

Unit 2: Government and Illinois

What is the government?

8 weeks (38 sessions)

STAGE 1: DESIRED LEARNING

Essential Question: What is the government?

Essential Understanding: Students will explore the concept of government to learn more about how people created governments to establish laws, provide services, and regulate resources and the economy for people living in communities around the world. Students will rank the importance of services provided by the government at the beginning, middle, and end of this unit to see how their thinking has changed over time after learning more about types of governments, branches of the United States' federal government, and differences between federal, state, and local governments.

Although students will explore different types of governments during the first inquiry, the majority of their focus will be on democracy and learning about the rights and responsibilities of citizens in countries that have a democratic system of government. Students will consider how voting in elections can help citizens make their voices part of their government through electing officials to represent their ideas at the local, state, and federal levels of government.

Students will also explore the law-making process and how different branches of the federal government play a role in creating, enforcing, and reviewing laws to make sure that laws are constitutional. Students will participate in a mock law-making process with their peers while proposing a "bill" to suggest a new school rule to the building principal. Students will vote on their bills and will send one bill to the principal for a signature of approval (or a veto!).

Students will read informational texts (including articles, maps, and other text passages) to gather information about democratic governments, the law-making process, and the different levels of government. They will read with a purpose in order to identify the main idea of informational texts, compare and contrast main ideas in informational texts to determine importance of ideas, and will gather and cite text evidence to support their own understanding of key concepts.

Mid-unit, students will take what they've learned about government and zoom in on their home state, Illinois. Students will read an informational textbook, "Illinois: Past and Present," by Joanne Mattern, to learn more about their state's geography, history, resources, and economy. Students will also explore how nonfiction text features, such as headings, bolded or italicized fonts, maps, photographs, sidebars, etc. help readers learn information from a text and can help provide clues

for readers when considering the main idea and determining the importance of ideas in an informational text.

Finally, students will incorporate academic vocabulary terms related to government through daily vocabulary exploration that includes key terms related to government and democracy, and key terms related to the “Illinois: Past and Present” text to support their understanding of informational text content. Students will also dive deeper into noticing elements of words through word study activities that are included within each inquiry. Word study topics include: syllable types, using morphemes to learn about word meanings, Greek roots, prefixes, and suffixes. Students will continue exploring elements of words throughout 4th grade to support their understanding of academic vocabulary and to help them see connections between key terms throughout the year.

STAGE 3: THE LEARNING PLAN

The Learning Plan in Stage 3 provides a detailed explanation of the work that happens on a daily basis to support the Essential Question, Essential Understandings, and standards outlined in Stage 1. The expectation is that all inquiries are taught in the order that they are written.

Unit 2 Inquiry Overview

Inquiry #	Inquiry Question	# Sessions
Inquiry 1	Why do we have a government? ¿Por qué tenemos un gobierno?	4 Sessions
Inquiry 2	What makes the United States' government unique? ¿Qué hace que el gobierno de los Estados Unidos sea único?	3 Sessions
Inquiry 3	What do the 3 branches of the U.S. government do? ¿Qué hacen las 3 ramas del gobierno de los Estados Unidos?	5 Sessions
Inquiry 4	How are laws created? ¿Cómo se crean las leyes?	3 Sessions
Inquiry 5	Why are there levels of government (federal, state, and local)? ¿Por qué hay niveles de gobierno (federal, estatal y local)?	5 Sessions
Inquiry 6	Where are you in Illinois? ¿Dónde estás en Illinois?	7 Sessions
Inquiry 7	How does Illinois' state government compare to the United States' government?	3 Sessions

	¿Cómo se compara el gobierno del estado de Illinois con el gobierno de los Estados Unidos?	
Inquiry 8	How has Illinois changed over time? ¿Cómo ha cambiado Illinois con el tiempo?	4 Sessions
Inquiry 9	What is the government? ¿Qué es el gobierno?	4 Sessions
Total Sessions		38 Sessions

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STAGE 1: DESIRED LEARNING

Essential Question: What is a government?

Essential Writing Tasks: This unit includes three writing tasks for students to explore three genres of writing: poetry (narrative), opinion, and research.

Poetry (narrative): Students will write a poem that describes how they use their voice and what makes their voice unique. Students are exploring the concept of democracy and how citizens use their collective voices within their government in shared reading, so this assignment is intended to extend the idea of voice for students to consider their own unique voice. This task is the first opportunity that students will have writing poetry in 4th grade.

Opinion: Students will write a letter to a local elected official expressing an idea about a new law or rule. Students are exploring the idea of citizens participating in their government by voicing opinions and working with elected officials during shared reading, so this task is intended for students to experience expressing an idea to a local leader.

Research: Students will create an Illinois Brochure to showcase information about the state's geography, history, government, and economy. They will use research to help them incorporate factual information into their final product to share with their reader, and will also incorporate nonfiction text features into their final draft of their brochure.

Looking Back: During Unit 1, students explored the three genres of writing: narrative, opinion, and research. Students wrote a narrative piece about either an experienced “inconvenience” or “disaster” to think about telling a personal story as a narrative. Students wrote about a natural disaster that they thought was the most dangerous and why it was dangerous, incorporating research about a topic to support an opinion. Finally, students researched ways that people can stay safe during a natural disaster and wrote a short expository essay as well as a comic strip with the same information to create a paired-text, similar to the anchor texts they were reading during their shared reading lessons.

Looking Ahead: Students will continue to develop their writing in all three genres: narrative, opinion, and research, throughout 4th grade. Each unit in 4th grade includes opportunities for students to write a piece using each genre of writing. One genre will be a larger focus per unit for students to have more time to work with that type of writing within a larger task, and the remaining two genres will be within shorter tasks so that all genres spiral throughout 4th grade units. Written tasks will incorporate content students learn through shared reading units so that they can apply what they have read through writing.

4th graders will be working toward writing multi-paragraph pieces that include appropriate opening and closing statements, include details and examples that support a main idea, and incorporate conventions and grammar. All units will include daily mini lessons using Patterns of Power so that conventions and grammar become a daily routine for students to notice correct usage of conventions and grammar within exemplar texts and begin to transfer those components into their own writing through guidance from teachers and daily writing tasks.

Connection to Technology: 4th grade students will first begin learning traditional keyboarding skills to support them in longer written tasks using technology. Students will be offered the choice to type one of their written pieces during this unit as a way to practice their typing skill set and publish their work digitally. If students are not ready to type a written piece they may be offered the option to handwrite at this time and may try typing a final draft during a later unit.

STAGE 3: THE LEARNING PLAN

The Learning Plan below gives a detailed explanation of the work that happens on a day-to-day basis to guide students to the Essential Question, Essential Writing Tasks, and learning standards outlined in Stage 1. The expectation is that all writing tasks are taught in the order outlined in Stage 3.

UNIT 2 PLANNER

<u>Writing Task 1</u>	Narrative: My Voice poem <hr/>	10 Sessions
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	<p>Patterns of Power Conventions Lessons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use prepositions to tell when or where, or to add details ● Use <i>and</i> to join two actions in a sentence. 	
Writing Task 2	<p>Opinion: Letter to a Local Official</p> <hr/> <p>Patterns of Power Conventions Lessons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use a comma and an <i>and</i> to join two sentences to form a compound sentence ● Use a comma and <i>but</i> to join to contrasting sentences to form a compound sentence 	12 Sessions
Writing Task 3	<p>Research: Illinois Brochure</p> <hr/> <p>Patterns of Power Conventions Lessons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use a comma and <i>so</i> to join two sentences with a cause/effect relationship to form a compound sentence ● Use a comma and <i>or</i> to join two sentences to present choices within a compound sentence ● Review conjunctions and when to use a comma to separate ideas within a compound sentence 	16 Sessions
Total Sessions		38 Sessions