



YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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2019 Volume III: American Democracy and the Promise of Justice

The Right to Vote: Empowerment and Civic Engagement in our Democracy

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by Cinde Berkowitz

Introduction

The unit will study how voting works in our American democracy. Now is the perfect time to address and confront many issues that are front and center in our voting cycle/national election time. Voting rights, voter disenfranchisement, and voting inequalities are enormous issues that may lead to Americans feeling marginalized. It is imperative to emphasize civic duty and raise an educated population for the future. There are many issues on the minds of our students today, such as climate change, school shootings, bullying, injustices, and individual rights. The focus will be on the issues that are most important to the students becoming informed citizens.

Students will be challenged and engaged to be properly invested in our current history and educated for the jobs of tomorrow. Students need to be guided and mentored toward advocacy, transformation, and have a viable connection to their community to be successful in their futures. Students need to be well-informed citizens to use their knowledge to participate and impact visible, lasting change. Some examples to explore are the popular vote, the Electoral College, and whether voting practices may be discriminatory. Looking at a moral narrative, national interests, learning about the issues, and looking at how to make democracy more effective will be central themes in this unit.

What we are Doing (Action Process)

The League of Women Voters (LWV) believes,

Voting is a sacred right. For 100 years, we have fought to protect the rights of eligible voters and expand access for those who have been disenfranchised by the democratic process. Our volunteers spearhead efforts to enact common-sense voting reforms, and we are the first to fight back when voters' rights become threatened. We protect millions of voters every year by aggressive advocacy and education efforts. We have been at the forefront of major voting rights

court cases over the last decade.¹

The LWV has volunteered to partner with the school to guide students in this process. This unit will work together with the League of Women Voters to help educate our students, their families, and the community in a voter registration campaign.

The LWV is an American civic organization that was formed to help women take a larger role in public affairs after they won the right to vote. It was founded in 1920 to support women's suffrage rights. The LWV began as a "mighty political experiment" aimed to help women exercise their responsibilities as voters. Originally, only women could join the league, but in 1973 the charter was modified to include men. LWV operates at the local, state, and national level, with over 1,000 local and 50 state leagues. The LWV is officially nonpartisan—it neither supports nor opposes candidates or parties. However, it does support a variety of progressive, public policy positions, including campaign finance reform, universal health care, climate change action, and environmental regulation.

Learning from history proves that the process does matter. With the upcoming 2020 Presidential election, the timing is beneficial for studying the issues.

Rationale

I currently teach at Daniel Webster High and Middle School, located in West Tulsa, Oklahoma. Webster was built as part of the Work Progress Administration (WPA) program in 1938 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Webster is an art deco building on nineteen acres just off Historic Route 66. It has proudly served multiple generations of Westside families and continues to welcome students from all over Tulsa. The school population consists of Caucasian, African American, Hispanic, Micronesian, Native American, Asian, and Multiracial students. Webster is a Title 1 school, as many of our students qualify for free or reduced lunch based on their parents' income. Many of our students (25-30%) are on IEPs (Individualized Education Plans).

The student body includes a wide range of emotional, social, and academic levels and a significant number of English learners. This diversity provides a challenge to teach the core curriculum through differentiation and accommodations, including group and individual lessons. The 9th grade history curriculum has opportunities to apply project-based learning (PBL) that includes projects, mentoring, and self-directed learning. The opportunities also exist to focus on issues in the community. Furthermore, students will participate in field trips to engage in education, advocacy, and apprenticeships with businesses in the community. This will help students understanding the various issues.

My teaching philosophy is all about balance and integrity. I incorporate all the teaching strategies, everything from short lectures and media clips to group activities and student-led discussion/inquiry. In addition, I like to include pop culture connections to hands-on learning opportunities. I think of the whole student, what they will encounter in their future learning experiences and the critical thinking skills that they will need for the demands of life. I focus on creating a positive atmosphere and giving students the respect, care, and dedication, they deserve while I help them navigate through difficult issues in our history. Maintaining the commitment to the struggle for progress, civic action and a fair democracy will be discussed.

Content Background

Voting rights and civil rights are hotbed issues right now with the approaching Presidential Election in 2020. Now more than ever in our history, it is so important to be educated on our governmental policies at the local and global level. In the age of twenty-four-hour news and social media, it is imperative to take the time to educate ourselves on the real truths of today. Reflecting and delving into our past will expose students to the foundations that our country was built upon.

Students will study and learn about the foundational principles of American democracy. Further, they will explore apparent inequalities in our system of government and the “coexistence of democracy with substantial inequality.”² Studying Jim Crow laws, the civil rights era, and present-day law, this unit will dig deep through project-based learning (PBL) and activities. Students will gain a thorough knowledge regarding these topics. In the course of this project, students will find their voices, and some students will hopefully advance to advocacy.

Unit Objectives

In this unit, students will come to understand the historical foundations of voting rights in the United States of America through the analysis of primary sources (documents, speeches, bills, laws, and the Constitution). In addition, they will identify the fundamental principles necessary to maintain equal voting rights for all. The final lesson of the unit will allow students to participate in a voting rights campaign that will include how to get out the vote, who gets to vote, and the process of voting.

Objectives of the unit will include having students critically examine fundamental concepts of the theory and practice of democracy as these concepts were explored in our Yale National Initiative seminar, American Democracy and the Promise of Justice, led by Ian Shapiro, Sterling Professor of Political Science at Yale University. Dr. Shapiro taught and shared his knowledge ranging from the foundations of history, political comparisons, distributive politics, deliberative Democracy, and possibilities for Democratic reform.

Essential Questions in this unit will be: How did voting rights transform America and create the cornerstone of today’s democratic society? How can the right to vote continue our democracy in the future? Jim Crow laws will be examined to see how differences, or the absence of the law might have changed history. Students will look at how mass media in the beginning of the 20th century affected our laws and our society. Also, exploring different factions and coalitions in our government’s history will be studied to explain how politics and policy go hand in hand.

Topic One

Foundations of Our Democracy--18th century

The Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776. The Declaration of Independence states that “the nature of a fair government is to recognize that people are born with certain rights, including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; and that a government is formed to protect these rights.”³

In May 1787, fifty-five delegates from all 13 states (except Rhode Island) met in Philadelphia. George Washington served as President of the convention. James Madison took detailed notes of the meetings. The delegates at the convention decided to write a new constitution. Four months later, the document was completed. The constitution they created is the highest law of the United States. “It provides for citizens to elect the officials that govern them. It establishes that power is shared between the national government and the state governments.”⁴ In the federal government, there is the legislative branch (Congress) that makes the laws; an executive branch, headed by the president that carries out the laws; and a judicial branch, headed by the Supreme Court that decides if the laws are constitutional or applied correctly. The power of each branch can be controlled by the other two. This is the system of checks and balances. No single branch of government can act without input from another, and each office has the power to “check” the other, as well as balance other branches’ powers.⁵

Even though the U.S. Constitution was ratified, many people feared the central government would have too much power. It was a very political process to build the coalition to get the Constitution ratified. Our founders did not want to have a monarchy, and the solution to this was the separation of power.

The Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution after opponents of the Constitution convinced the nation that a strong central government without safeguards for the people was a danger to liberty. The Bill of Rights consists of ten amendments, or additions, to the Constitution. It guarantees basic liberties, such as freedom of speech, of the press, and of religion.

The Federalist Papers are a collection of essays written by James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay in 1788. The Federalist Papers revolutionized the way people thought about democracy. The essays urged the ratification of the United States Constitution, which had been debated and drafted at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia in 1787. “The Federalist Papers are widely considered to be the most significant American contributions to the field of political philosophy and theory and are still widely considered to be the most authoritative source for determining the original intent of the framers of the US Constitution.”⁶ The essays were aimed at convincing opponents of the U.S. Constitution to ratify it so that it would take effect as the nation’s fundamental governing document.

During the debate on the U.S. Constitution, a disagreement arose between the Northern and Southern states involving voting rights and how slaves should be counted when determining a state’s quota of representatives. In the South, large numbers of slaves were commonly used to run plantations. Delegates wanted slaves to be counted in the population to determine the number of representatives in each state but not counted to determine the amount of taxes the states would pay. The northern states wanted exactly the opposite arrangement.

The final decision was to count three-fifths of the slave population both for tax purposes and to determine

representation. This was called the Three-Fifths Compromise. The Three-Fifths Compromise is found in Article 1, Section 2, and Clause 3 of the United States Constitution of 1787 and is often misinterpreted to mean that African Americans as individuals are considered three-fifths of a person or that they are three-fifths of a citizen of the United States. The three-fifths clause in fact declared that for purposes of representation in Congress enslaved blacks in a state would be counted as three-fifths of the number of white inhabitants of that state.⁷

The three-fifths clause was part of a series of compromises enacted by the Constitutional Convention of 1787. The most notable other clauses prohibited slavery in the Northwest Territories and ended U.S. participation in the international slave trade in 1807. "Although the Three-Fifths Compromise and others regarding slavery helped hold this new fragile union of states together, many on both sides of the issue were opposed. James Madison and Edmund Randolph of Virginia used the phrase 'Quotas of contribution' to argue that slaves should be fully counted, one for one, and opposed the compromise."⁸ The three-fifths clause remained in place "until the post-Civil War 13th Amendment freed all enslaved people in the United States, the 14th amendment gave them full citizenship, and the 15th Amendment granted black men the right to vote."⁹

Electoral College

Established in Article II, Section 1 of the U.S. Constitution, the Electoral College is the formal body that elects the President and Vice President of the United States. The Founding Fathers always intended that the states and not the people select the president. Under the Electoral College system, it is possible for a presidential candidate to lose the nationwide popular vote yet be elected President of the United States by winning in only a handful of key states. "They created the Electoral College system as a process to 'insulate the selection of the president from the whims of the public.'"¹⁰ "The Founding Fathers also felt the Electoral College system would enforce the concept of federalism, the division and sharing of power between the state and national governments."¹¹ Any change to the way America chooses its president will require a constitutional amendment.

For example, even when Democrat Hillary Clinton won the popular vote in 2016, Republican Donald Trump still won the election in the Electoral College. Democrat Al Gore won the popular vote back in 2000, but after the U.S. Supreme Court halted the vote recounts in Florida, Republican George W. Bush was awarded the state's 25 electoral votes and won the presidency through a 271 to 266 vote margin in the Electoral College. In 1888, Republican Benjamin Harrison won the electoral votes, but Democrat Grover Cleveland won the popular vote. In 1876, Republican Rutherford B. Hayes won the electoral votes, but Democrat Samuel J. Tilden won the popular vote. "It remains highly unlikely that the Electoral College system would be changed or repealed."¹² Getting rid of the Electoral College would strengthen the power of the president and would strengthen their power at the cost of the legislature.

Topic Two

The Civil War, Reconstruction, Jim Crow, and Significant Constitutional Amendments

The 1800's were a time of growth in the United States; however, the North and the South were very different, and by the 1850's, it was clear that the debate over slavery would not be resolved peacefully. The American Civil War, which started in 1861 after decades of tensions between northern and southern states over slavery,

states' rights, and westward expansion, was fought between the North and the South. Voting, during the early days, was limited to white men who owned property. It was not until after the Civil War ended that African American men were granted the right to vote in the 15th Amendment.

African Americans and minorities systematically were denied the right to vote during Reconstruction. After the Reconstruction period, the birth of the civil rights movement seemed to ensure that the promises to African American males were enacted.¹³ In 1863, the 13th Amendment ended slavery. The 13th Amendment and 14th Amendment had started the process by setting slaves free and securing citizenship. However, the 15th Amendment, though theoretically giving all men the right to vote, spurred lawmakers to find ways to suppress the African American vote. Thus the 15th Amendment began a fight for equality that would continue into the twentieth and twenty-first century.

"Although ratified on February 3, 1870, the promise of the 15th Amendment would not be realized for almost a century. In 1940, only 3% of eligible African Americans in the South were registered to vote. Jim Crow laws like literacy tests and poll taxes were meant to keep African Americans from voting."¹⁴

It would take the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 before the majority of African Americans in the South were registered to vote. It was not until after the civil rights movement in the 1960s that African Americans in the South were able to exercise their rights. "Through the amendment process, and the civic movements that demanded such amendments, more Americans were eventually included in the Constitution's definition of "We the People."¹⁵

In 1920, the 19th Amendment gave women the right to vote nationwide, and in 1971 the 26th Amendment extended suffrage to eighteen-year-olds. But these amendments were impossible without an abolitionist movement that swayed Lincoln, a women's suffrage movement that accused Woodrow Wilson of being a hypocrite about democracy, and a youth movement that insisted someone old enough to die for his government was also old enough to elect it."¹⁶

Topic Three

Civil Rights, Equal Rights, 1960s

"During the 1960s, more than in any previous era, the Supreme Court sided with racial minorities against their oppressors. By this date, the justices were following the lead of Congress and the president, who were, in turn, reflecting a transformation in public opinion on race."¹⁷ In 1963, over 25,000 Americans marched on Washington for civil rights.

"The Civil Rights Act of 1964, which ended segregation in public places and banned employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, is considered one of the crowning legislative achievements of the civil rights movement. First proposed by President John F. Kennedy, it survived strong opposition from southern members of Congress and was then signed into law by Kennedy's successor, Lyndon B. Johnson. In subsequent years, Congress expanded the act and passed additional civil rights legislation such as the Voting Rights Act of

1965."¹⁸

The Civil Rights Act drafted by the Kennedy administration in 1963, which would become the Civil Rights Act of 1964, was grown out of a moral narrative of the time. Included in the bill were such rights as voting rights, desegregation of schools, housing, and employment opportunities, as well as other rights to African Americans, per the Whalen's book *The Longest Debate*.¹⁹ Robert Mann states in *The Walls of Jericho* that once LBJ assumed the presidency from the slain John Kennedy, he used Humphrey, now majority whip, to pry Republican Everett Dirksen away from the Southern Democrats to support the far tougher Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.²⁰

As noted in *The Longest Debate*, Charles and Barbara Whalen showed how Lyndon B. Johnson exhibited strong leadership skills when he supported the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which "included many titles that would ensure, voting rights and provided for the desegregation of education, houses, employment, etc. as well as other terms to provide rights to African Americans."²¹ Due to opposition from Conservative Southern Democrats, the Johnson administration knew that it needed Republican support, or the bill would not have a chance of passing. They knew they must work with the Republican leadership. Both parties wanted a bill that stood a chance of passing rather than an idealistic bill that would die in Congress.

Democrats and Republicans worked across the aisle to secure the rights of and understanding the national political situation during this time period, also showing leadership. The bill was sent up to the full House, was passed by a clear majority, and sent to the Senate. In June of 1964, the Senate passed the legislation. With a few minor amendments, they returned the bill back to the full House and passed the Senate's version. Following the bill's passage through Congress, it was sent to the White House where it was signed into law by President Johnson.

Johnson's actions helped the bill to pass through both the House and Congress, where President Johnson signed it into law. On March 25, 1965, "more than 500 non-violent civil rights marchers are attacked by law enforcement officers while attempting to march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama to demand the need for African American voting rights."²²

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was "signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson, aimed to overcome legal barriers at the state and local levels that prevented African Americans from exercising their right to vote as guaranteed under the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution."²³ It outlawed the discriminatory voting practices adopted in many Southern states after the Civil War, including literacy tests as a prerequisite. The Voting Rights Act is considered one of the most far-reaching pieces of civil rights legislation in U.S. history.²⁴

Beyond being a narration of events, David Garrow in his book *Protest at Selma* provides an in-depth look at the political strategy of Dr. King and of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Garrow tells us how Dr. King's awareness of media coverage of the protests—especially reports of white violence against peaceful African American protestors would elicit sympathy for the cause and lead to a powerful shift for change. Garrow analyzes these tactics and the news reports surrounding these events providing a deeper understanding of how civil rights activists used a nonviolent approach to achieve success in the face of great opposition and ultimately brought about monumental political change. The events at Selma as narrated by Garrow in *Protests at Selma* show Dr. King's leadership.²⁵

Topic Four

Voter Suppression, Voter Disenfranchisement

"Voting has grown more complicated in many parts of the United States in recent years: 20 states require a photo ID, and an additional 14 require some form of identification. Even those who registered and voted in the past may find themselves having to re-register; nearly 16 million people were purged from voter rolls between 2014 and 2016, the Brennan Center for Justice at the New York University School of Law found in a nationwide study released this summer."²⁶

Significant barriers and threats to equal voting rights still exist in the United States. Take, for example, the U.S. Supreme Court's 2013 ruling in *Shelby County v. Holder*, which gutted a key provision of the Act. (Shelby County is in Alabama, directly north of the 54-mile-long Selma-to-Montgomery March route.)

Shelby County is one of the states that with fell under the preclearance provision of the VRA because it had a history of enacting voting laws that took the right to vote away from minorities. In 2011, it sued then Attorney General Eric Holder, as a representative of the federal government, on the basis that preclearance as covered in Sections 4 and 5 of the VRA were unconstitutional. Over the next few years the case worked its way through the courts, and on February 27, 2013 *Shelby County v. Holder* made it to the Supreme Court. The case was set to determine if Sections 4 and 5 were in violation of the 10th Amendment and Article 4 of the Constitution, and to determine if the 2006 extension of preclearance was a step too far in upholding the 15th Amendment.²⁷

The five Supreme Court justices appointed by Republican presidents voted in *Shelby County v. Holder* to cripple sections 4 and 5 of the VRA. The four Democratic justices dissented. Taken together, sections 4 and 5 require that states and counties with long, established histories of race-based denial of voting rights wanted Justice Department (DOJ) agreement for any changes in their voter registration and balloting procedures.²⁸ This case has weakened the Voting Rights Act.

The decision of *Shelby County v. Holder* states that additional federal oversights that were previously deemed necessary in states with histories of discriminatory voting practices were no longer needed, an assertion disputed by many citizens of those localities and by some members of the Court. In her dissent, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg wrote, "Throwing out [federal oversight] when it has worked and is continuing to work to stop discriminatory changes is like throwing away your umbrella in a rainstorm because you are not getting wet."²⁹ In the years since *Shelby*, voter suppression persists in several forms: racial gerrymandering, photo ID laws, lack of access to registration, and felon disenfranchisement, to name just a few.

Voting on our local issues is so important as well. Education and information are influential antidotes to having power on the local level, getting to know our local politicians, and following in the footsteps of the suffrage movements. Having a sustained intellectual dialogue and building relationships are key to educational justice. Having hope and coming together in our time in history are key components to confronting some of the same issues as our founders. We have a culture of entrenched white supremacy, economic injustice, and must fight for educational justice. As Dale Russakoff wrote about in *The Prize*, these are challenging times in public education, and we must continue to fight for justice in our schools.³⁰

Voter disenfranchisement is at an all-time high. Our political parties have become weak in many ways and Congress must compromise to pass bills and make deals. As stated in Ian Shapiro's book *The Wolf at the Door*, weaker parties produce more alienation and anger.³¹

"Reducing the influence of big money in politics makes our elections fairer. Voters have the right to know who is raising money for which political candidates, how much money they are raising, and how that money is being spent. Our elections should be free from corruption and undue influence and should work so that everyday Americans can run for office, even if they aren't well connected to wealthy special interests."³²

Jane Mayer, in her book *Dark Money*, writes about mega-rich families and how buying levels of political clout has been a theme in US history—she writes on the Koch brothers, The DeVos, and Rockefellers, who funded a huge number of political campaigns and projects. Her overall message is one of intense criticism of the systems and laws that allow so few men to have such a large amount of control over the economy and also makes it clear that she “does not stand behind the environmental damage caused by the Koch brothers and other billionaires.”³³ Mayer makes it clear that she believes that the actions of the Koch brothers have led to the disillusionment that the American people have in their government and to the current political situation in the U.S. and worldwide.

Topic Five

Call to Action--Civic Duty and Community Participation

The League of Women Voters (LWV), along with four respected U.S. Senate Majority Leaders and other leading Americans, are taking action to establish September as National Democracy Month. This resolution would institute an annual national focus on educating people about the election process. National Voter registration day is on Sept. 25, 2019 to educate and promote awareness of voter registration. LWV supports early voting to make voting easier, more convenient, and to increase voter turnout.

For more than nine years, the LWV Education Fund has invested in the engagement and registration of young voters by offering Youth Voter Registration training and grants to state and local leagues. League volunteers use these funds to build on their relationships with local schools and universities to reach students and register them to vote. For many first-time voters, volunteers with the LWV will be the first people to start a conversation about voting and how to be involved with the democratic process. With LWV voter's guides people can see the races on the ballot, compare candidates' positions side-by-side, and print out a "ballot" indicating preferences as a reminder, and take it with you to the polls on Election Day. There are also resources for military and overseas voters.

To begin a Voter Registration project, it would be helpful to contact your local LWV chapter and ask whether they are available to provide help with your registration program. It is also suggested that you visit www.Vote411.org to find out about voter registration requirements for your state. With the help of the LWV it is imperative to implement a course of action to prepare for achievement with students, their peers and their families.

The LWV will help partner with the schools to develop a community action plan to help register students and families to educate, increase voter participation and help individuals exercise their right to vote. Members of the LWV will come to the high school to help educate and inform the students about the fundamental values of a democracy. Partnering with the League will give you access to dedicated volunteers, speakers and support for your students and the project.

Teaching Strategies

This curriculum unit will take four to five weeks to complete and will continue to serve as a teaching model for students. There are fifty-minute periods, and during a class, there will be adequate time to complete reading, studying, and analysis.

Socratic Seminar

Student's inquiries, collaborative examination, and cognitive tools will be used to investigate and analyze questions and problems. Reading and writing strategies will be addressed and utilized, while students brainstorm, ask questions, and think critically in Socratic Seminars. Questions will include, how did voting rights transform America and create the cornerstone of today's Democratic Society? How can the right to vote to continue our democracy in the future? Looking at what if decisions about Jim Crow laws were different, how could that have changed history?

Rap and Song

Students will listen to and research the *Hamilton* soundtrack and study our history through rap and song.

“As musicals go, *Hamilton*” is infinitely listenable, but one of the biggest reasons for the show’s popularity is that Lin-Manuel Miranda managed to uniquely capture the human side of our Founding Fathers in a way that history books or previous movies weren’t quite able to portray them. Hamilton and his colleagues escape the two dimensions of historical writing to be complex, human, and relatable. It’s this relatability that makes them interesting for students.”

Students will discuss our founding fathers, the Constitution, and the Federalist Papers. Students will also read two important chapters from Chernow’s book *Hamilton* that the musical *Hamilton* was based on.

Timeline

The unit will proceed chronologically with a color-coded timeline of historical voting rights events in our history. The class will begin by reading and studying the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the Constitution to establish the history of voting rights in the United States. Using a color-coded visual timeline to show important dates in history will help students to see the progression of historical events in chronological order. Students will draw and chart a timeline of specific dates to make historical connections. Students will proceed with an excel spread sheet to visually align these events.

Document Based Reading and Questions

Students will read and analyze various primary source documents regarding the Voting Rights Act of 1965. After completing various activities over these sources, students will compose a letter to a local organization or government agency advocating for a proposal the students created to address local voter disenfranchisement. Students will analyze the 2013 U.S. Supreme Court decision, *Shelby County v. Holder*, that struck down key provisions of the Voting Rights Act, a law often hailed as the single most effective piece of civil rights legislation in history. Students will investigate additional civil rights issues currently in the headlines in order to consider how far we have come and how far we still need to go in addressing civil rights in the U.S. today.

Students will examine the 2006 Act to Amend the Voting Rights Act. They will research the reasons that are given for the necessity of an amendment. Listening to the 2014 US Senate hearing, they will examine the harm done by *Shelby v. Holder* to the voting rights of minority groups.³⁴

Think, Pair, Share

Another great strategy as, Ian Shapiro, discussed in our Seminar is to pose the question to our students in thinking about how our society has changed so much in the past 240 years and to think about how and why the Constitution is so hard to change. Furthermore, students can create classroom rules and think about how these rules will be relevant in the future. The Think, Pair, Share strategy helps students build confidence, encourages greater participation, and often results in more thoughtful discussions.

Students will answer questions about is there equal voting power in our states. When it comes to our Senators, voting power is very disproportionate to the size of our state populations. Students will be asked, do people want to be bound by the constraints of our forefathers? Will these rules and laws still be applicable 200 years from now?

In each lesson, students will be provided the needed contextual support, reading materials, and an exemplar for each of the activities. As with any classroom, as the unit progresses adjustments will have to be made for pacing and student performance. Each student's unique perspective will be honored.

Timeline: Voting Rights and Civil Rights

Timeline: Voting Rights and Civil Rights ³⁵

Topic One

Foundations of Our Democracy--18th century

1776--The Declaration of Independence is signed in 1776. Who could vote? Not all citizens can vote.

Abigail Addams, a future first lady, asked the continental Congress to support women's rights.

1777-1821--Women are still not able to vote, and free men of color lose their right to vote in all states.

Topic Two

The Civil War, Reconstruction, Jim Crow and Significant Constitutional Amendments

1863--The 13th Amendment ends slavery

1867--The 14th Amendment granted citizenship but not the right to vote to all native-born Americans.

1868--Women petition that women's right to vote be included in the 15th Amendment.

1869--Congress passed the 15th Amendment giving only African American men the right to vote.

1890--Formal literacy tests for voter eligibility are first introduced.

1896--Louisiana passes "grandfather clauses" to keep former slaves and their descendants from voting. As a result, registered black voters dropped from 44.8% in 1896 to 4.0% later. Mississippi, South Carolina, Alabama, and Virginia follow Louisiana's lead by enacting their own grandfather clauses.

1920--Congress passed the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote.

1940--Only 3% of eligible African Americans in the South are registered to vote. Jim Crow laws like literacy tests and poll taxes were meant to keep African Americans from voting.

May 17, 1954--Supreme Court outlawed school segregation in *Brown vs. Board of Education*

June 14, 1955--Emmett Till is murdered while visiting family in Money, Mississippi. The 14-year-old Emmett Till, an African American from Chicago, was brutally murdered for allegedly flirting with a white woman four days earlier.

December 1, 1955--Rosa Parks' arrest resulted in lawsuits and appeals leading to the Supreme Court ruling that bus segregation was unconstitutional. Rosa Parks became known as "the mother of the civil rights movement."

Topic Three

Civil Rights, Equal Rights, 1960s

June 12, 1963--Medgar Evers, civil rights leader, was assassinated in Jackson, Mississippi.

August 28, 1963--25,000 Americans march on Washington for civil rights.

July 2, 1964--President Lyndon B. Johnson signs Civil Rights Act of 1964.

1964--Poll taxes are outlawed with the adoption of the 24th Amendment.

February 26, 1965--Jimmie Lee Jackson, civil rights marcher, was killed by a state trooper in Marion, Alabama.

March 7, 1965--State troopers beat back marchers at Edmund Pettus Bridge, Selma, Alabama.

March 25, 1965--More than 500 non-violent civil rights marchers are attacked by law enforcement officers while attempting to march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama to demand the need for African American

voting rights.

July 9, 1965--Voting Rights Act of 1965 is signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson, aimed to overcome legal barriers at the state and local levels that prevented African Americans from exercising their right to vote as guaranteed under the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

1965--By the end of 1965, 250,000 new black voters are registered, one third of them by federal examiners.

1970--President Richard Nixon signed an extension of the Voting Rights Act.

1971--26th Amendment enlarged the electorate by 27 million voters by granting the right of 18-21-year-olds the right to vote.

1972--Barbara Jordan of Houston and Andrew Young of Atlanta become the first African Americans elected to Congress from the South since Reconstruction.

1975--Presidents Gerald Ford signed an extension of the Voting Rights Act.

1982--President Ronald Reagan signed a 25-year extension of the Voting Right Act.

1990--Due in part to the enforcement of the Voting Rights Act, the number of black elected officials in Georgia grows to 495 in 1990 from just three prior to the Voting Rights Act.

Topic Four

Voter Suppression, Voter Disenfranchisement

2002--Trying to solve election inconsistency with more federal voting standards Help America Vote Act (HAVA) passed in response to disputed 2000 presidential election. Massive voting reform effort requires states comply with federal mandate for provisional ballots, disability access, centralized, computerized voting lists, electronic voting and requirement that first-time voters present identification before voting.

2006--Congress extended Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act for an additional 25 years.

2011--Restrictions to voting passed in South Carolina, Texas, Florida are found to disproportionately impact minority voters.

2010 to Present--Since 2010, the Department of Justice (DOJ) has had 18 Section 5 objections to voting laws in Texas, South Carolina, Georgia, North Carolina, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

2011--Florida passed a law that restricts voter registration and made cuts to early voting.

2011--Texas passed one of the nation's most restrictive voter ID laws. The court blocked the law, citing racial impact and suppression.

2011--South Carolina passed a restrictive voter ID law that would keep more than 180,000 African Americans from casting a ballot.

2013--Shelby County v. Holder crippled one of the most effective protections for the right to vote by rendering ineffective that certain jurisdictions with a history of voting discrimination get pre-approval for voting changes.

States wasted no time enacting potentially discriminatory laws including Texas, Mississippi, North Carolina, Florida, Virginia, South Dakota, Iowa, and Indiana.

Topic Five

Call to Action -Civic Duty and Community Participation

1976--The League of Women Voters sponsored the first televised presidential debates since 1960 for which they won an Emmy award for Outstanding Achievement in Broadcast Journalism.

1982--The LWV was in the forefront of the struggle to pass the Voting Rights Act Amendments of 1982.

1990--The LWV grassroots campaign finally secured House passage of the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA), known as “motor-voter.”

1993--President Clinton signed the National Voter Registration Act. Clinton saluted the League as “freedom fighters” in the continuing effort to expand American democracy. The “motor-voter” bill enabled thousands of citizens to apply to register at motor vehicle agencies automatically, as well as by mail and at public and private agencies that service the public.

2002--The League was instrumental in the enactment of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 and the Bipartisan Finance Reform Act of 2002.

2011--The League launched, “Power the Vote,” a campaign opposing measures to restrict access to voting that particularly affected minorities, elderly, students and rural voters and helped bring cases to court.

2014--The League adopted the study of the Structures of Democracy to review money in politics, redistricting, and the Constitutional Amendment process.

Classroom Activities

Topic One

Foundations of Our Democracy- 18th century

Hamilton traces the rise of Alexander Hamilton, from his youth in the Caribbean to his battles in the American Revolution, his role in shaping the Constitution and early economic policies, and finally his ill-fated duel with Aaron Burr. The plot, which weaves in a love story and messages about democracy and civic engagement, is told primarily through rap.

Students will listen to and research the *Hamilton* soundtrack and study our history through rap and song. Students will read two important chapters from Chernow’s book *Hamilton* that the musical *Hamilton* is based on. Having listened to the songs and read individual chapters, students will discuss our Founding Fathers, the Constitution, and the Federalist Papers.

Using primary sources, secondary sources, and tracks from *Hamilton: An American Musical*, this lesson will

help students understand how both the personal and political differences of Jefferson and Hamilton created factions in Washington's first cabinet and the creation of American two-party political system. In activity one, students will use a graphic organizer to compare the two men. Students will listen to track one of *Hamilton*, which will provide a background on Hamilton's early years. To understand Jefferson, students will listen to track 24 called "What Did I Miss." This background will enable students to understand how political and ideological conflicts between Jefferson and Hamilton contributed to the creation of the two-party system in the American political system.

In the next activity, students will identify key reasons Hamilton defended his proposal for the assumption of state's debts and the establishment of a national bank. For this, students will view a clip from the HBO miniseries "John Adams" based on the book of the same name by historian David McCullough. In addition, students will listen to "Cabinet Battle 1" from the soundtrack to gain further background knowledge. The assessment for this activity will include three questions for the students to answer.

1. After viewing the video clip, what do you believe was Hamilton's reasoning for assuming states' debts?
2. What was Jefferson's argument against assuming states' debt and establishing a national bank?
3. How did Hamilton justify assuming the states' debts left over from the Revolutionary War?

In the third activity, students will use critical thinking skills to interpret a primary source document. They will read an excerpt from Hamilton's essay entitled "Pacifcus 1." In this document, the Secretary of State defended his belief that the United States should stay neutral during the war that began between France and Great Britain in 1793. After reading, students will listen to the track "Cabinet Battle 2." The assessment for this activity will include three questions for the students to answer.

1. What was Jefferson's argument to why America should get involved in foreign affairs involving France and Great Britain?
2. What was Hamilton's reasoning for staying out of this foreign conflict?
3. Whose side does Washington take and why?

In the fourth activity, students will listen to the track entitled, "One Last Time." This track will allow students an opportunity to gain a sense of how Washington felt about partisan fighting among American politicians. To help put this into context, students will then read an excerpt from Washington's farewell address. By comparing these to sources, students will be able to answer the following five questions.

1. What issues does President Washington warn against in his track and his Farewell Address?
2. Why does Washington feel the need to step down from his post as president?
3. What does he believe he will achieve by stepping down?
4. What does Washington intend to do during his retirement from the presidency?
5. After listening to this track, do you feel there was any favoritism towards Hamilton by Washington? Why or why not?

After completing the first four activities, students will begin the culminating task of Topic One. Students will prepare answers to five questions. Students will reflect on their understanding of the conflicts between Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton during their time in Washington's first cabinet and answer the five questions. Then students will participate in a Socratic Seminar where they will discuss their answers, consider each other's opinions, and draw conclusions regarding the influence of personal conflict on shaping the American political system.

1. How much do you believe the personal differences between Jefferson and Hamilton played into the breakdown of their relationship while in Washington’s first cabinet?
2. What role do you feel the conflicts between Jefferson and Hamilton played in the creation of the two-party system?
3. How did these factions, especially those between Jefferson and Hamilton, lead to the two-party system?
4. How does this system still divide our country today?
5. How did the sharp political divisions of Washington’s cabinet help set the precedent for later presidents and their cabinet appointments? ³⁶

Topic Two

The Civil War, Reconstruction, Jim Crow, and Significant Constitutional Amendments

The purpose of this lesson plan is to provide high school students with an enhanced understanding of enfranchisement, or the right to vote, as protected by the Constitution of the United States and their respective state constitution. Students will read Chapter 21 of David Goldfield’s book *America Aflame* to gain an understanding of the government and economy after the Civil War.

In the first activity, students will read and analyze various primary source documents. Students will begin by reading and studying the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the Constitution to establish the history of voting rights in the United States. By looking at historical context, students will examine how certain laws came to be and the ways in which laws can disproportionately impact different community members.

For the second activity, students will be provided with a color-coded visual timeline to show important voting rights dates in history. These important dates will range from the Civil War era to the 1960s. This timeline will help students to visually see the progression of historical voting events in chronological order. Students will also chart a timeline with an excel spreadsheet of specific dates to make historical connections.

For the culminating activity, students will research other important dates that were happening during this time period. Students will fill in the timeline to include world politics, U.S. and local politics, natural events, entertainment, sports, science exploration, art, and music. Students will pick five important dates from each category to enter on their timeline to get a broader understanding of historical events that were going on in the world. Students will discuss, identify, and correctly sequence main events.

Topic Three

Civil Rights, Equal Rights, 1960s

To begin, the students will examine the 15 Amendment and the letter from Senator Borah. Through these documents, students will understand the historical context of the Amendment and Senator Borah’s perspective on the Amendment. Students will also discuss how his perspective demonstrates the limits of legislation in eliminating racism.

Next, the students will view a political cartoon, poll-tax petition, and citizenship test. Students will identify obstacles to African American enfranchisement and explain how “grandfather clauses” provided access for poor white southerners and how and why the citizenship test was an unreasonable voting requirement. Students will evaluate the validity of a real literacy test: The State of Louisiana Literacy Test (this test is to be given to anyone who cannot prove a fifth-grade education).

In the third activity, students will read the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and create a list of the goals spelled out in this document.

For the fourth activity over this topic, students will watch a television news clip of Martin Luther King Jr. speaking about the Summer Community Organization and Political Education project. After viewing, students will list the concerns King expresses in the film clip and identify what issues were difficult for the legislation to address.

For the fifth activity, students will read a chapter from Michael Klarman's book, *Unfinished Business, Racial Equality in American History*. Students will read chapter ten on The Civil Rights Era to gain further knowledge of the 1960s, social and political conditions, and challenges in racial issues. Students will discuss the protest and civil rights movements.

The last activity will have students view a television news broadcast from March 1965 in which Georgia state officials offer multiple objections to the proposed Voting Rights Act. In pairs, students will create a list describing these objections. Students will also listen to and analyze Martin Luther King's Jr. "I Have a Dream Speech." Students will be able to reflect on the speech in preparation for the lesson in the next topic about an important Supreme Court case that has recently been in the news and that also relates to civil rights and redressing racial inequality. *Shelby v. Holder* was decided over 55 years after the "I Have a Dream Speech."³⁷

This lesson will focus on the 1965 law that aimed to ensure that African Americans would no longer be denied their right to vote. Students will read a summary of the Voting Rights Act to find out what it said, then study data that show the law's impact. Students will watch two news reports, one from CBS and one from PBS, about a 2009 Supreme Court challenge to the Voting Rights Act and the Court's ruling on the challenge.

After reading, reflecting, and working through the all the activities, the culminating task for Topic Three will require students to create a list of the remaining obstacles to full enfranchisement of people of color, particularly African Americans. Students will then create a second list of possible solutions to these obstacles, both legislative and non-legislative. Finally, in groups, students will write a letter outlining a policy proposal to a local organization or government body explaining and recommending one of these solutions.

Topic Four

Voter Suppression, Voter Disenfranchisement

To begin this topic, students will examine the 2006 Act to Amend the Voting Rights Act and identify five reasons for the necessity of this amendment. In addition, students will read a summary of the Supreme Court's 2013 ruling of *Shelby v. Holder*. Students will learn how this ruling effected the voting rights of minority groups. In addition, students will listen to, read, and analyze Ruth Bader Ginsburg's dissent in the case. Students will read chapter 6, in Ruth Bader Ginsburg's book, *My Own Words*, where she also writes about "human dignity and equal justice under the law."³⁸

In Heidi Schreck's recent play on Broadway, *What the Constitution Means to Me*, she argues the 9th and the 14th amendment. She explores equality for women as she supremely argues the case for women's rights. This play challenges people to step back and look at a bigger picture, to dwell not just on the losses but also gains and the struggle to keep our precarious rights and freedoms from moving backwards. Students will watch several clips from the play and debate the merits of the Amendments.

In the next activity, students will think about how our society has changed in the past 240 years and think about how and why the Constitution has not changed. After examining this question, students will propose three changes they would make to the Constitution and defend their reasoning with evidence from their research.

Finally, students will begin the culminating task for this topic. In small groups, students will create ten rules for their current classroom. Then each group will imagine a classroom 243 years in the future and create ten classroom rules that would be appropriate for that time. Finally, each group will present their rules and explain why the future rules they chose would be relevant in the year 2260.

Topic Five

Call to Action - Civic Duty and Community Participation

To begin the first activity, students will research the history of the League of Women Voter's (LWV). Students will learn about how the LWV started and their continued platform to register voters.

In the second activity, students will partner with LWV for a voter education and voter registration campaign. Students will start to gain insight into how they can enact change in the community. Volunteers from the LWV will come to the school to help educate students on their rights and how to enact their civic duty. Students will also research how young people are standing up and how to help increase the voter turnout amongst people age 18-35. From Parkland to Tulsa, there are many issues on the minds of students today. Students will research how they can educate others on issues that they care about, especially voting rights.

In planning your drive, think especially about how to incorporate voter registration into your classroom work. In each class, ask the students to do the following:

Ask all students in the room to stand up. Tell them they represent all 18-30-year old in the country. Next, ask every third row (or roughly 35%) of the students to sit down. Next, tell those sitting that they represent young people their age who were not registered to vote in 2008. Next, ask every tenth student to sit down; these students represent those who are registered but chose not to vote. Finally, ask everyone to look at those left standing; these are the young people making decisions for them every time they choose not to register or vote. Those sitting down have no voice in the elections that impact their lives, and they're letting everyone else (their standing colleagues) make the choice for them.

Following this exercise and a discussion about why voting is important, hand out voter registration forms and walk through the form step-by-step as students fill them out.

Note: Some states require either a driver's license number or social security number in order to complete a voter registration application. Remind students to bring this information to school with them on the day of the drive.

For the third activity, students will host a voter registration drive at school for a community forum night. Leading up to National Voter Registration Day on September 25, 2019, high school students will have a peer to peer informational campaign and registration at the school. The LWV will come to the school to help educate students on the process of voting. This will lead to a community night where students will present the information that they learned to their parents and members of the community.

Students will demonstrate the knowledge they have learned in this curriculum unit and their work with the

LWV to register and educate eligible new voters. Students will establish how they can enact change at their school and in their community. Students will be prepared to answer questions about the rules for registering and voting in Oklahoma. They will review the requirements for registering to vote by checking with local elections officials. Students will have resources on-hand in the event of complex questions about registration, absentee/early voting, and other aspects of voting in Oklahoma.

For the final activity, students will write a reflection on the importance of community action, empowerment, and the relevance of their civic achievements. Students will then have a classroom conversation about the personal importance of voting and participating in our democracy.

Resources

Thirteenth Amendment (Ratified December 1865)

Section 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Fourteenth Amendment (Ratified July 1868)

Section 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States, and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

Section 2. Representatives shall be apportioned among several State according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each State, excluding Indians not taxed.

Fifteenth Amendment (Ratified February 1870)

Section 1: The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

Nineteenth Amendment (Ratified August 1920)

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Twenty-fourth Amendment (Ratified January 1964)

Section 1: The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State by reason of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax.

Twenty-sixth Amendment (Ratified July 1971)

Section 1: The right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age.

The Three-Fifths Compromise is found in Article 1, Section 2, and Clause 3 of the United States Constitution, which reads:

Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other persons.

Student Resources

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Selma, 2014 historical drama film directed by Ava DuVernay and written by Paul Webb.

www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/constitution.amendmentxv.html.

<http://www.vote411.org>.

<http://www.rockthevote.org>.

Hamilton Soundtrack.

“Cabinet Battle 2”

“What Did I Miss”

“One Last Time”

CBS News Set up- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sCZJBN9YvcQ>.

PBS Ruling video- <https://youtu.be/aoYBzjytjbl>.

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/lessons-plans/constitution-day-the-1965-alabama-literacy-test/>.

PBS: The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow—Voting Then and Now Activity (includes literacy test)

www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/tools_voting.html.

Statistics on voter turnout and elected representatives: Voter Registration Rates (1965 vs. 1988)

http://www.justice.gov/crt/about/vot/intro/intro_c.php.

<http://www.infoplease.com/timelines/voting.html>.

<https://www.aclu.org/timeline-history-voting-rights-act>.

What the Constitution Means to Me.

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Appendix

Oklahoma Academic Standards for Social Studies United States Government

USG.2 The student will describe the historical and philosophical foundations of the republican system of government in the United States.

USG.2.4 Compare the points of view toward the structure and powers of government as expressed in the Federalist Papers, authored by Madison, Hamilton and Jay, as well as the writings of the Anti-Federalists.

USG.3 The student will analyze the fundamental principles of the American system of government resulting in a republic, as established in the Constitution of the United States, the supreme law of the land.

USG.3.1 Examine the American system of federalism and evaluate the changes that have occurred in the relationship between the states and the national government over time.

USG.4 The student will examine the Constitution of the United States by comparing the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government as they address the needs of the public.

USG.4.1 Explain the purposes of government expressed in the Preamble and how the Constitution of the United States preserves the core principles of American society.

USG.4.2 Examine the structure, functions, and authority exercised by the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government.

E. Examine how government exercises its authority in real world situations including current issues and

events.

USG.5 The student will be able to evaluate the significance of civic participation in order to ensure the preservation of our constitutional government.

USG.5.1 Define civic virtue and explain the individual's duty and responsibility to participate in civic life by voting, serving on juries, volunteering within the community, running for office, serving on a political campaign, paying state and federal taxes prior to the April 15th annual deadline, and respecting legitimate authority

Oklahoma Academic Standards for Social Studies United States History

USH.1 The student will analyze the transformation of the United States through its civil rights struggles, immigrant experiences, and settlement of the American West in the Post Reconstruction Era, 1865 to the 1920s.

USH.1.1 Explain the constitutional issues that arise in the post-Civil War era including federalism, separation of powers, and the system of checks and balances.

USH.1.2 Analyze the post-Reconstruction civil rights struggles.

B. Examine the purposes and effects of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments.

C. Assess the impact of the Black Codes, Jim Crow laws, and the actions of the Ku Klux Klan.

USH.2 The student will analyze the social, economic and political changes that occurred during the American Industrial Revolution, the Gilded Age, and significant reform movements from the 1870s to the 1920s.

USH.2.1 Evaluate the transformation of American society, economy and politics during the American Industrial Revolution.

G. Compare early civil rights leadership including the viewpoints of Booker T. Washington, and W.E.B. DuBois in response to rising racial tensions, the anti-lynching work of Ida B. Wells, and the use of poll taxes and literacy tests to disenfranchise blacks.

USH.7 The student will analyze the cause and effects of significant domestic events and policies from 1945 to 1975.

USH.7.1 Analyze the major events, personalities, tactics and effects of the Civil Rights Movement.

B. Evaluate the events arising from separate but equal, policies, such as poll taxes and literacy tests, violent responses such as the Birmingham church bombing and the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and conflicts over segregation including:

6. Marches on Washington and Selma to Montgomery

7. adoption of the 24th Amendment

8. passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

C. Compare the viewpoints and the contributions of civil rights leaders and organizations linking them to events of the movement, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his I Have a Dream speech, the leadership of Malcolm X, the role of organizations such as the Black Panthers; describe the tactics used at different times including civil disobedience, non-violent resistance, sit-ins, boycotts, marches, and voter registration drives.

USH.9 The student will examine contemporary challenges and successes in meeting the needs of the American citizen and society, 2002 to the present.

USH.9.3 Examine the ongoing issues to be addressed by the Donald Trump and subsequent administrations, including taxation, immigration, employment, climate change, race relations, religious discrimination and bigotry, civic engagement, and perceived biases in the media.

Social Studies Practices 9-12 Progression

1. Engage in Democratic Processes Students will understand the principles of government, the benefits of democratic systems, and their responsibilities as citizens.

A. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the virtues that citizens should use when interacting with each other and the virtues that guide official government institutions.

1.A.9-12.1 Evaluate various significant documents from the United States and other countries to compare civic virtues and principles of political systems.

1.A.9-12.2 Evaluate the impact of perspectives, civic virtues, democratic principles, constitutional rights, and human rights on addressing issues and problems in society.

B. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the important institutions of their society and the principles that these institutions are intended to reflect.

1.B.9-12.2 Analyze the role of informed and responsible citizens in their political systems and provide examples of changes in civic participation over time.

C. Students will demonstrate understanding of the processes and rules by which groups of people make decisions, govern themselves, and address public problems.

1.C.9-12.2 Engage in a range of deliberative and democratic processes to develop strategies to address authentic, real-world problems in the community and out of school contexts

2. Analyze and Address Authentic Civic Issues Students will utilize interdisciplinary tools and master the basic concepts of the social studies in order to acquire and apply content understanding in all related fields of study.

A. Students will develop skills and practices which demonstrate an understanding that historical inquiry is based on the analysis and evaluation of evidence and its credibility.

2.A.9-12.1 Develop, investigate and evaluate plausible answers to essential questions that reflect enduring understandings across time and all disciplines.

3. Acquire, Apply, and Evaluate Evidence Students will utilize interdisciplinary tools and master the basic concepts of the social studies in order to acquire and apply content understanding in all related fields of study.

A. Students will develop skills and practices which demonstrate an understanding that historical inquiry is based on the analysis and evaluation of evidence and its credibility.

3.A.9-12.1 Gather, organize, and analyze various kinds of primary and secondary source evidence on related topics, evaluating the credibility of sources.

3.A.9-12.5 Evaluate how multiple, complex events are shaped by unique circumstances of time and place, as well as broader historical contexts.

4. Read Critically and Interpret Informational Sources Students will engage in critical, active reading of grade-level appropriate primary and secondary sources related to key social studies concepts, including frequent analysis and interpretation of informational sources.

A. Students will comprehend, evaluate, and synthesize textual sources to acquire and refine knowledge in the social studies.

4.A.9-12.2 Analyze information from visual, oral, digital, and interactive texts (e.g. maps, charts, images, political cartoons, videos) in order to draw conclusions and defend arguments.

B. Students will apply critical reading and thinking skills to interpret, evaluate, and respond to a variety of complex texts from historical, ethnic, and global perspectives.

4.B.9-12.3 Actively listen, evaluate, and analyze a speaker's message, asking questions while engaged in collaborative discussions and debates about social studies topics and texts.

5. Engage in Evidence-Based Writing Students will apply effective communication skills by demonstrating a variety of evidence-based written products designed for multiple purposes and tasks, in order to demonstrate their understandings of social studies concepts, ideas, and content.

A. Students will summarize and paraphrase, integrate evidence, and cite sources to create written products, research projects, and presentations for multiple purposes related to social studies content.

5.A.9-12.4 Write independently over extended periods of time, varying modes of expression to suit audience, purpose, and task; synthesize information across multiple sources and/or articulate new perspectives. B. Students will engage in authentic inquiry to acquire, refine, and share knowledge through written presentations related to social studies

5.B.9-12.3 Construct visual and/or multimedia presentations, using a variety of media forms to enhance understanding of findings and reasoning, for diverse audiences.

Notes

1. League of Women Voters www.lwv.org.
2. Democracy and Distribution, Chapter 5.
3. Declaration of Independence.
4. Ibid.

5. nccs.net ("The vote is the most powerful instrument ever devised by man for breaking down injustice and destroying the terrible walls which imprison men because they are different from other men," declared President Lyndon B. Johnson when he signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965. All the participants in the bloody events at Selma, Alabama, which led up to that legislation, agreed with the president. "Voting is the foundation stone for political action," announced Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., for the civil rights demonstrators. (National Center for Constitutional Studies).
6. <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/road-to-revolution/creating-a-nation/a/the-federalist-papers>.
7. <https://constitution.laws.com/three-fifths-compromise>.
8. www.gilderlehrman.org/node/301828.
9. Ibid.
10. <https://www.law.cornell.edu> > U.S. Constitution.
11. Ibid.
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