

REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY IN THE 3 BRANCHES

6-8 week inquiry unit

Cover this core content **with confidence**
without getting lost in the weeds!

- ✓ 26 varied student activities plus a 45-slide instructional slide deck
- ✓ Unit overview and pacing guide
- ✓ Overarching unit and daily lesson inquiry questions to drive the content
- ✓ Step-by-step daily lesson plans with accommodation ideas, lesson takeaways, and detailed answer keys
- ✓ Standards-aligned student "I can..." unit review, and unit note-taking sheets
- ✓ DBQ-style culminating essay assessment and authentic PBL project

PRINT & DIGITAL OPTIONS INCLUDED



CIVICS & GOVERNMENT TOPICS *covered*

- ✓ **Federal Government Broadly:** representative democracy, checks & balances, how to reach out to elected officials, current members of each branch's leadership
- ✓ **Legislative Branch:** Article I; requirements, powers, set up of Congress; how a bill becomes a law; Congress's demographic makeup
- ✓ **Executive Branch:** Article II; requirements, powers, set up of the President; the role of the Cabinet; Presidential job approval ratings; the electoral college
- ✓ **Judicial Branch:** Article III; Supreme Court & federal courts system; current Supreme Court docket

“ I ABSOLUTELY loved this! It's very well thought out and requires students to *truly engaged with the content* .- Katlynn C.

The unit *connected government to everyday life*. It was a great project with LOTS of good resources and information! - Kelsey F.



VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES

included

Closely read & analyze Articles 1, 2, 3

Explore checks & balances, including the people's power to check government

Research the current members of Congress, Cabinet, & Supreme Court

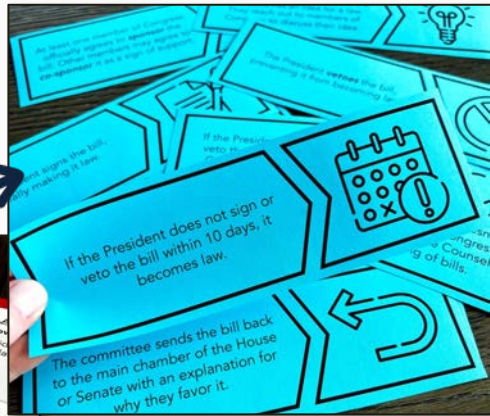
Analyze demographic data of current federal officers, comparing to the US's broader data

Analyze current presidential job approvals & Supreme Court docket

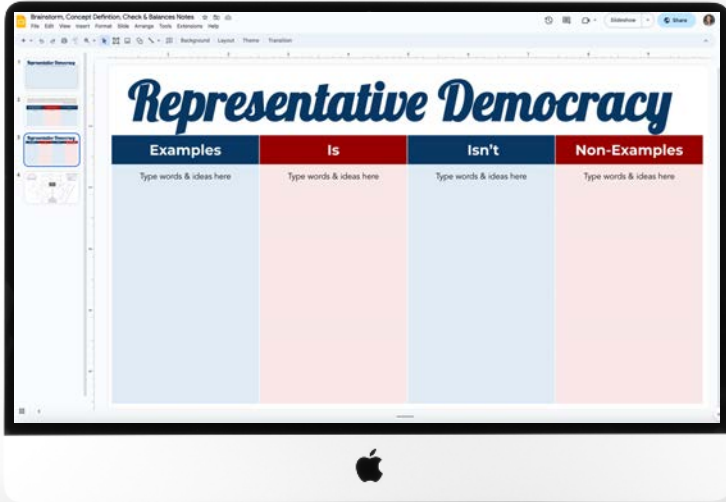
Simulate the electoral college vote

“ This unit is **expertly done and updated**. There are not enough adjectives to describe the depth and usefulness of these units. Thank you!! - **Kara G.** ”

Collaborative sort game for how a bill becomes a law



Play Race to 270 to teach the Electoral College (just add dice!)



FEDERAL OFFICER

one-pagers

Throughout the unit, research and create one-pagers of all the White House Cabinet members, leaders in Congress, and Supreme Court Justices.

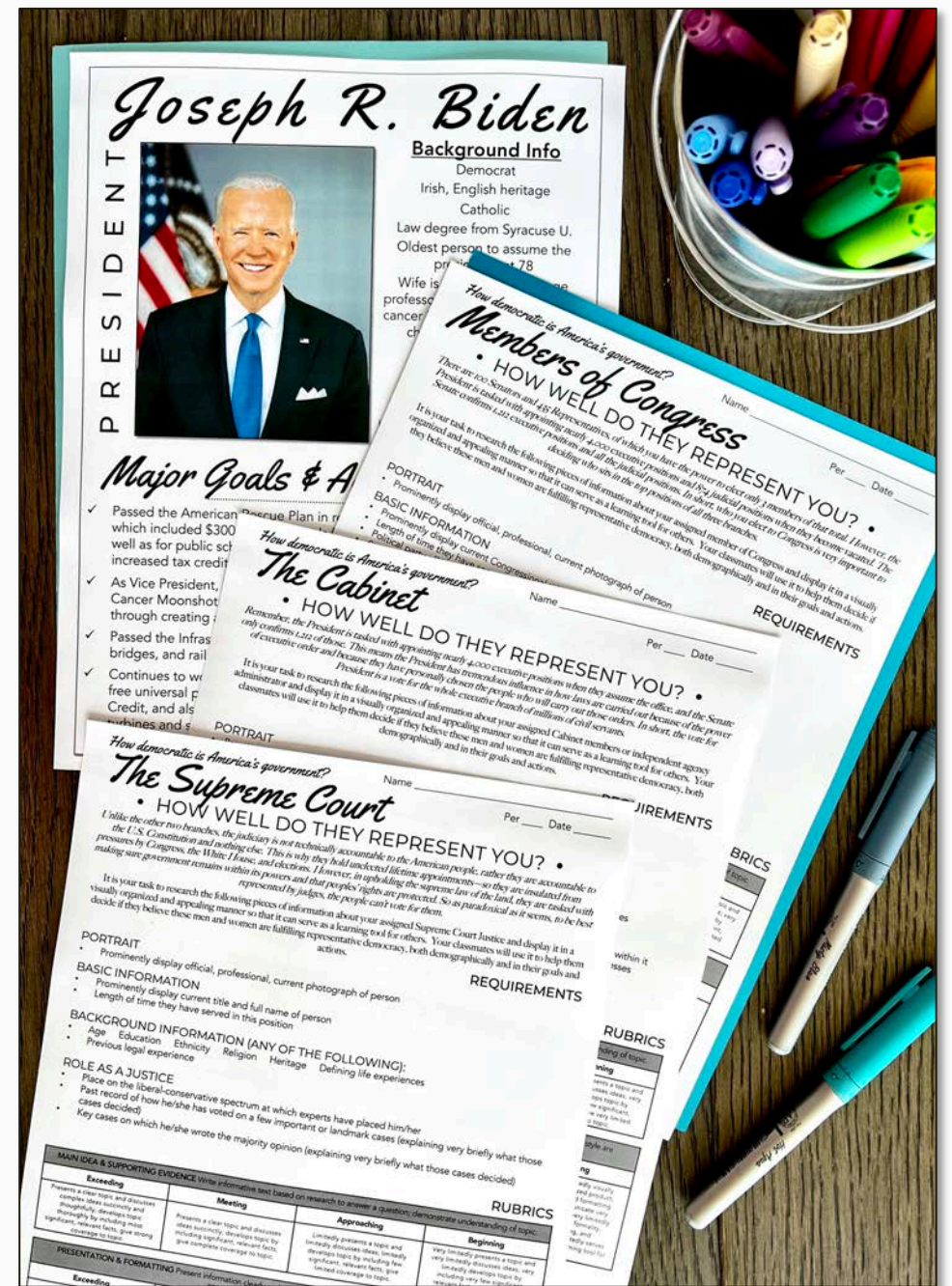
Assign each student one person to research

Model with included sample one-pager

Support with detailed requirements and a student-friendly rubric

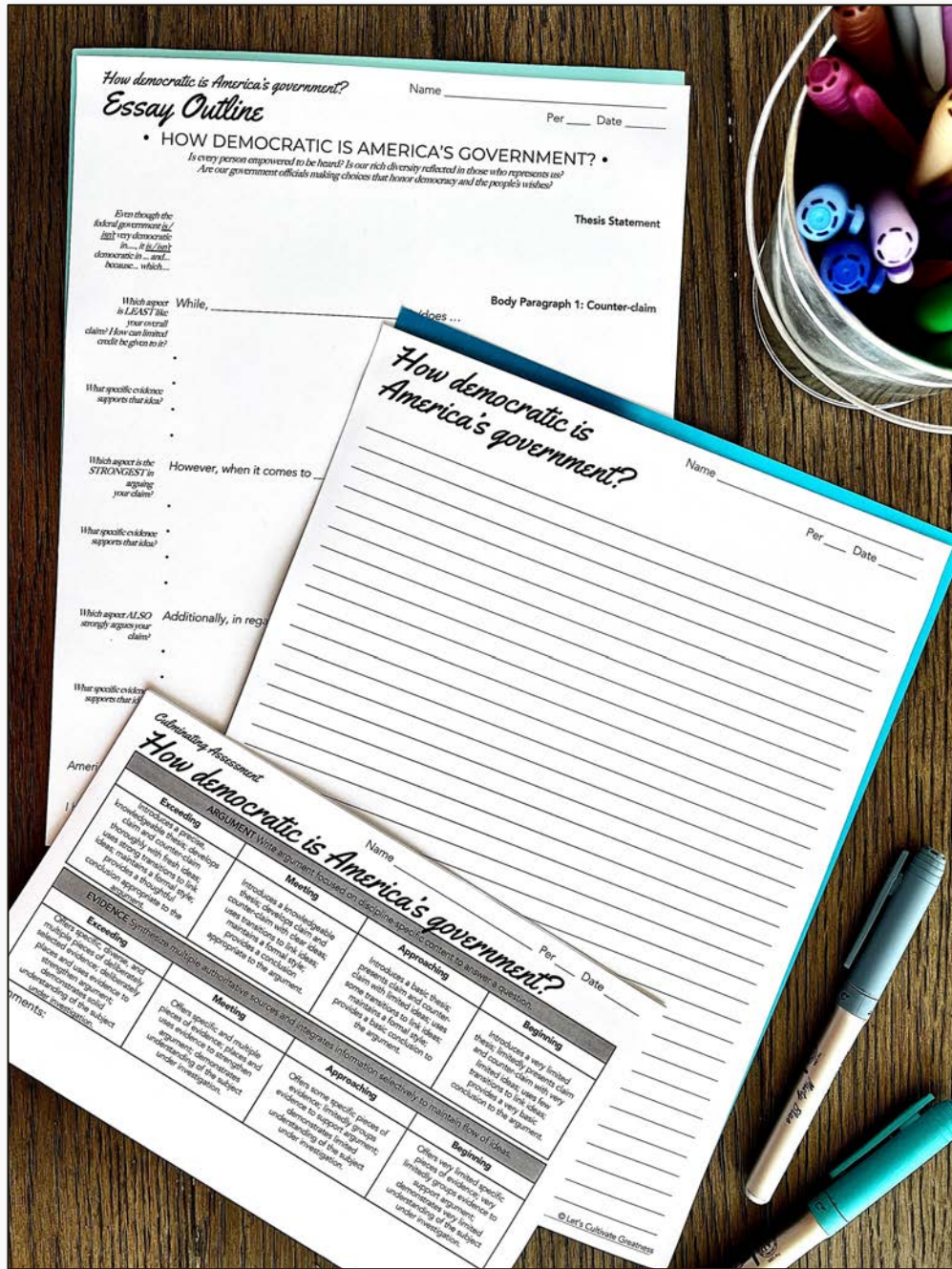
Examine in gallery walk activity

MAKES THE PERFECT STUDENT-MADE BULLETIN BOARD!



Culminating DBQ ESSAY

- ✓ Unit-long inquiry question with note-taking for deepening understanding
- ✓ Lesson-specific inquiry questions to build toward overarching unit inquiry
- ✓ Collaborative end-of-unit brainstorming exercise
- ✓ Detailed outline template form
- ✓ Step-by-step instructional slides to guide outlining process
- ✓ Thesis & topic sentence templates
- ✓ Essay writing skill how-to handouts
- ✓ Student-friendly rubrics

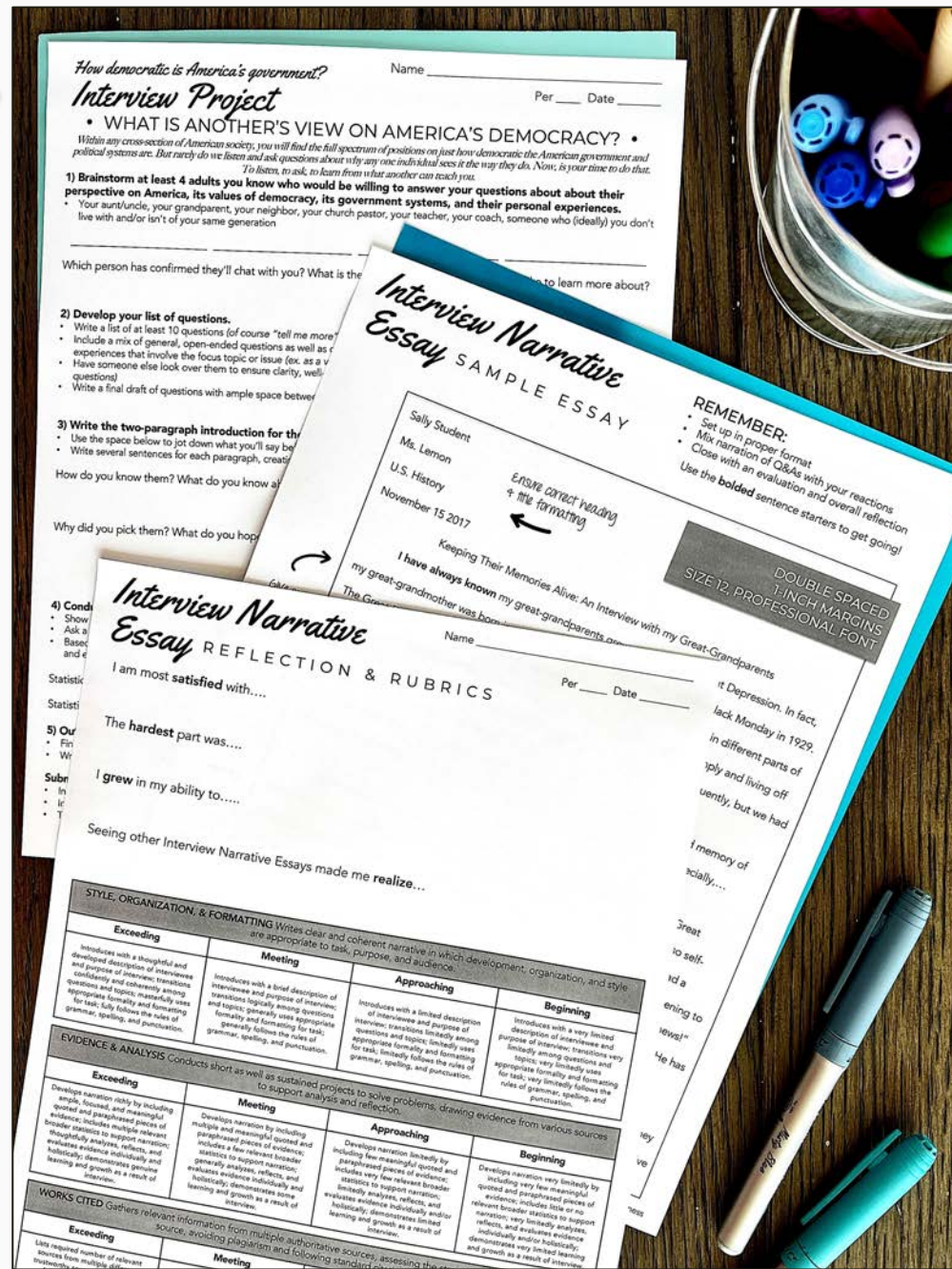


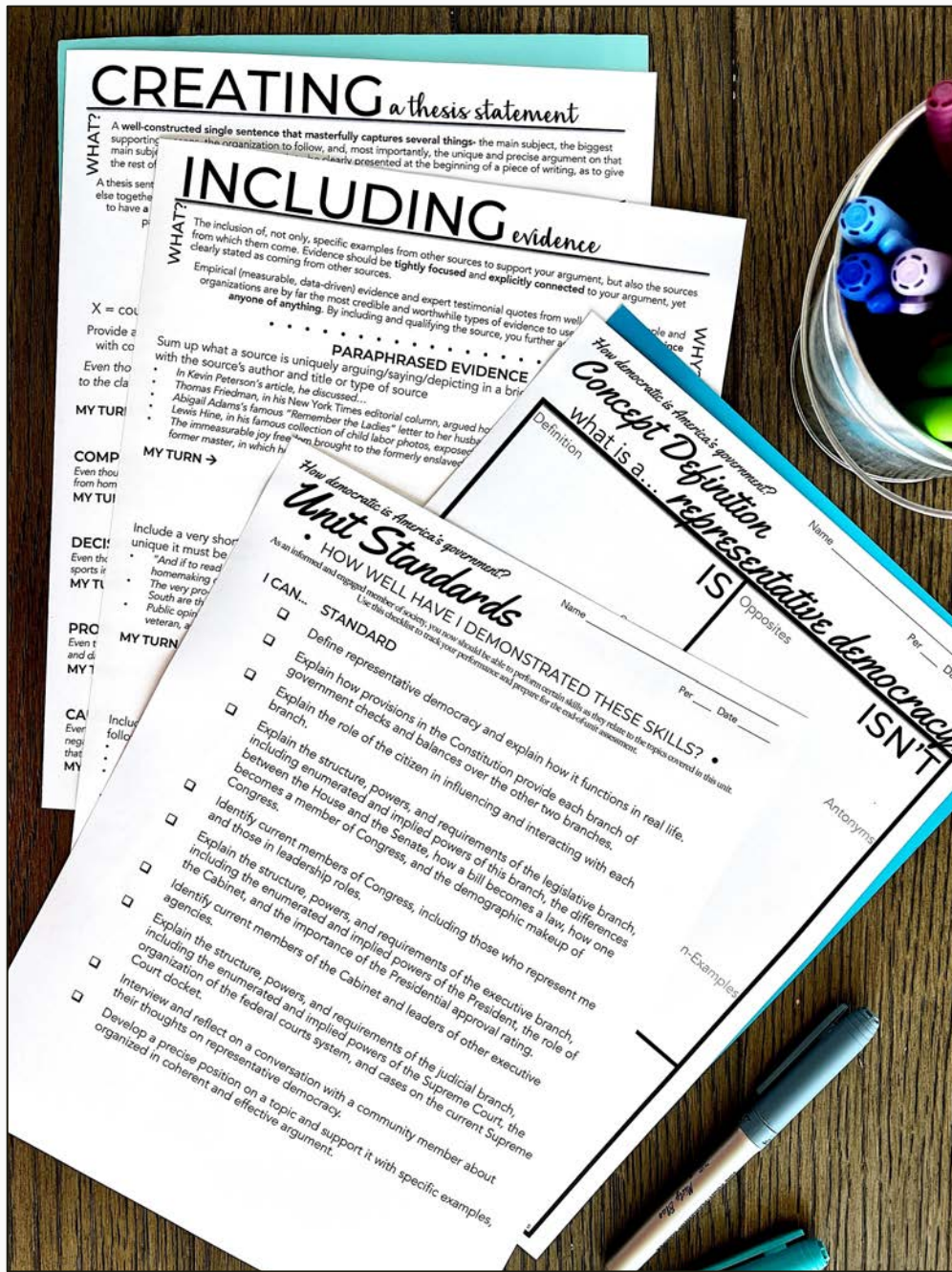
INTERVIEW ESSAY project

Connect students' developing ideas on the unit's guiding inquiry by challenging them to ask a community member in a memorable conversation.

- ✓ Project overview to break down tasks—develop pick interviewee, write questions, and write essay
- ✓ Writing samples of essay and thank you note & sample questions
- ✓ Rubrics, project overview, edit handouts for each step

PROMOTE ACTIVE LISTENING & COMMUNITY-BUILDING





SUPPORTS & ASSESSMENTS *included*

- ✓ Pacing guide with standards checklist
- ✓ Daily driving questions, bell ringers, & closures
- ✓ Step-by-step lesson plans
- ✓ Lesson background & takeaways
- ✓ Answer keys & rubrics
- ✓ Graphic note taking sheets
- ✓ Skill how-to handouts
- ✓ Instructional slide deck
- ✓ Print & digital options

TAKE A PEEK *inside*

every
LESSON

THREE BRANCHES OVERVIEW

General Notes continued

THREE BRANCHES
An inquiry unit exploring the basics of American government.

Course
9th - 12th Government & Civics

Time
6-8 weeks

Enduring Understanding & Outcomes
Driving Question: How democratic is America's government?
Greatness is being an engaged and contributing member of our democracy.

By the end of this unit...

Students will know:
 • the concept of representative democracy
 • the Constitutional powers, requirements, and provisions of each branch of government
 • the real-life practices and procedures of each branch of government
 • the role citizens play as a branch of government

Students will demonstrate they can:
 • articulate their position on American government
 • develop and strengthen annotating, sourcing, writing, and research skills
 • analyze a variety of media resources
 • use and evaluate sources to gather information to answer real-world questions

Unit Overviews give you a bird's eye view of everything at once!

THREE BRANCHES OVERVIEW

Pacing Guide
Since classes can range anywhere from 45 to 90 minutes, period length approximates are made for each set of activities. The estimates below amount for most work completed in class. As you examine each activity, you may find portions of the lessons you can assign as homework or cut out if you choose. Lastly, current political events tend to generate great unplanned and genuine questions from students, so allow some flexibility in time to accommodate.

Classes

Activities

Standards Addressed

Unit Overview, Hook, & Notes

Legislative Activities

Executive Activities

Judicial Activities

Unit Project, Essay & Skill Sheets

Pacing guide & standards

THREE BRANCHES OVERVIEW

DIGITAL LINKS

How democratic is America's government?

Unit Overview, Hook, & Notes

Legislative Activities

Executive Activities

Judicial Activities

Unit Project, Essay & Skill Sheets

Quick link to Google files

Digital versions are fully editable!

EXECUTIVE BRANCH LESSON PLANS

Suggested Lessons continued

Article II: Executive Branch (Varies)

These two websites offer fantastic commentary and annotations on the Constitution for your own background information and learning:
 US Congress: <https://constitution.congress.gov/browse/>
 Annenberg Classroom

EXECUTIVE BRANCH LESSON PLANS

Time
2 weeks

Materials
Podcast: The Executive Branch sheet
Article II: Executive Branch folder
Podcast: The Cabinet sheet
The Cabinet poster project & notes sheet
Job Approval Rating sheet
Political Cartoon & News Source sheets

Lesson Takeaway
This activity is best as a whole class, which assigning as homework. After students have read the provisions of the Constitution, give them a few minutes to discuss the provisions of the Constitution. To conclude, give them a few minutes to discuss the provisions of the Constitution.

Planning & Preparation
Decide how you want students to complete each activity, as there is flexibility with each: whole class, jigsaw, small groups, independent, or at home. You also have some flexibility in the order in which you can assign the activities. For example, students could either analyze the Constitution's text or listen to the podcast overview episode first. Included are sheets of icon images and individual steps for how a bill becomes a law to give you options for conducting the interactive activity. Some ideas are listed in the lesson plans.

Suggested Lessons
Prior to Each Activity (10-15 minutes each)
Ideally, this is completed the following class after an activity is finished, not as an exit ticket on the same day, because this creates deeper memory for students having a refresh on what they learned 24 hours later.

Topics Addressed
Constitutional provisions and real-life processes
Historical and current practices and issues
Current executive office holders
Presidential approval rating
Checks and balances among the three branches

Skills Addressed
Explain the structure, functions, powers, and requirements of the executive branch created by Article II
Analyze and evaluate current issues
Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of sources
Work collaboratively to investigate and address a question

Lesson Takeaway

Info at a glance

Lesson Plans come with step-by-step directions

Closing formative assessment with each activity

Helpful planning tips & Links to Google files

Wide range of ways to complete activities!

Daily Inquiry, Directions & Background context

Article II: Executive Branch

Podcast: Executive Branch

IMPLIED & INFORMAL POWERS

Job Approval Rating

PRESIDENT'S JOB APPROVAL EVENTS & SENTIMENTS

BY COMPARISON

Using the interactive data analysis tool made by Gallup's Presidential Job Approval Center, examine and compare the current president's approval rating trends with that of previous presidents.

The president who had an approval rating record most similar to the current president is...

The president who had an approval rating record least similar to the current president is...

In general, approval ratings over a president's term tend to...

The president whose approval rating record is most unlike the others is...

Overall, the current president's approval rating seems to...

Examine real-world info & stats

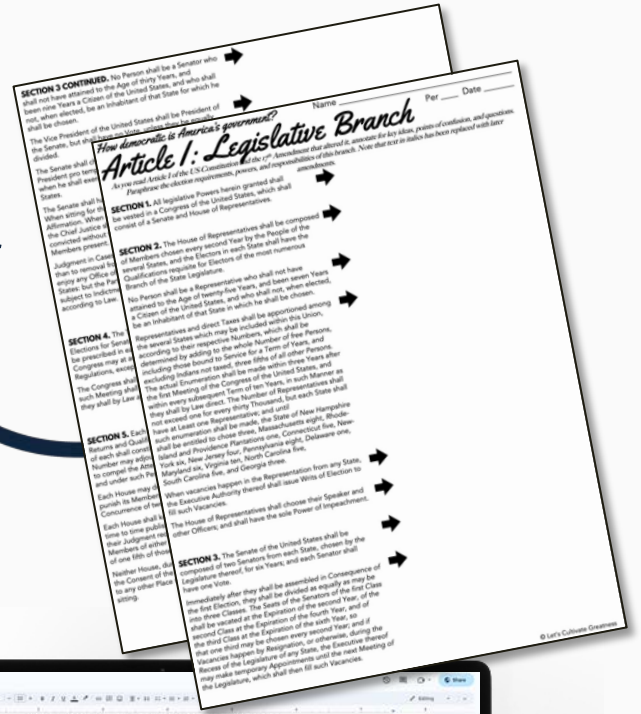
UNIT
overview

TAKE A PEEK *inside* **each** ACTIVITY



Real-life photos of leaders of each branch

Print PDF & editable Google file options for all student materials to tailor to your classroom needs



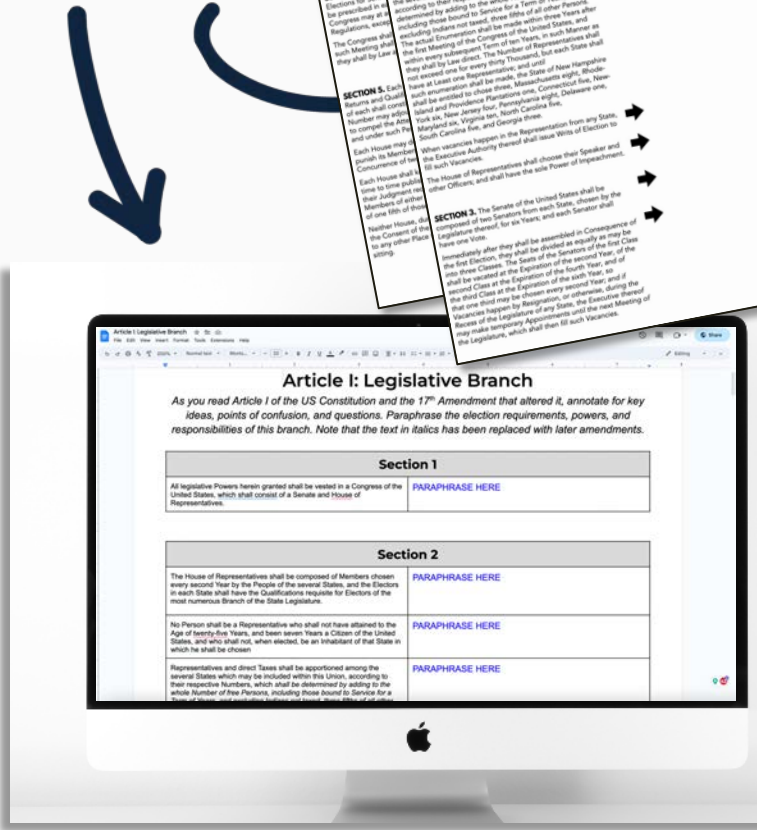
OVERALL, what word best translates your letter grade?
 Overwhelmingly Mostly Sufficiently Occasionally
 Clearly Sufficiently Occasionally

What **OVERALL LETTER GRADE** do you give our government for being a representative democracy?

After reviewing everything
 How **ARE** and **AREN'T** the 3 branches fulfilling **REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY?**
 Capture **OVERALL**, then provide **EXAMPLES.**
 UNIT BRAINSTORM

CLAIM
 B – solidly, 80-89%
 D – inadequate, 60-69%
 F – poor, 0-59%
 Outline Sheet
 #1: ESSAY CLAIM

Step-by-step essay support



Instructional SLIDE DECK