



Unit 1 Foundations and the United States Federal system of Government

Marietta City Schools

2025–2026 District Unit Planner

American Government

Unit title	Unit 1: Foundations and the United States Federal System of Government	MYP year	4	Unit (hrs)	duration	15 Hours
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Mastering Content and Skills through INQUIRY (Establishing the purpose of the Unit): *What will students learn?*

GA DoE Standards

Standards

SSCG1 Compare and contrast various systems of government.

- Determine how governments differ in geographic distribution of power, particularly unitary, confederal, and federal types of government.
- Determine how some forms of government differ in their level of citizen participation particularly authoritarian (autocracy and oligarchy) and democratic.
- Determine how the role of the executive differs in presidential and parliamentary systems of government.
- Differentiate between a direct democracy, representative democracy, and/or a republic.

SSCG2 Demonstrate knowledge of the political philosophies that shaped the development of the United States constitutional government.

- Analyze key ideas of limited government and the rule of law as seen in the Magna Carta, the Petition of Right, and the English Bill of Rights.
- Analyze the impact of the writings of Hobbes (Leviathan), Locke (Second Treatise on Government), Rousseau (The Social Contract), and Montesquieu (The Spirit of the Laws) on our concept of government.
- Analyze the ways in which the philosophies listed in element 2b influenced the Declaration of Independence.

SSCG3 Demonstrate knowledge of the framing and structure of the United States Constitution.

- Analyze debates during the drafting of the Constitution, including the Three-Fifths Compromise, the Great Compromise, and the Commerce Clause.
- Analyze how the Constitution addresses the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation.
- Explain the fundamental principles of the United States Constitution, including limited government, the rule of law, federalism, separation of powers, checks and balances, and popular sovereignty.

d. Explain the key ideas in the debate over ratification made by the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists.

SSCG4 Demonstrate knowledge of the organization and powers of the national government.

a. Describe the structure, powers, and limitations of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, as described in the Constitution.

b. Analyze the relationship between the three branches in a system of checks and balances and separation of powers.

SSCG5 Demonstrate knowledge of the federal system of government described in the United States Constitution.

a. Explain and analyze the relationship of state governments to the national government.

b. Define and provide examples of enumerated, implied, concurrent, reserved, and denied powers.

c. Analyze the ongoing debate that focuses on the balance of power between state and national governments as it relates to current issues.

d. Analyze the Supremacy Clause found in Article VI and the role of the U.S. Constitution as the “supreme law of the land.”

e. Describe the roles of Congress and the states in the formal process of amending the Constitution.

SSCG6 Analyze the meaning and importance of each of the rights guaranteed under the Bill of Rights and how each is secured.

Concepts/Skills to be Mastered by Students

Information Processing Skills:

1. compare similarities and differences
3. identify issues and/or problems and alternative solutions
5. identify main idea, detail, sequence of events, and cause and effect in a social studies context
6. identify and use primary and secondary sources
10. analyze artifacts
11. draw conclusions and make generalizations
12. analyze graphs and diagrams
13. translate dates into centuries, eras, or ages
16. check for consistency of information
17. Interpret political cartoons

Map and Globe Skills:

4. compare and contrast the categories of natural, cultural, and political features found on maps.
7. use a map to explain impact of geography on historical and current events
10. compare maps of the same place at different points in time and from different perspectives to determine changes, identify trends, and generalize about human activities

SS Reading Standards 6-8:

L9-10RHSS1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

L9-10RHSS2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

L9-10RHSS3: Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them

L9-10RHSS4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science

L9-10RHSS5: Analyze how a text uses structure to emphasize key points or advance an explanation or analysis

L9-10RHSS7: Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.

L9-10RHSS8: Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author's claims.

L9-10RHSS10: By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 9–10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

SS Writing Standards 6-8:

L9-10WHST1: Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content

L9-10WHST2: Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes.

Key concept	Related concept(s)	Global context
Systems are sets of interacting or interdependent components. Systems provide structure and order in human, natural, and built environments. Systems can be static, dynamic, simple, or complex	Power Governance Ideology	Fairness and Development Students will explore rights and responsibilities; the relationship between communities; sharing finite resources with other people and with other living things; access to equal opportunities; peace and conflict resolution.
Statement of Inquiry		
As a society increases in complexity and interacts with other societies, the complexity of government also increases.		
Inquiry questions		
Factual What is the level of citizen participation in an autocracy, oligarchy, and democracy? What are the differences between unitary, confederal, and federal governments? How is our government organized? Conceptual How do citizens participate in a direct democracy, representative democracy, and a republic?		


How do presidential and parliamentary governments compare with one another?
 Where does our government get its power?
 Why do we need a government?

Debatable

Is the distribution of governmental power in America changing?
 How does the rule of law in a government system reflect the beliefs and ideals of a society?

MYP Objectives	Assessment Tasks	
<i>What specific MYP objectives will be addressed during this unit?</i>	<i>Relationship between summative assessment task(s) and statement of inquiry:</i>	<i>List of common formative and summative assessments.</i>
Criterion C. Communicating Criterion D. Thinking Critically	<p><u>Stranded Island Activity</u> Students work collaboratively to use their knowledge of SSCG1 to create their ideal government Communication</p> <p><u>ESOL Stranded Island Activity</u>: Students will collaborate through member roles and apply their knowledge of SSCG1 to create their ideal government.</p>	<p><u>Formative Assessment(s):</u></p> <p>SSCG1 AMP Checkpoint SSCG2 AMP Checkpoint SSCG3 AMP Checkpoint SSCG4 and 5 AMP Checkpoint SSCG6 AMP Checkpoint</p> <p><u>Summative Assessment(s):</u></p> <p>Multiple Choice Foundations Summative</p>
Approaches to learning (ATL)		
<p>Category: Communication Cluster: Communication Skill Indicator: Students will negotiate ideas and knowledge with peers and teachers while listening actively to others’ perspectives to create a governmental system for <i>Stranded Island</i>.</p> <p>Category: Thinking Skills Cluster: Transfer Skill Indicator: Students will combine knowledge, understanding and skills to create products or solutions for <i>Stranded Island</i></p>		

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<u>Learning Experiences</u> Add additional rows below as needed		
Objective or Content	Learning Experiences	Personalized Learning and Differentiation
SSCG1 Compare and contrast various systems of government. a. Determine how governments differ in geographic distribution of power, particularly unitary, confederal, and federal types of government. b. Determine how some forms of government differ in their level of citizen participation particularly authoritarian (autocracy and oligarchy) and democratic.	<div>  Authoritarian Governments Exercise </div> Students will choose an authoritarian government that exists today and will investigate questions attached in above link	Allow for collaboration
SSCG2 Demonstrate knowledge of the political philosophies that shaped the development of the United States constitutional government. b. Analyze the impact of the writings of Hobbes (Leviathan), Locke (Second Treatise on Government), Rousseau (The Social Contract), and Montesquieu (The Spirit of the Laws) on our concept of government. c. Analyze the ways in which the philosophies listed in element 2b influenced the Declaration of Independence.	I'm Breaking Up with You Students will investigate the Declaration of Independence and reasons why colonists were in favor of separating from England/Great Britain. To show understanding they will write a "break-up" letter to the king explaining why the colonists are seeking their freedom focusing on the impact of the writings of Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and Montesquieu. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1P12wDabdKeOdA_Qs2hp7Z8kg8ttztg03/edit Vocabulary and personal Declaration of Independence, link to video	Small group reading Sentence starters Allow for collaboration
SSCG2 Demonstrate knowledge of the political philosophies that shaped the development of the United States constitutional government.	Documents and Philosophers Students will be divided into small groups and assigned one document or philosopher. Each group will determine how the document or philosopher contributed to the creation of the US Govt and will present it to the class.	Small group reading Sentence starters Allow for collaboration

<p>b. Analyze the impact of the writings of Hobbes (Leviathan), Locke (Second Treatise on Government), Rousseau (The Social Contract), and Montesquieu (The Spirit of the Laws) on our concept of government.</p> <p>c. Analyze the ways in which the philosophies listed in element 2b influenced the Declaration of Independence.</p>		
<p align="center">Content Resources</p>		
<p><u>Documents and Contributors of the US Government</u></p> <p>The Constitution of the United States</p> <p>The Bill of Rights</p> <p>The Articles of Confederation</p> <p><u>Crash Course Video: Why Study Government</u></p> <p>SSCG1</p> <p>Video on why it is important for students to study the government they are a part of</p> <p><u>Civic Participation Video</u></p> <p>SSCG1 b,c</p> <p>Video on how citizens participate in the government and the importance of being an active participant</p> <p><u>Stranded Island Activity</u></p> <p>SSCG1</p> <p>Students get to create their ideal government</p> <p><u>National Archives: Declaration of Independence</u></p> <p>SSCG2</p> <p>Primary document for student reference</p> <p><u>To late to Apologize Declaration of Independence Video</u></p> <p>SSCG2</p>		

Song showing all the failures of the Declaration of Independence

[Documents and Contributors of the US Government](#)

SSCG2

Simple breakdown/explanation of the ideas used to create our government from Enlightenment thinkers

[Three Fifths compromise Khan Academy Video](#)

SSCG3

Video concerning the 3/5ths compromise as part of the ratification of the Constitution

[Articles of Confederation](#)

SSCG3

Primary document

[The Mask Slackers of 1918 New York Times Article](#)

SSCG3

Article on government involvement in people lives during Spanish Flu pandemic...parallel to Covid procedures

[National Archives: The Constitution of the United States](#)

SSCG3

Primary document

[National Archives: The Bill of Rights](#)

SSCG3

Primary document