simulations, debates, and mock trials.

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- Allow choice in projects, assessments, and presentations.
- Group flexibly for inquiry projects and problem-solving tasks.
- Integrate cross-curricular activities (ELA for persuasive writing, math for data analysis).
- Provide leadership opportunities such as facilitating discussions or mentoring peers.
- Encourage reflection, peer teaching, and authentic presentations.

### **Multilingual Learners**

- Collaborate with ESL/MLL specialists.
- Provide small-group instruction and partner support.
- Pre-teach and revisit vocabulary with visuals, cognates, and realia (maps, artifacts, political cartoons).
- Use bilingual glossaries, graphic organizers, and labeled diagrams.
- Scaffold reading of primary sources with summaries or side-by-side translations when possible.
- Provide sentence frames, discussion stems, and writing templates.
- Allow extended time and oral presentations instead of written responses.
- Use digital supports (translation tools, captioned videos, read-aloud technology).

### **Diversity and Inclusion**

- Integrate diverse voices, cultures, and perspectives into lessons and primary sources.
- Provide alternative project formats (visual, oral, digital).
- Use visuals, timelines, and maps alongside text.
- Use clear academic language and avoid slang/idioms.
- Collaborate with cultural liaisons, language specialists, and support staff.
- Establish classroom norms for respectful debate and discussion.
- Provide sufficient wait time for responses.
- Foster strong school-family connections and invite families to contribute cultural perspectives.

### **Low Prep Strategies**

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Varied journal prompts, spelling or vocabulary lists : Students are given a choice of different journal prompts, spelling lists or vocabulary lists depending on level of proficiency/assessment results.

Anchor activities: Anchor activities provide meaningful options for students when they are not actively engaged in classroom activities (e.g., when they finish early, are waiting for further directions, are stumped, first enter class, or when the teacher is working with other students). Anchors should be directly related to the current learning goals.

Choices of books: Different textbooks or novels (often at different levels) that students are allowed to choose from for content study or for literature circles.

Choices of review activities: Different review or extension activities are made available to students during a specific section of the class (such as at the beginning or end of the period).

Homework options: Students are provided with choices about the assignments they complete as homework. Or, students are directed to specific homework based on student needs.

Student-teacher goal setting: The teacher and student work together to develop individual learning goals for the student.

Flexible grouping: Students might be instructed as a whole group, in small groups of various permutations (homogeneous or heterogeneous by skill or interest), in pairs or individuals. Any small groups or pairs change over time based on assessment data.

Varied computer programs: The computer is used as an additional center in the classroom, and students are directed to specific websites or software that allows them to work on skills at their level.

Multiple Intelligence or Learning Style options: Students select activities or are assigned an activity that is designed for learning a specific area of content through their strong intelligence (verbal-linguistic, interpersonal, musical, etc.)

Varying scaffolding of same organizer: Provide graphic organizers that require students to complete various amounts of information. Some will be more filled out (by the teacher) than others.

Think-Pair-Share by readiness, interest, and/or learning profile: Students are placed in pre-determined pairs, asked to think about a question for a specific amount of time, then are asked to share their answers first with their partner and then with the whole group.

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Mini workshops to re-teach or extend skills: A short, specific lesson with a student or group of students that focuses on one area of interest or reinforcement of a specific skill.

Orbitals: Students conduct independent investigations generally lasting 3-6 weeks. The investigations “orbit” or revolve around some facet of the curriculum.

Games to practice mastery of information and skill: Use games as a way to review and reinforce concepts. Include questions and tasks that are on a variety of cognitive levels.

Multiple levels of questions: Teachers vary the sorts of questions posed to different students based on their ability to handle them. Varying questions is an excellent way to build the confidence (and motivation) of students who are reluctant to contribute to class discourse. Note: Most teachers would probably admit that without even thinking about it they tend to address particular types of questions to particular students. In some cases, such tendencies may need to be corrected. (For example, a teacher may be unknowingly addressing all of the more challenging questions to one student, thereby inhibiting other students’ learning and fostering class resentment of that student.)

### **High Prep Strategies**

Cubing: Designed to help students think about a topic or idea from many different angles or perspectives. The tasks are placed on the six sides of a cube and use commands that help support thinking (justify, describe, evaluate, connect, etc.). The students complete the task on the side that ends face up, either independently or in homogenous groups.

Tiered assignment/ product: The content and objective are the same, but the process and/or the products that students must create to demonstrate mastery are varied according to the students’ readiness level.

Independent studies: Students choose a topic of interest that they are curious about and want to discover new information on. Research is done from questions developed by the student and/or teacher. The researcher produces a product to share learning with classmates.

4MAT: Teachers plan instruction for each of four learning preferences over the course of several days on a given topic. Some lessons focus on mastery, some on understanding, some on personal involvement, and some on synthesis. Each learner has a chance to approach the topic through preferred modes and to strengthen weaker areas.

Stations/ Learning Centers: A station (or simply a collection of materials) that students might use independently to explore topics or practice skills. Centers allow individuals

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or groups of students to work at their own pace. Students are constantly reassessed to determine which centers are appropriate for students at a particular time, and to plan activities at those centers to build the most pressing skills.

Tape recorded materials at different levels: Books on tape are purchased or (created by the teacher) so that students can listen to the book being read aloud to them while they follow along in the text. This is often done at a listening station, where tapes of books/information on various reading levels are available.

Choice Boards: Work assignments are written on cards that are placed in hanging pockets. By asking students to select a card from a particular row of pockets, the teacher targets work toward student needs yet allows student choice.

### Supplemental Resources

#### Instructional Resources:

- iCivic
- Discovering our Past: History of the United States

#### Supplemental Resources:

- Rutgers Center for Civics Instruction
- EdPuzzle
- CommonLit

#### Intervention Resources:

- Audio version of text
- Video exploration
- Review Games