Civics and Government

Grade(s):	☐ K ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5	☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8	☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☑ 11 ☑ 12 ☐ Other _____
Discipline/Course:	**Discipline:** Social Studies **Course:** Civics		
Course Title:	Civics and Government		
Prerequisite(s):	N/A		
Course Description: *Program of Studies*	In Civics and Government, students study the United States government as they investigate the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy. Students will explore foundational documents, structure, and function of government, political participation, and civic engagement using disciplinary tools and resources that support the planning and development of inquiries, evaluation of a broad range of historical sources, and communication of civic knowledge through deliberation and informed action about political events and issues.		
Course Essential Questions:	● What is the purpose of government? ● How do the different layers of government address the needs of citizens? ● In what ways do individuals, groups, and the media influence political participation and representation? ● How will I influence change in my community?		
Course Enduring Understandings:	● Understanding the foundational principles of democracy, such as the rule of law and separation of powers, helps us understand how the government works to protect our rights and serve the community. ● The United States government operates under a federal system in which power is divided between		

	national and state governments, each with distinct and shared responsibilities. ● The separation of powers among the three branches of government maintains a system of checks and balances, protecting against the concentration of power and promoting accountability in government. ● Getting involved in civic activities, like voting and volunteering, gives people a voice in government decisions and makes them feel responsible for their community and democracy. ● Learning about civil rights and liberties is important to understand the ongoing fight for equality and justice, as well as the need to protect everyone's rights in a democracy. ● Being engaged in civic life is key to a strong democracy. It encourages people to speak up for their rights, participate in government, and make sure leaders are accountable to the public.	
Duration: **Credit:**	☑ Semester ☐ Full-Year	☑ 0.5 Credit (s) ☐ 1.0 Credit(s) ☐ 1.5 Credit(s)
Course Materials/Resources:	*Civics and Citizenship* by National Geographic	
FPS Course Academic Expectation(s):	☐ Exploring and Understanding (EU) ☑ Synthesizing and Evaluating (SE) ☐ Creating and Constructing (CC) ☑ Conveying Ideas (CI) ☐ Collaborating Strategically (CS) ☐ Using Communication Tools (UCT)	
Year at a Glance (Units):	**Unit 1**: Purpose of Government (~2-3 weeks) **Unit 2:** Your Government at Work (~6-7 weeks) **Unit 3:** Political Engagement (~4-5 weeks) **Unit 4:** Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (~4-5 weeks)	

Unit Number and Title:	**Unit 1:** Purpose of Government
Duration:	~2-3 weeks
Resource(s):	*Civics and Citizenship* by National Geographic
Unit Overview:	This unit explores the philosophical and historical foundations of the United States government. Students will analyze key principles embedded in foundational documents such as the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution to understand the core ideals of democracy, popular sovereignty, and limited government. Also, students will explore the evolving balance of power between state and federal governments, highlighting historical and contemporary conflicts shaped by federalism. Through this study, students will develop a deeper understanding of the principles that continue to shape American governance and civic life.
Learning Goals	
Standard(s):	*Connecticut Elementary and Secondary Social Studies Standards* CG.His.5.a. Analyze how interpretations of the social contract theory of government influenced the founding of the United States government (e.g., Thomas Hobbes, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, John Locke). CG.Civ.4.a. Explain how the Declaration of Independence and United States Constitution contributed to the establishment of a federal democratic republic (e.g., popular sovereignty, federalism). CG.Civ.4.d. Explain how federalism led to conflict between states and the federal government (e.g., healthcare, suffrage, taxation). CG.Civ.4.b. Describe how the United States Constitution organizes, enumerates, and divides power to create a limited government (e.g., separation of powers, checks and balances, necessary and proper clause, supremacy clause, 10th Amendment). *National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) College, Career, and Civic (C3) Frameworks for Social Studies State Standards* DIMENSION 1: Developing Questions and Planning Inquiry CG.Inq.1.a. Explain how a question reflects an enduring issue in the United States Government. DIMENSION 2: Applying Disciplinary Concepts and Tools

	See CT Elementary and Secondary Social Studies Standards listed above. DIMENSION 3: Evaluating Sources and Using Evidence CG.Inq.3.a. Gather relevant information from multiple sources representing a wide range of views and mediums while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value to guide the selection of credible sources. DIMENSION 4: Communicating Conclusions and Taking Informed Action CG.Inq.4.a. Construct arguments using precise and knowledgeable claims, with evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging counterclaims and evidentiary weaknesses. CG.Inq.4.c. Critique political arguments and explanations while acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses given the purpose and audience (credibility, bias, reasoning, sequencing, details).
Essential Question(s):	● What is the purpose of government?
Enduring Understanding(s):	● Enlightenment philosophy influenced the creation and development of the US Government. ● The Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and the Bill of Rights established key principles that formed the foundation of the American system of government. ● The United States government operates under a federal system in which power is divided between national and state governments, each with distinct and shared responsibilities. ● The interpretation and application of founding documents and principles continue to evolve.
Learning Goal(s): *Students will know and will be able to use their learning to:* (Content/ Skills)	**Content:** (Students will know…) ● the theories proposed by Enlightenment thinkers that contributed to the philosophical foundations of the United States government. ○ Locke ○ Montesquieu ● the significance of the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution in establishing the principles of a federal democratic republic. ○ limited government ○ checks and balances ○ principle of popular sovereignty ○ separation of powers

	○ Judicial Review ● federalism is a shared power divided between national and state governments. ○ enumerated Powers ○ reserved Powers ○ concurrent Powers ● the historical and contemporary conflicts arising from federalism and the implications of these conflicts on governance ○ Supremacy Clause ○ 10th Amendment ○ 14th Amendment Skills: (Students will be able to…) ● analyze how Enlightenment theories influenced the foundations of American government. ● identify and describe key principles in foundational documents (e.g., limited government and checks and balances). ● investigate the concept of popular sovereignty and its impact. ● examine specific conflicts between states and the national government due to federalism. ● evaluate the implications of these conflicts on governance.

Unit Number and Title:	**Unit 2:** Your Government at Work
Duration:	~6-7 weeks
Resource(s):	*Civics and Citizenship* by National Geographic
Unit Overview:	In this unit, students will explore the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the United States government, focusing on the structure and functions of each institution in the policymaking process and governance in response to the will of the people. They will analyze the principles of separation of powers and checks and balances as established by the U.S. Constitution and evaluate how these principles uphold democratic values across local, state, and national levels. Using case studies, discussions, and collaborative projects, students will examine how government institutions shape public policies, address societal challenges, and safeguard civil rights and liberties.
Learning Goals	
Standard(s):	*Connecticut Elementary and Secondary Social Studies Standards* CG.Civ.1.a. Distinguish between the functions of local, state, tribal, and national governments in response to challenges (e.g., court decisions, executive orders, legislation, sovereignty, states' rights). CG.Civ.2.b. Analyze the role and effectiveness of the legislative branch in addressing constituent and societal needs (e.g., Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, elections, political polling, representation, constituent services). CG.Civ.5.a. Evaluate the relationship between law-making, enforcement, and interpretation in balancing the rights of the individual with the well-being of society (e.g., Bill of Rights, Supreme Court cases). CG.Eco.9.a. Describe the roles of the executive branch in developing and implementing economic policies in the United States (e.g., Department of the Treasury, Federal Reserve Board, Internal Revenue Service). CG.Civ.8.a. Identify how the structure of state and local governments promote democratic principles and public participation (e.g., boards of education, Connecticut General Assembly, municipal government).

	National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) College, Career, and Civic (C3) Frameworks for Social Studies State Standards DIMENSION 1: Developing Questions and Planning Inquiry CG.Inq.1.b. Explain how supporting questions contribute to an inquiry and how new, compelling, and supporting questions emerge when engaging sources that represent varied perspectives. DIMENSION 2: Applying Disciplinary Concepts and Tools See CT Elementary and Secondary Social Studies Standards listed above. DIMENSION 3: Evaluating Sources and Using Evidence CG.Inq.3.b. Organize and prioritize evidence directly and substantively from multiple sources in order to develop or strengthen claims (e.g., detect inconsistencies). DIMENSION 4: Communicating Conclusions and Taking Informed Action CG.Inq.4.c. Critique political arguments and explanations while acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses given the purpose and audience (credibility, bias, reasoning, sequencing, details). CG.Inq.4.e. Analyze the characteristics and causation of local, regional, and global problems and issues using a multidisciplinary lens.
Essential Question(s):	● How do the different layers of government respond to the demands and needs of the people?
Enduring Understanding(s):	● The structure of the U.S. government distributes power among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, enabling them to work together to address societal needs while protecting individual rights. ● State and local governments are designed to address the specific needs of Americans. ● The policymaking process involves creating, interpreting, and enforcing laws, which presents challenges in balancing the rights of individuals with societal well-being. ● The roles and responsibilities of each branch of government (at federal, state, and local levels) evolve to respond to economic, societal, and legal challenges.
Learning Goal(s): *Students will know and will be able to use their learning to:* (Content/ Skills)	**Content:** (Students will know…) ● the key structures and functions of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the United States government ● the legislative branch's role in representing constituents and addressing public needs

	○ powers of the House of Representatives ○ powers of the Senate ○ policy-making process ○ committees ○ town halls ○ gerrymandering ○ lobbying ○ confirmation powers ● the executive branch's development and implementation of policies ○ executive order ○ veto ○ pocket-veto ○ cabinet ○ bureaucracy ● the judicial branch's role in interpreting laws and balancing individual rights with societal well-being ○ Supreme Court ○ Landmark Supreme Court Cases ○ *Marbury v. Madison* ○ *McCulloch v. Maryland* ○ *Gibbons v. Ogden* ● the checks and balances among the branches and their impact on governance ○ separation of powers ○ veto ○ veto override ○ appointment powers ○ judicial review ○ War Powers Act ● the structures and responsibilities of state and local governments ○ Board of Education ○ Board of Finance

	○ Board of Selectmen ○ Representative Town Meeting ○ state legislature ○ governor ○ local courts ● the interaction between state, local, and federal governments in crafting and implementing public policies. **Skills:** (Students will be able to…) ● evaluate the effectiveness of different branches in addressing the will of the people. ● interpret data and case studies to determine how policymaking processes unfold in practice. ● analyze primary and secondary sources, including legislation, court cases, and executive orders, to understand their impact on society and governance.

Unit Number and Title:	**Unit 3:** Political Engagement
Duration:	~4-5 weeks
Resource(s):	*Civics and Citizenship* by National Geographic
Unit Overview:	In this unit, students will learn how history has shaped the development of political parties and their associated beliefs in the United States. They will explore how individuals, interest groups, and media shape political participation and how media bias affects what people think. Students will examine trends in voting access and representation, focusing on issues such as gerrymandering and voter representation, to understand citizens' rights and responsibilities. They will also evaluate how social movements and laws can address inequalities related to race, gender, and socio-economic status. Through group discussions, research projects, and writing activities, students will build critical thinking and media literacy skills. By the end of the unit, students will have a better understanding of how their social environment influences their political beliefs and voting behavior, empowering them to be active participants in democracy.
Learning Goals	
Standard(s):	*Connecticut Elementary and Secondary Social Studies Standards* CG.Civ.2.c. Analyze the role of individuals, groups and the media in shaping political participation over time in the United States (e.g., interest groups, media bias, political parties CG.Civ.2.d. Analyze trends in access to voting, voter turnout, and voter representation over time (e.g., gerrymandering, reapportionment, redistricting, voter socialization) CG.Civ.2.e. Analyze the rights and responsibilities of individuals in the United States (e.g., voting) CG.Civ.5.b. Evaluate the effectiveness of strategies used by an individual, group, or institution in addressing a social problem at the local, state, tribal, national, and/or international level (e.g., social protest movements, get out the vote campaigns, conscious consumerism) CG.Civ.5.c. Evaluate the role of the media in addressing social and political problems or influencing elections (e.g., fourth estate, media bias, concentration of media ownership) CG.His.5.c. Analyze how social context shapes personal political beliefs and voting behavior

	CG.Civ.8.a. Identify how the structure of state and local governments promote democratic principles and public participation (e.g., boards of education, Connecticut General Assembly, municipal government). CG.Civ.14.b. Analyze advocacy and activism in the United States related to a contemporary human rights issue using the United States Constitution and other historical sources (e.g., youth activism, journalism, social media, whistleblowers, protestors, strikes, boycotts, petitions, resistance). CG.Civ.2.e. Analyze the rights and responsibilities of individuals in the United States (e.g., 4th Amendment, trial by jury, jury service, interacting with law enforcement, voting). *National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) College, Career, and Civic (C3) Frameworks for Social Studies State Standards* DIMENSION 1: Developing Questions and Planning Inquiry CG.Inq.1.c. Explain points of agreement and disagreement experts have about interpretations and applications of civic concepts and ideas associated with both compelling and supporting questions. DIMENSION 2: Applying Disciplinary Concepts and Tools See CT Elementary and Secondary Social Studies Standards listed above. DIMENSION 3: Evaluating Sources and Using Evidence CG.Inq.3.c. Refine claims and counterclaims by pointing out strengths and limitations of arguments and explanations (e.g., precision, significance, knowledge conveyed). DIMENSION 4: Communicating Conclusions and Taking Informed Action CG.Inq.4.a. Construct arguments using precise and knowledgeable claims, with evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging counterclaims and evidentiary weaknesses. CG.Inq.4.d. Present arguments and explanations that feature evocative ideas and multiple perspectives about political issues and topics to reach a range of audiences and venues outside the classroom using print, oral, and digital technologies.
Essential Question(s):	• In what ways do individuals, groups, and the media influence political participation and representation?
Enduring Understanding(s):	• Organized groups like political parties, interest groups, and social movements work to bring people together, express common interests, and push for changes in policies.

	● Media, in its many forms, shapes how people see issues and discuss politics. ● How people engage and influence their government changes over time.
Learning Goal(s): *Students will know and will be able to use their learning to:* (Content/ Skills)	**Content:** (Students will know…) ● the differences among major political ideologies. ○ Conservatism ○ Liberalism ○ Democrats ○ Republicans ○ Ideological Spectrum ● the role of individuals, groups, and the media in shaping political participation over time. ○ interest groups ○ media bias ○ social media ● the trends in access to voting, voter turnout, and voter representation. ● the rights and responsibilities of individuals in the United States, particularly concerning voting and civic engagement. ● the electoral process and how it impacts various types of elections in the United States political system. ○ winner-take-all ○ Electoral College ○ ranked choice voting ○ gerrymandering ● the role of money in politics. ○ campaign finance laws ○ lobbyists ○ interest groups ○ political action committees ○ *Citizens United v. FEC*

	● strategies employed by individuals, groups, or institutions to address social problems at various levels. **Skills:** (Students will be able to…) ● compare and contrast different political ideologies, party platforms, or social movements. ● investigate trends in voting access, voter turnout, and voter representation using statistical data and historical examples. ● evaluate the effectiveness of various strategies employed by individuals, groups, or institutions to address social issues. ● critically analyze media sources, identify bias, evaluate credibility, and understand the impact of media on public opinion and political discourse. ● engage in discussions and debates on political issues, utilizing evidence to support arguments and positions.

Unit Number and Title:	**Unit 4:** Civil Rights and Civil Liberties
Duration:	~4-5 weeks (This includes Civic Action Project)
Resource(s):	*Civics and Citizenship* by National Geographic
Unit Overview:	In this unit, students will explore the history of the struggle for civil rights and liberties in the United States, focusing on key amendments, landmark legislation, and significant court cases. Through analyzing primary sources and engaging in discussions, students will gain an understanding of the obstacles and achievements of marginalized groups in their pursuit of equality. The unit will also examine contemporary issues surrounding civil rights and the ongoing challenges faced in safeguarding liberties. By the end of the unit, students will develop critical thinking skills and a deeper appreciation for the importance of civil rights in shaping American democracy.
Learning Goals	
Standard(s):	*Connecticut Elementary and Secondary Social Studies Standards* CG.Civ.4.c. Explain how the United States Constitution has been adapted and interpreted in response to societal changes in both historical and contemporary contexts (e.g., amendments, *Marbury v Madison, Brown v. Board of Education, Tinker v. DesMoines, Obergefell v. Hodges*). CG.Civ.14.a. Analyze historical, contemporary, and emerging means of protecting, defending, and promoting constitutional rights in the United States (e.g., law-making, federal court system. Constitutional amendments, Supreme Court decisions, exercising Constitutional rights). CG.Civ.13.a. Evaluate how a regulation or law can create or eliminate systemic inequalities involving race, gender and sexuality, ability, socio-economic status, belief systems, or access to resources (e.g., gerrymandering, 14th Amendment, *Plessy v Ferguson*, poll taxes, *Sheff v. O'Neill,* Voting Rights Act of 1965, Rehabilitation Act). CG.Civ.5.b. Evaluate the effectiveness of strategies used by an individual, group, or institution in addressing a social problem at the local, state, tribal, national, and/or international level (e.g,. social protest movements, get out the vote campaigns, conscious consumerism)

	National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) College, Career, and Civic (C3) Frameworks for Social Studies State Standards DIMENSION 1: Developing Questions and Planning Inquiry CG.Inq.1.c. Explain points of agreement and disagreement experts have about interpretations and applications of civic concepts and ideas associated with both compelling and supporting questions. DIMENSION 2: Applying Disciplinary Concepts and Tools See CT Elementary and Secondary Social Studies Standards listed above. DIMENSION 3: Evaluating Sources and Using Evidence CG.Inq.3.c. Refine claims and counterclaims by pointing out strengths and limitations of arguments and explanations (e.g., precision, significance, knowledge conveyed). DIMENSION 4: Communicating Conclusions and Taking Informed Action CG.Inq.4.b. Construct explanations using sound reasoning, correct sequence, relevant examples, and pertinent details to contextualize evidence and arguments (e.g., chronology, causation, procedure). CG.Inq.4.f. Evaluate and implement strategies for individual and collective action to address local, regional, and global problems in classrooms, schools, and out-of-school civic contexts.
Essential Question(s):	● How will I influence change in my community?
Enduring Understanding(s):	● The health of a democracy depends on the active engagement of its citizens. ● Civic engagement empowers individuals to affect change in their communities.
Learning Goal(s): *Students will know and will be able to use their learning to:* (Content/ Skills)	**Content:** (Students will know…) ● the rights and responsibilities of individuals in the United States as outlined in the Constitution, including the implications of the 4th Amendment and the right to a fair trial. ● how landmark Supreme Court cases have shaped the interpretation of the Constitution. ○ *Tinker v. Des Moines* ○ *Gideon v. Wainwright* ○ *Miranda v. Arizona* ○ *New Jersey v. TLO* ○ *Obergefell v. Hodges* ● significant constitutional amendments.

	○ 13th, 14th, 15th, 19th Amendments ● how constitutional rights are protected and promoted through various means. ○ legislation ○ judicial review ● how advocacy and activism have shaped constitutional rights, focusing on contemporary human rights issues and the influence of social movements. ○ women's suffrage, ○ Civil Rights Movement ○ Title IX ○ Americans With Disabilities Act ○ #MeToo ○ Black Lives Matter ○ Occupy Wall Street ● how regulations and laws can expand or eliminate inequities. ● the impact of historical and contemporary social movements, assessing their strategies and outcomes in relation to constitutional rights and social justice. **Skills:** (Students will be able to…) ● assess how political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors are shown in various situations. ● review important Supreme Court cases by examining the facts, issues, decisions, majority, and dissenting opinions. ● create a clear claim or thesis statement that can be supported with evidence. ● explain how visual sources (like cartoons, maps, or infographics) relate to political ideas and actions. ● analyze the arguments and evidence presented in different sources to understand their perspectives. ● use relevant evidence to back up their arguments or claims. ● analyze how political principles and actions can be applied to various situations. ● employ individual and/or collective action to address a local, regional, or global issue.