LESSON 1: Congress and the Federal Budget

Objective:
Students will understand how Congress develops the federal budget and the roles of both the House and Senate in this process.

Materials:

- Slide presentation
- Short video (e.g., *Crash Course: Federal Budget*): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_tULRch1PRQ
- Google Docs/Forms
- Budget simulation website (e.g., CRFB's Budget Simulator): https://www.crfb.org/debtfixer?gad_campaignid=1523781801&gad_source=1&gbraid=0AAAADs3w0Km1U-WPjZdkFUsO5kTMDgBI&gclid=EAIaIQobChMI79nRyqChjwMV5WlHAR23Yg2bEAAYASAAEgKU7_D_BwE

Lesson Structure:

1. **(5 min) Warm-Up:**
   - Prompt: *"If you had $1 trillion, what would you fund in the U.S. government?"* Write your response on a Word or Google doc sheet or on a sheet of paper and turn in at school.

2. **(8 min) Video** Short video (***CrashCourse: Federal Budget***): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_tULRch1PRQ**:**
   - Watch a short explainer video on the budget process.
   - Students answer 3 comprehension questions:
     - How is the budget proposed?
     - How is spending determined?
     - What problems or conflicts may appear in the budget process?

3. **(15 min) Activity: Budget Simulation**

   Use CFRB Budget Simulator:
   https://www.crfb.org/debtfixer?gad_campaignid=1523781801&gad_source=1&gbraid=0AAAADs3w0Km1U-WPjZdkFUsO5kTMDgBI&gclid=EAIaIQobChMI79nRyqChjwMV5WlHAR23Yg2bEAAYASAAEgKU7_D_BwE

   - Students use the CRFB Budget Simulator to try balancing the federal budget.
   - Record choices and rationales in Google Doc or on paper.
4. **(10 min) Discussion & Wrap-Up:**
   - Groups present one funding choice and justification.
   - Teacher clarifies misconceptions and summarizes takeaways.

Homework:
Reflection: *"Is it possible for Congress to create a budget everyone agrees on? Why or why not?"* (250 words)

📙 LESSON 2: Presidential Powers

Objective:
Students will analyze the formal and informal powers of the U.S. President and consider limits on executive authority.

Materials:

- Case studies (Executive Order 9066, War Powers Resolution, DACA, Truman and Steel Mills)
- Executive Order 9066: https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Executive_Order_9066/?gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=17337995974&gbraid=0AAAADoXvXUN1XRDFdIER2nGU3V_x881p&gclid=EAIaIQobChMI-MP_7qOhjwMVuUVHAR2PxSJwEAAYASAAEgI9OfD_BwE
- War Powers Resolution: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_Powers_Resolution
- Obama and DACA: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deferred_Action_for_Childhood_Arrivals
- Lincoln's suspension of habeas corpus: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Habeas_Corpus_Suspension_Act_(1863)
- Truman and Steel Mills: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1952_steel_strike

Lesson Structure:

1. **(5 min) Warm-Up:**
   - Poll: *"Can the president declare war?"*
   - Discuss misconceptions briefly.
2. **(15 min) Case Study Analysis:**
   - Break students into groups, each assigned a presidential action (Executive Order 9066, Lincoln's suspension of habeas corpus, Truman and Steel Mills, Obama and DACA).
   - Use a Google Doc to analyze and record:
     - Action taken
     - Legal/constitutional justification
     - Reaction from other branches
3. **(15 min) Activity:**
   - Each student writes a summary and opinion: Was this an appropriate use of power?
   - Class discusses, with teacher leading final thoughts.
4. **(5 min) Wrap-Up:**
   - Exit Ticket: Name one check on presidential power and one power the president has that Congress does not.

Homework:
Write a one-paragraph response: *"Should the president be able to issue executive orders without Congressional approval?"*

📗 LESSON 3: Executive Agencies

Objective:
Students will explain the role of executive agencies and analyze how they affect public policy and daily life.

Materials:

- Slide deck
- Agency website links:
  - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_federal_agencies_in_the_United_States
  - https://www.federalregister.gov/agencies

Lesson Structure:

1. **(5 min) Warm-Up:**
   - Question: *"Which government agencies do you interact with in daily life (directly or indirectly)?"*
2. **(30 min) Group Activity: Agency Research & Pitch**
   - In small groups, students research one agency (assigned).
   - Create 1 slide to present:
     - What it does
     - Who runs it
     - One major program or policy
     - Recent news about it
3. **(5 min) Presentations:**
   - Each group gives a quick 1-minute pitch on their agency when returning to classroom
4. **(5 min) Wrap-Up:**
   - Discuss: *Why do we need agencies if Congress and the president make laws?*

Homework:
Write a summary of one executive agency and how it impacts your community.

📒 LESSON 4: State Powers (Federalism)

Objective:
Students will distinguish between federal and state powers and understand the concept of federalism in action.

Materials:

- Slide deck
- News articles or infographics showing state vs. federal disputes

Lesson Structure:

1. **(5 min) Warm-Up:**
   - Ask: *"Can a state make its own gun laws? What about minimum wage?"*
2. **(10 min) Lecture:**
   - Define federalism
   - Compare enumerated, reserved, concurrent powers
   - Supremacy Clause explained
3. **(10 min) Quiz Game:**
   - Use Kahoot or Quizizz: "Who has the power?" (federal vs. state vs. both)
4. **(15 min) Case Study Discussion:**
   - Perform short readings on a current issue marijuana legalization and COVID restrictions:
   - https://www.americanbar.org/groups/business_law/resources/business-law-today/2022-april/a-cannabis-conflict-of-law-federal-vs-state-law/
   - https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8385820/
   - Students may use other articles on these topics
   - Students identify:
     - Which level(s) of government were involved?
     - Did they agree or conflict?
     - Which level had the final say?
5. **(10 min) Wrap-Up Discussion:**
   - Prompt: *Is it good for states to have different laws? Why or why not?*

Homework:
Find a news article about a state law. Write 3-4 sentences explaining how it reflects federalism.

📕 LESSON 5: The Supreme Court and Judicial Review

Objective:
Students will explain the role of the Supreme Court and evaluate how judicial review shapes U.S. law and society.

Materials:

- Slide presentation
- Excerpts from *Marbury v. Madison*

Lesson Structure:

1. **(5 min) Warm-Up:**
   - Ask: *"What does the Supreme Court actually do? Can it make laws?"*
2. **(10 min) Direct Instruction:**
   - Role of the Supreme Court
   - Lifetime appointments
   - Judicial review (established in *Marbury v. Madison*)
   - How a case reaches the Court
3. **(10 min) Primary Source:**
   - Read a short excerpt from *Marbury v. Madison*: https://www.oyez.org/cases/1789-1850/5us137
   - Discuss: Why is this case important?
4. **(15 min) Landmark Case (Digital):**
   - Use Google Slides or on paper to answer the question "Why is the case important and what did SCOTUS rule? for different major SCOTUS cases:
   - *Brown v. Board,*
   - *Roe v. Wade*
   - *Obergefell v. Hodges*)
5. **(10 min) Discussion & Wrap-Up:**
   - Poll: *Should justices have lifetime terms?*
   - Reflect on how the Court influences modern society.

Homework:
Write a short opinion: *Choose a Supreme Court case not covered above. Do you agree with the decision? Why or why not?*