



# Civics & American Government - Unit 2 - Interactions Among Branches of Government

## Unit Focus

In 1787 the Founding Fathers established a Federal Republic through a Constitution which established core principles of democracy: equality, rights, liberties, opportunities, and security. Central to those principles is the concept of consensus. Over 200 years later, the importance of the role of consensus will allow the student to better grasp the inner workings of the American democratic system. The Unit on "Governing by Consensus" focuses on the structure, function, and relationship between and among branches in the federal government and local, state, and national governmental bodies. Through a deeper look into the principles of the Constitution, students will know and be able to apply knowledge and concepts about government power and purpose as the Founding Fathers may have intended. Students will discuss the organization of the government at the federal level, and may also compare those structures to state and local government structures. In particular, the unit will ask students to consider the reasoning behind laws, how they impact their daily lives, and the benefits and drawbacks of making decisions (legislating) by consensus. In a government that was established to consider equal representation and power of the majority, students will define consensus and evaluate how citizens work together within this social contract. Students, as lawmakers, will further their understanding of the way in which the Framers established the lawmaking process.

## Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

Standard(s)	Transfer	
<p><b>Common Core</b> History/Social Studies: 11-12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole. (CCSS.ELALITERACY.RH.11-12.5)</li> <li>Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant data and evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both claim(s) and counterclaims in a discipline-appropriate form that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.1B)</li> <li>Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.4)</li> <li>Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.7)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Students will be able to independently use their learning to...</i></p> <p><b>T1</b> Pose and pursue question(s) to better understand an issue and draw conclusions or seek patterns based on a synthesis of evidence</p> <p><b>T2</b> Apply historical knowledge to develop connections to other eras/situations or provide insight into a contemporary issue</p> <p><b>T3</b> Evaluate diverse sources and points of view to determine what really happened</p>	
	<b>Meaning</b>	
	<b>Understanding(s)</b>	<b>Essential Question(s)</b>
	<p><i>Students will understand that...</i></p> <p><b>U1</b> Various levels and branches of government have unique responsibilities and powers that interact with other levels and branches to make government work.</p> <p><b>U2</b> Rules, laws, and processes help people make decisions on issues to balance individual freedoms and common good.</p>	<p><i>Students will keep considering...</i></p> <p><b>Q1</b> What is the purpose of government? How do we balance personal freedoms and the common good?</p> <p><b>Q2</b> How does power impact the function of government?</p> <p><b>Q3</b> What is the reason behind the rule/law? Is it fair?</p>
	<b>Acquisition of Knowledge and Skill</b>	
	<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Skill(s)</b>
<p><i>Students will know...</i></p> <p><b>K1</b> The core principles of democracy, including the impact of consensus, majority rule, and minority voice</p>	<p><i>Students will be skilled at...</i></p> <p><b>S1</b> explaining points of agreement, disagreement, and interpretations</p>	

## Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

### Connecticut Goals and Standards

Social Studies: 11

- Explain points of agreement and disagreement experts have about interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a supporting question. (INQ.9–12.3)
- Explain how supporting questions contribute to an inquiry and how, through engaging source work, new compelling and supporting questions emerge. (INQ.9–12.4)
- Distinguish the powers and responsibilities of local, state, tribal, national and international civic and political institutions. (CIV.9–12.1)
- Evaluate multiple procedures for making governmental decisions at the local, state, national and international levels in terms of the civic purposes achieved. (CIV.9–12.14)
- Explain how the U.S. Constitution establishes a system of government that has powers, responsibilities and limits that have changed over time and that are still contested. (CIV.9–12.4)
- Evaluate the credibility of a source by examining how experts value the sources. (INQ.9–12.7)

### Madison Public Schools Profile of a Graduate

- Idea Generation: Studying a problem, need or model (mentor text, political piece, documents, art work, etc.) to consider limitations and imagine new solutions/transformations. (POG. 2.1)
- Product Creation: Effectively use a medium to communicate important information. (POG.3.2)
- Citizenship: Identify, analyze and contribute to critical issues in society in an ethical and responsible manner. (POG.5.1)

- K2** The major tenets of the Preamble and Articles of Constitution
- K3** The Federal Census, reapportionment, and redistricting
- K4** Structure and function of the three branches of Government
- K5** The roles and powers of leaders from the three branches
- K6** Federalism, states' rights, and local control
- K7** Vocabulary: consensus, majority, public opinion, Federal Republic, constitutional democracy, Representative Democracy, constituent, bicameral, checks and balances, separation of powers, reapportionment, redistricting, gerrymandering, limited power of government, impeach, commander in chief, executive, legislative, judicial, ratification, veto, pocket veto, concurrent powers, jurisdiction, federalism, amendment

- S2** distinguishing between Constitutional powers and responsibilities in government
- S3** evaluating multiple procedures for governmental decisions
- S4** evaluating various explanations
- S5** supplying relevant data and evidence to support claims
- S6** synthesizing multiple sources