

INDIAN HILL EXEMPTED VILLAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Social Studies Curriculum - May 2009

United States Government – Semester Course

Big Idea: The Foundations of Government

Essential Questions:

- What historical factors have influenced the development of American democracy?
- What are the major components of American democracy?
- How are federalism, checks and balances, and separation of powers both similar and different?
- How does the formal amendment process work? How does the informal amendment process work?
- What are some significant formal amendments?

Skills & Objectives:

- Challenge arguments of historical inevitability by giving examples of how different choices could have led to different consequences (e.g., choices made during the Civil War, choices relating to immigration policy or choices made during the Cuban Missile Crisis).
- Analyze primary source material to see if a historical interpretation is supported.
- Analyze cause-and-effect relationships and multiple causation including the influence of ideas, the role of chance, and individual and collective action.
- Explain the key arguments made for and against the ratification of the Constitution and illustrate how those arguments influence contemporary political debate.
- Research an issue or topic by gathering, recording, evaluating and interpreting relevant data.
- Develop a research project and make formal presentations to the class and/or community members using

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Big Idea: Legislative Branch

Essential Questions:

- What is the significance of Congress in the American system of Government?
- What are the duties and responsibilities of members of the House of Representatives and the Senate? How are they similar and different?
- Why is reapportionment necessary?
- What does the demographic profile of Congress look like?
- What are the various powers of Congress?
- How is Congress organized?
- How does the legislative process work?

Skills & Objectives:

- Analyze economic policy decisions made by governments that have resulted in intended and unintended consequences.
- Identify public policies that may cost more than the benefits they generate, assess who enjoys the benefits, who bears the cost, and explain why the policies exist.
- Identify and analyze an issue related to domestic or foreign policy in the United States (e.g., human rights, intervention in conflicts between other countries or health care).
- Explain how individuals and groups, both governmental and non-governmental, influence domestic and foreign policy and evaluate how these actions reflect characteristics of American democracy.
- Identify and analyze issues related to the election process in the United States (e.g., election board policies, technology used in elections, media reporting of election results).
- Practice forms of civic discussion and participation consistent with the ideals of citizens of a democratic republic
- Evaluate policies that have been proposed as ways of dealing with social changes resulting from new technologies (e.g., censorship of the media, intellectual property rights or organ donation).
- Analyze the causes, consequences and possible solutions to persistent, contemporary and emerging world problems (e.g., health, security, resource allocation, economic development or environmental quality).
- Analyze how democracy, the free flow of information, global economic interdependence or human rights movements can cause change within a country.
- Construct an action plan for presenting a position to the appropriate decision-making body.

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- Research an issue or topic by gathering, recording, evaluating and interpreting relevant data.
- Engage in group work on issues-analysis and decision-making

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Big Idea: Political Behavior and the Electoral Process

Essential Questions:

- What are the factors that influence an individual's political beliefs?
- How did the two-party system develop in the United States?
- What role do political parties and interest groups play in the political process?
- What are the responsibilities of a citizen in the United States?
- How have voting rights evolved in American history?
- What role does the media play in the electoral process?
- What role does public opinion play in the political process?

Skills & Objectives:

- Analyze primary source material to see if a historical interpretation is supported.
- Explain how individuals and groups, both governmental and non-governmental, influence domestic and foreign policy and evaluate how these actions reflect characteristics of American democracy.
- Identify and analyze issues related to the election process in the United States (e.g., election board policies, technology used in elections, media reporting of election results).
- Practice forms of civic discussion and participation consistent with the ideals of citizens of a democratic republic
- Evaluate policies that have been proposed as ways of dealing with social changes resulting from new technologies (e.g., censorship of the media, intellectual property rights or organ donation).
- Analyze relationships and tensions between national sovereignty and international accords and organizations (e.g., international agreements on environmental issues, trade agreements or arms agreements, European Union or NATO).
- Analyze the causes, consequences and possible solutions to persistent, contemporary and emerging world problems (e.g., health, security, resource allocation, economic development or environmental quality).
- Analyze how democracy, the free flow of information, global economic interdependence or human rights movements can cause change within a country.
- Construct an action plan for presenting a position to the appropriate decision-making body.
- Research an issue or topic by gathering, recording, evaluating and interpreting relevant data.

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Big Idea: The Executive Branch and Foreign Policy

Essential Questions:

- What are the various roles of the presidency? How are they different? How are they interrelated?
- What are the qualifications for President?
- How does the presidential election process work? How does the presidential succession process work?
- What role does the Cabinet play in the executive branch?
- What impact has history had on the formation of U.S. foreign policy?
- How is U.S. foreign policy formulated?

Skills & Objectives:

- Challenge arguments of historical inevitability by giving examples of how different choices could have led to different consequences (e.g., choices made during the Civil War, choices relating to immigration policy or choices made during the Cuban Missile Crisis).
- Analyze primary source material to see if a historical interpretation is supported.
- Analyze cause-and-effect relationships and multiple causation including the influence of ideas, the role of chance, and individual and collective action.
- Identify the perspectives of diverse cultural groups when analyzing current issues.
- Analyze proposed solutions to current issues from the perspectives of diverse cultural groups.
- Analyze ways countries and organizations respond to conflicts between forces of unity and forces of diversity (e.g., English only/bilingual education, theocracies/religious freedom, immigration quotas/open immigration policy, single-sex schools/coeducation).
- Evaluate the effectiveness of international governmental organizations (e.g., United Nations, European Union, World Court and Organization of American States), multinational corporations, and nongovernmental organizations (e.g., Amnesty International, Red Cross and World Council of Churches) in the global arena.
- Evaluate the role of institutions in guiding, transmitting, preserving and changing culture.
- Explain how people create places that reflect culture, human needs, government policy, current values and ideals as they design and build specialized buildings, neighborhoods, shopping centers, urban centers and industrial parks.
- Compare how values and beliefs influence economic decisions in different communities.

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- Select a current issue; identify the costs and benefits of various choices to determine the impact of personal and social economic decisions on the allocation of productive resources.
- Identify reasons for and the impacts of multinational economic organizations
- Analyze economic policy decisions made by governments that have resulted in intended and unintended consequences.
- Identify public policies that may cost more than the benefits they generate, assess who enjoys the benefits, who bears the cost, and explain why the policies exist.
- Identify and analyze an issue related to domestic or foreign policy in the United States (e.g., human rights, intervention in conflicts between other countries or health care).
- Explain how individuals and groups, both governmental and non-governmental, influence domestic and foreign policy and evaluate how these actions reflect characteristics of American democracy.
- Evaluate policies that have been proposed as ways of dealing with social changes resulting from new technologies (e.g., censorship of the media, intellectual property rights or organ donation).
- Analyze relationships and tensions between national sovereignty and international accords and organizations (e.g., international agreements on environmental issues, trade agreements or arms agreements, European Union or NATO).
- Analyze the causes, consequences and possible solutions to persistent, contemporary and emerging world problems (e.g., health, security, resource allocation, economic development or environmental quality).
- Analyze how democracy, the free flow of information, global economic interdependence or human rights movements can cause change within a country.
- Research an issue or topic by gathering, recording, evaluating and interpreting relevant data.

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Big Idea: Judicial Branch and Civil Liberties

Essential Questions:

- What role does the judicial branch play in our government?
- What is the structure of the federal court system? How does the Supreme Court differ from other federal courts?
- What is jurisdiction? What are the different kinds of jurisdiction? What kinds of jurisdiction are held by each of the different federal courts?
- What are the origins and implications of judicial review?
- How does the constitution guarantee equal protection and due process?
- How are our civil liberties protected by the Constitution? What questions about civil liberties exist within contemporary American society?

Skills & Objectives:

- Challenge arguments of historical inevitability by giving examples of how different choices could have led to different consequences (e.g., choices made during the Civil War, choices relating to immigration policy or choices made during the Cuban Missile Crisis).
- Analyze proposed solutions to current issues from the perspectives of diverse cultural groups.
- Evaluate the role of institutions in guiding, transmitting, preserving and changing culture.
- Identify public policies that may cost more than the benefits they generate, assess who enjoys the benefits, who bears the cost and explain why the policies exist.
- Explain how individuals and groups, both governmental and non-governmental, influence domestic and foreign policy and evaluate how these actions reflect characteristics of American democracy.
- Practice forms of civic discussion and participation consistent with the ideals of citizens of a democratic republic
- Compare elements, proceedings and decisions related to the right to a fair trial in criminal and civil courts and describe alternatives to litigation for maintaining order and resolving conflicts within the United States legal system including
- Construct an action plan for presenting a position to the appropriate decision-making body.
- Research an issue or topic by gathering, recording, evaluating and interpreting relevant data.

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- Develop a research project and make formal presentations to the class and/or community members using
- Respond to questions and feedback about presentations knowledgeably and civilly.
- Engage in group work on issues-analysis and decision-making

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United States Government – Semester Course

Big Idea: Financial Literacy

Essential Questions:

- How are capitalism, communism, and socialism different? What are the defining characteristics and criticisms of each?
- What are the differences between fiscal and monetary policy? How can each be applied towards solving contemporary economic problems?
- Why will incomes differ in the labor market depending on supply and demand for skills, abilities, and education levels?
- How does a budget help in making personal economic decisions?
- What role do producers, consumers, savers, workers, and investors play in a market economy?
- How do interest rates affect lenders and borrowers?

Skills & Objectives:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of international governmental organizations (e.g., United Nations, European Union, World Court and Organization of American States), multinational corporations, and nongovernmental organizations (e.g., Amnesty International, Red Cross and World Council of Churches) in the global arena.
- Compare how values and beliefs influence economic decisions in different communities.
- Explain the impact of marginal cost/marginal benefit analysis on decision-making.
- Select a current issue; identify the costs and benefits of various choices to determine the impact of personal and social economic decisions on the allocation of productive resources.
- Use the circular flow model to explain the flow of money, goods, services and productive resources in the economy.
- Identify reasons for and the impacts of multinational economic organizations
- Analyze economic policy decisions made by governments that have resulted in intended and unintended consequences.
- Identify public policies that may cost more than the benefits they generate, assess who enjoys the benefits, who bears the cost and explain why the policies exist.
- Analyze how democracy, the free flow of information, global economic interdependence or human rights movements can cause change within a country.