

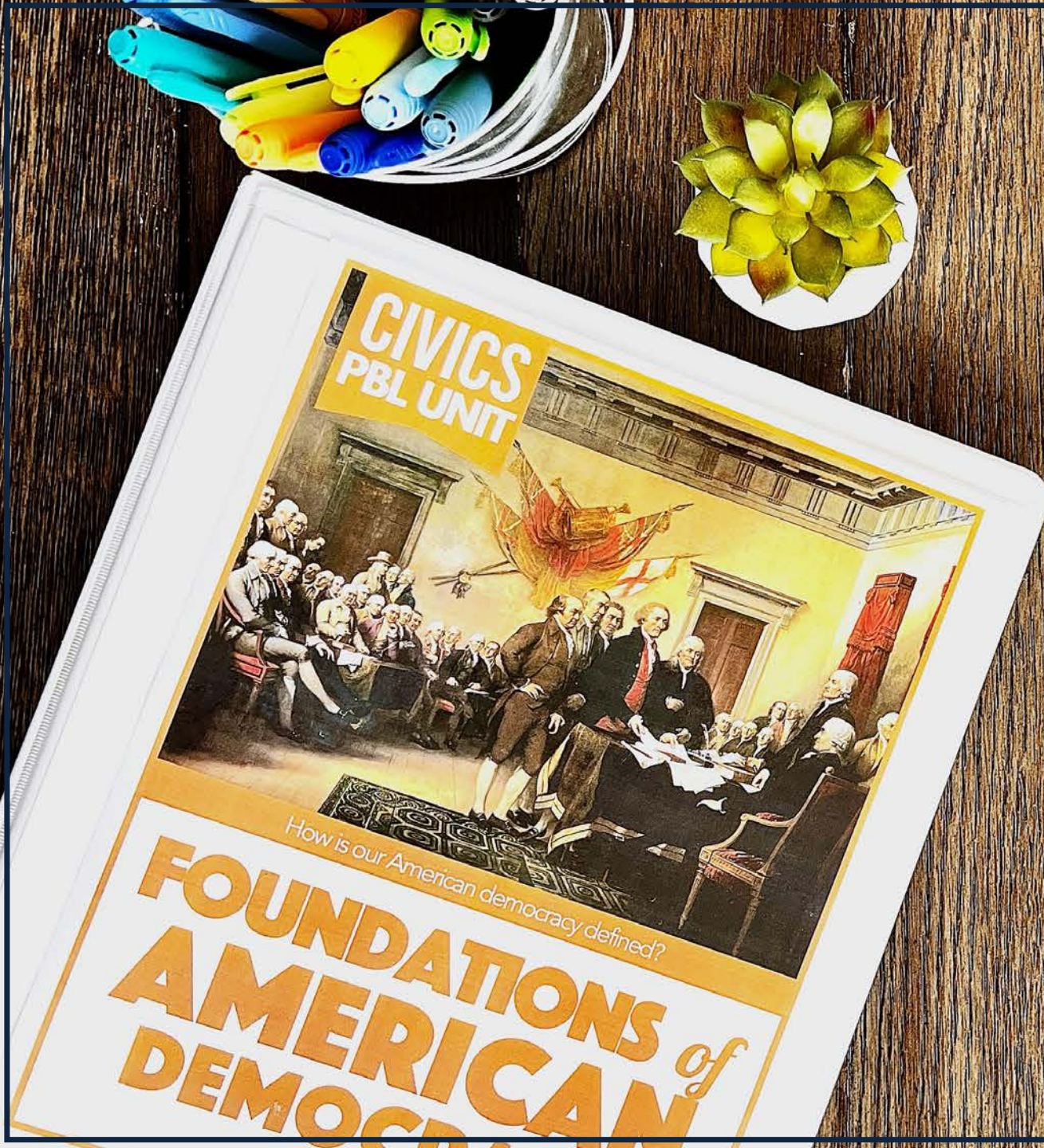
FOUNDATIONS OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

3 week inquiry unit

Kick off your Civics class **with confidence** on Day 1 with this complete unit.

- ✓ 25 mix & match student activities plus a 60-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

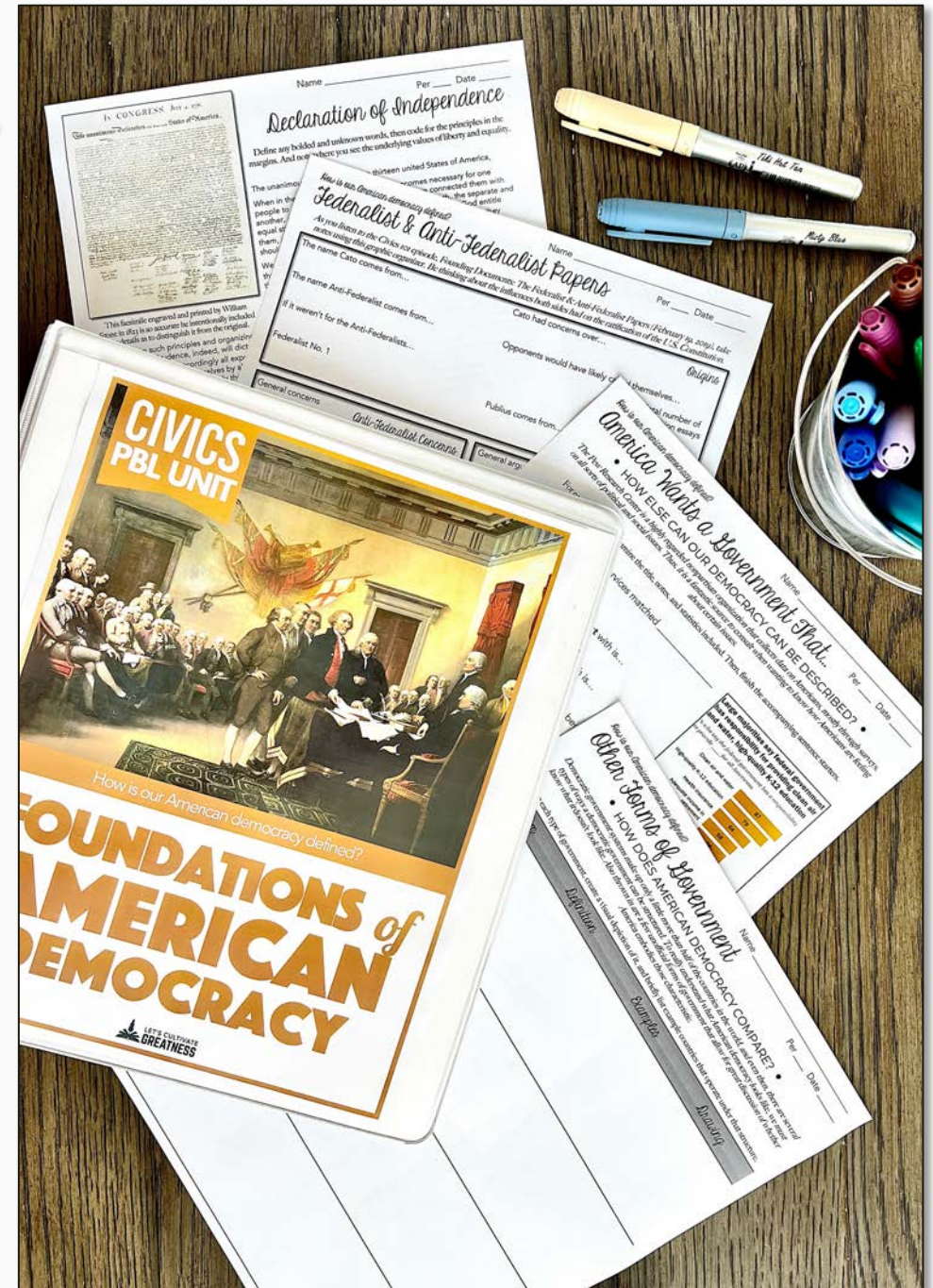
PRINT & DIGITAL OPTIONS INCLUDED



CIVICS & GOVERNMENT TOPICS *covered*

- ✓ **Principles of the Constitution:** checks & balances, federalism, individual rights, limited government, popular sovereignty, republicanism, the rule of law, separation of powers
- ✓ **Founding Documents:** Declaration of Independence, The Preamble to the US Constitution, Federalist Papers # 1, 10, & 51, George Mason's Objections essay
- ✓ **Modern America:** survey data on beliefs about government responsibilities, political cartoons, news articles
- ✓ **Other Types of Government:** anarchy, autocracy, confederation, direct democracy, monarchy, oligarchy, socialism, theocracy, unitary

“ This unit is pound-for-pound **the best I have purchased!** Downloaded as a **PDF or Google**, the assignments are easily paced. I print off materials and post them on Classroom. Thank you! I will be purchasing more!! – **Kara G.** ”



VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES

included

Explore Constitutional principles with political cartoons & gummy bears

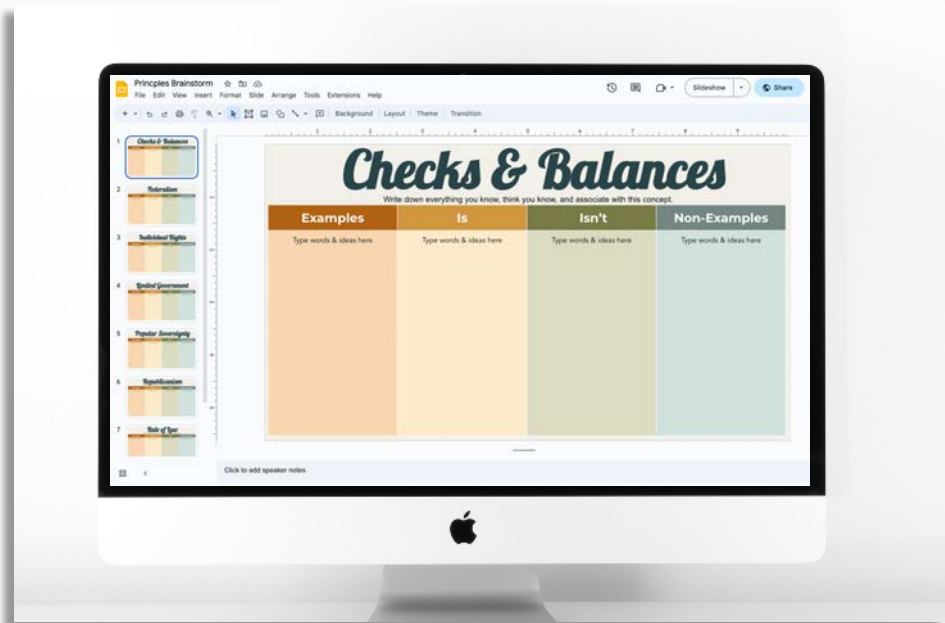
Closely analyze Declaration, Preamble, Federalist & Anti-Federalist Essay excerpts

Contrast other types of government with examples & gummy bears

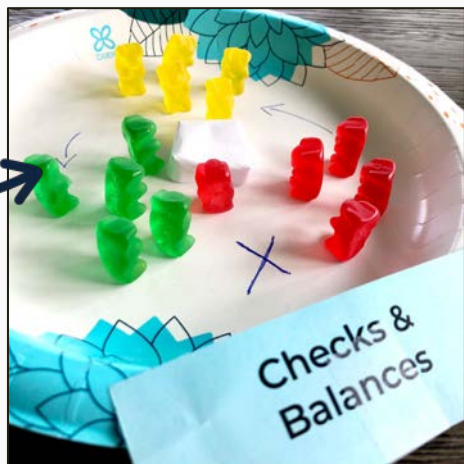
Analyze recent Pew data & current events

Listen to engaging podcasts on these topics

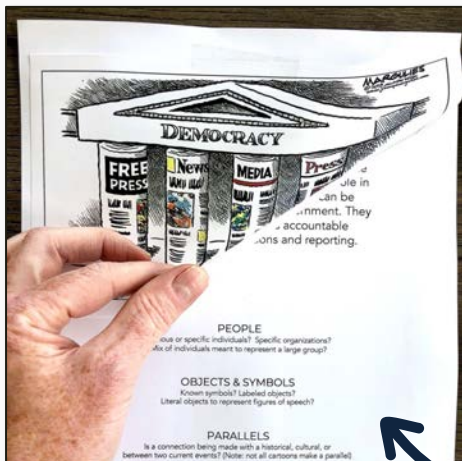
“ I used this resource with my 10th-grade government class. We read some of our textbooks as a base and then used the unit to make it real for them. They were **more engaged**, and it was **easy to link in current events** with each lesson. - **Glenda L.** ”



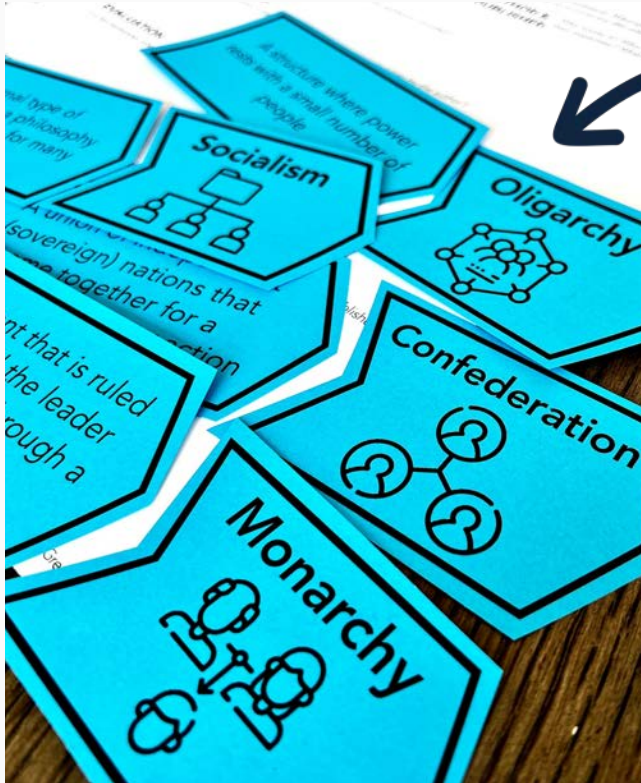
Use **gummy bears** to challenge and assess learning!



Analyze **political cartoons** to connect concepts to real life!

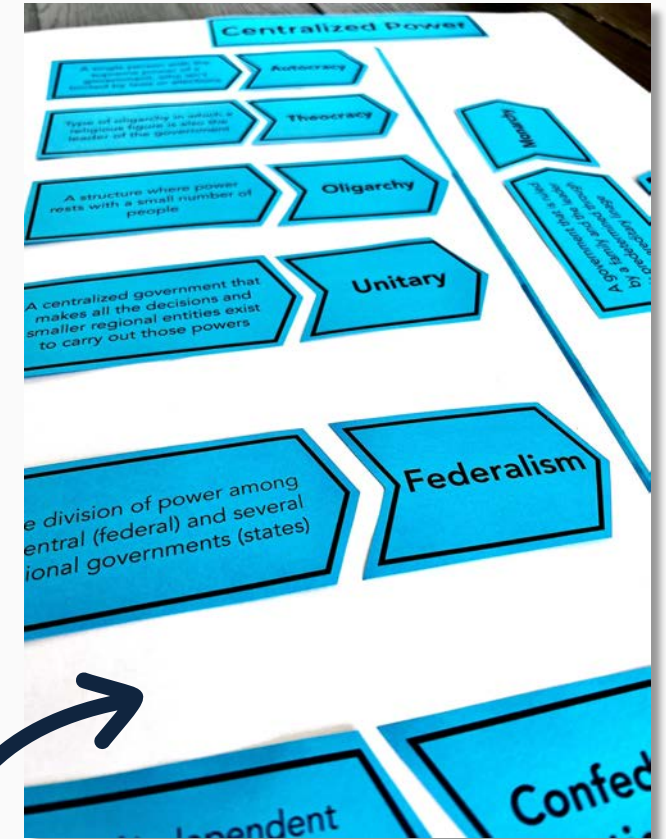
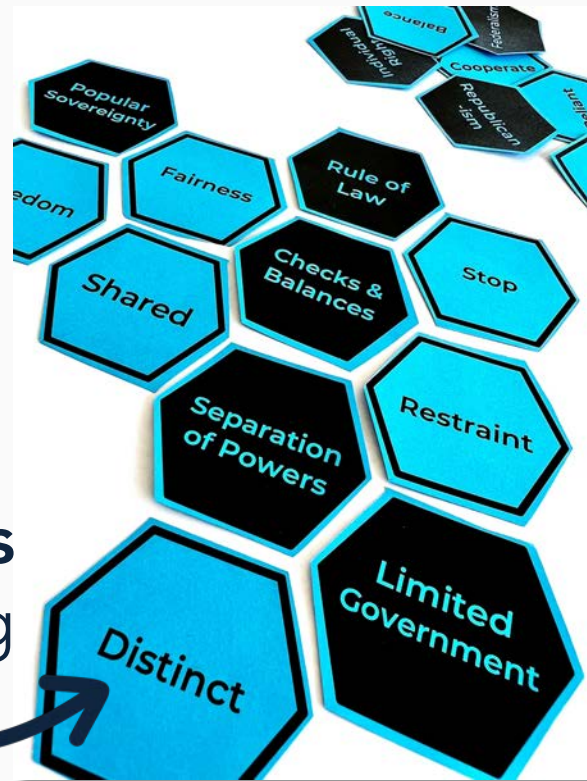


SUPPORTS & SCAFFOLDS *included*



Symbols and visuals to support **conceptual understanding**

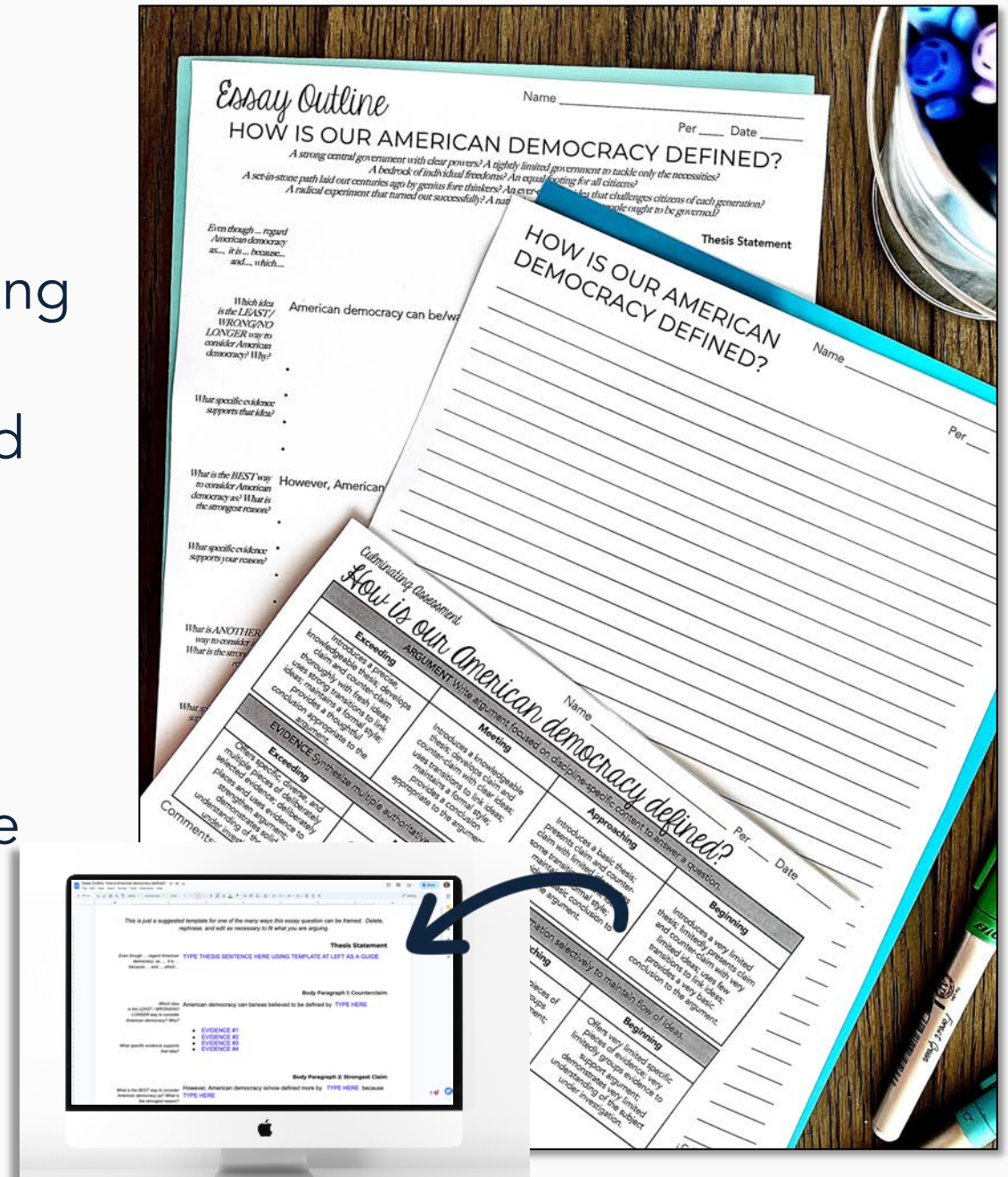
Deepen **connections** with hexagonal thinking



Collaborative, spatial activities to promote **low-stakes student talk** & demonstrate learning

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

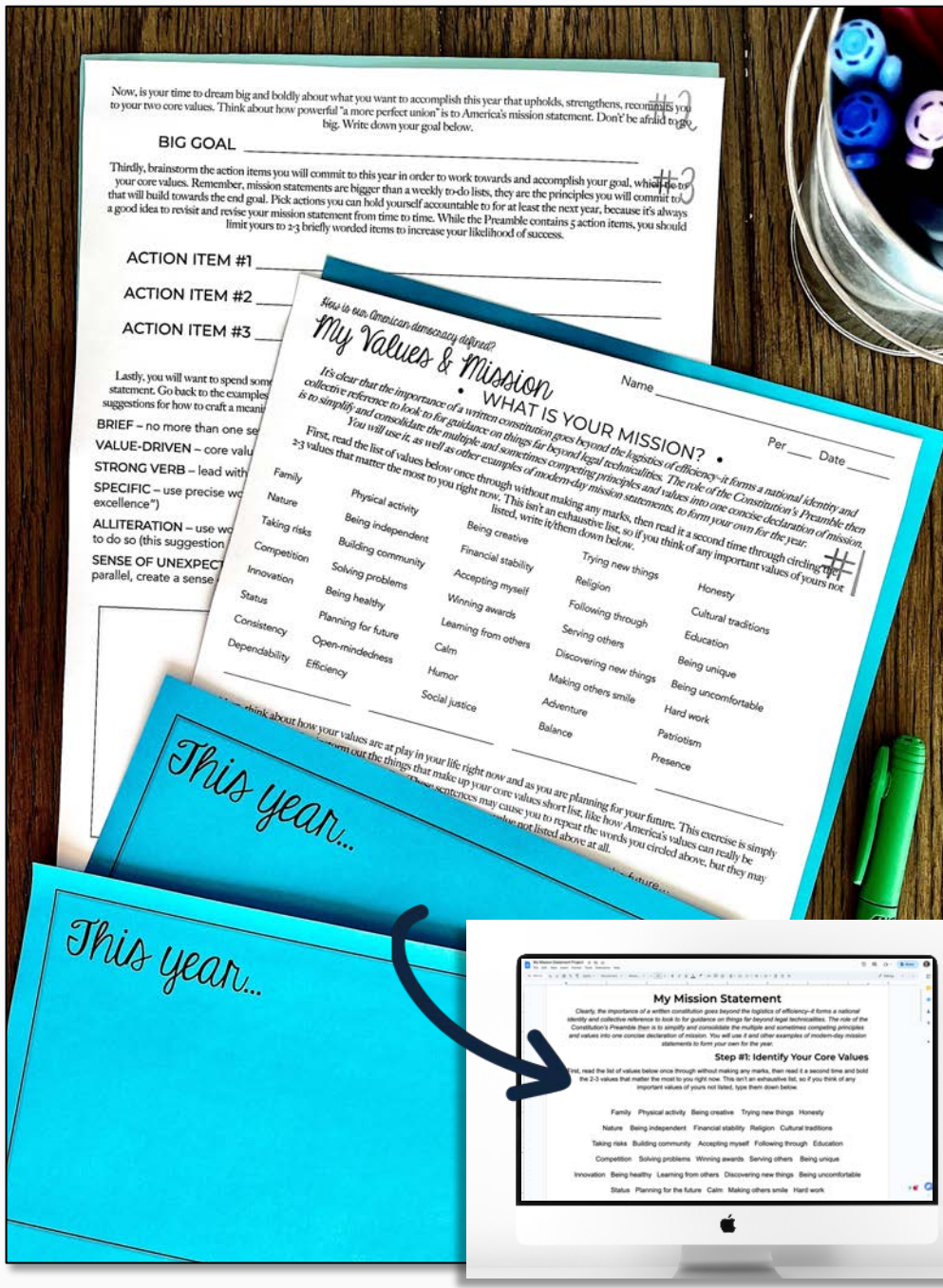


MISSION STATEMENT *project*

Connect making conscious value-based goals with those made by the Framers in the US Constitution's Preamble & founding documents.

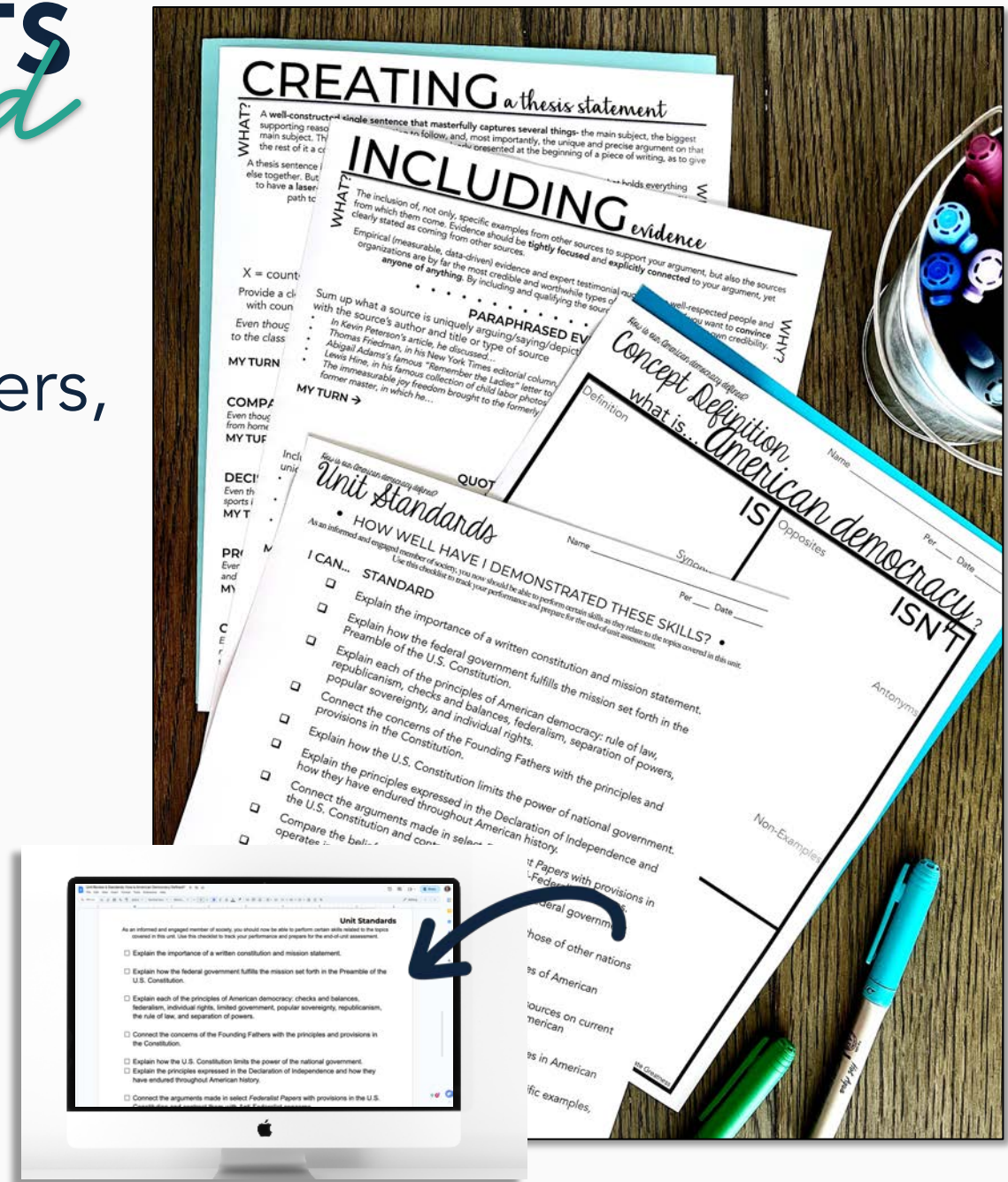
- ✓ Step-by-step project overview to identify core values & desired goals
- ✓ Advice for writing a specific, value-driven, and powerful personal mission statement
- ✓ Statement sheets for recording & committing to mission statement

THE PERFECT PROJECT TO START THE YEAR STRONG!



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

FOUNDING OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY OVERVIEW

General Notes continued

Included Resources

Unit Review & Standards, Skills Sheets (Google version) [Review & Standards](#) [Skill Sheets](#)

These handouts guide students in taking control of their learning. Students can use the Unit Review & Standards to check their understanding after each activity and review the content at the end of the unit. The Skill Sheets assist students in

FOUNDING OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY OVERVIEW

An inquiry unit exploring the origins of our core principles.

Course
9th - 12th Government & Civics

Time
3 weeks

Enduring Understanding & Outcomes

Driving Question: How is our American democracy defined?
Greatness is having a clear vision that reflects one's core values.

By the end of this unit...

Students will know:

- the concept American democracy
- the principles that collectivist American democracy
- the underlying values of liberty, equality and the enduring maintain both
- the text of the Declaration of Independence, the Preamble, and the Declaration of Sentiments
- Core values, vision, and the principles of American democracy in founding documents
- Arguments made by the Federalists and concerns raised by Anti-Federalists
- Current issues related to the principles of American democracy
- Additional forms of government used by other nations

FOUNDING OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY 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 account 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 explained and genuine questions from students, so allow some flexibility in time to accommodate

This unit aligns with standards from several states organized here for your planning purposes.

Class Activities

1	Democracy 101: D of I
2	Democracy 101: D of I
3	Democracy 101: D of I
1-2	The Preamble
2	Civics 101: D of I
1-2	Civics 101: D of I
2	Civics 101: D of I
1	Democracy 101: D of I
2	Democracy 101: D of I
3-4 total	Other Forms of Government

FOUNDING OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY OVERVIEW

DIGITAL LINKS

How is our American democracy defined?

Unit Overview, Hook, & Notes

- Unit Review & Standards
- Democracy Brainstorm
- America's Mission
- Concept Definition Notes

Principles Activities

- Principles Brainstorm
- Principles of American Democracy
- Principles in the News
- Principles in Political Cartoons

Founding Documents Activities

- D of I Podcast Notes
- D of I Text
- Preamble Text
- Ensemble Political Cartoon
- Federalist Papers Test
- Objections Text
- Federalist & Antifederalist Podcast Notes
- America Wants a Government That...
- Other Forms of Government

Survey Data & Other Forms of Gov. Activities

- Mission Statement Project
- Skill Sheets
- Essay Outline & Rubric
- Instructional Slide Deck

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

Lesson Takeaway

Helpful planning tips & Links to Google files

Wide range of ways to complete activities!

Info At-a-Glance

Pacing guide & standards

Daily Inquiry, Directions & Background context

Lesson Plans come with step-by-step directions

Quick link to Google files

Digital versions are fully editable!

Closing formative assessment

vocabulary supports throughout

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE LESSON PLANS

Suggested Lesson

Declaration of Independence Analysis continued

- As students read either individually, in small groups, or as a whole class, have them come in the margins for those principles
- Afterward, have students share and compare their markings, thoughts, and questions
- Have students and compare their markings, thoughts, and questions
- Provide time for contract and not popular sovereign

Lesson T

As the podcast episode to mean arguments, but using identity ever since

There are endless stress for the purpose of holding our being a bold pre

Time
2 class periods

Materials
Principles & Concept Definition sheets
Declaration of Independence sheets
Podcast episode
Highlighters (optional)

Topics Addressed
Conceptual understanding of American democracy
Core values, vision, and the principles of American democracy in founding documents

Skills Addressed
Explain how the Declaration of Independence reflected principles of popular sovereignty, social contract, natural rights, and individual rights
Develop conceptual understanding of a topic
Cite specific textual evidence to support the central theme or source
Work collaboratively to investigate and address a question

Planning & Preparation

Decide if you want students to listen to this Civics 101 podcast episode at home or in class. The release date is included to more easily find the episode via podcast apps. Transcripts are available for most episodes. You will want to download the episode audio and transcript files in case they ever become unavailable.

This episode has a longer-than-visual, but still entertaining, introduction lasting the first five minutes, before it gets into the content.

Founding Documents: Declaration of Independence (January 29, 2019 / 26 minutes)
<https://www.civics101podcast.com/civics-101-episodes/declaration>

Depending on students' incoming knowledge (from a previous unit or class) you may want to formally review those concepts in your introduction of the episode.

Below are two sources that provide a great extension, if desired. First is a video with some of Frederick Douglass's descendants reciting excerpts of his famous speech "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?" Second is an article that fact checks the famous Declaration of Independence who enslaved others.

<https://www.npr.com/2020/07/03/84832594/video-frederick-douglass-descendants-read-his-famous-speech>

<https://chicago.southwestindependence.com/2020/07/03/84832594/video-frederick-douglass-descendants-read-his-famous-speech>

Google version: [Declaration of Independence](#)

Suggested

- Have students give these principles
- Point out to students
- Give students democracy by
- Hand out a D of I
- Hit play and for you to
- Provide time
- Review with
- Hand out whole doc

Declaration of Independence

Name _____ Per _____ Date _____

Three big ideas: 1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____

Four parts: 1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____ 4) _____

For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world
For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:
For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences
For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighboring Province, establishing their same absolute rule
For taking away our Charters, and abolishing our most valuable and ancient rights
For suspending our Writs of Habeas Corpus
For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury:
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Declaration of Independence

Name _____ Per _____ Date _____

Define any bolded and unknown words, then circle for the principles in the margins. Add notes where you see the underlying values of liberty

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,
When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.—That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,—That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its basis on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that the good sense of the People of these Colonies has always been peculiarly disposed to suffer, while they are patiently suffering from the miseries and oppressions which these Colonies, and to provide new Guards for their future security.—Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies, and such a now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The History of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.
He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till he should assent thereto; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.
He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the seat of Government, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them by long and tedious Sessions.
He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.
He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean Land.
He has endeavored to prevent the population of these States, for the purpose of obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Aliens.
He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers.
He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their Offices, and the amount and payment of their Salaries.
He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance.
He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.
He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our Constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:
For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States.

UNIT *overview*

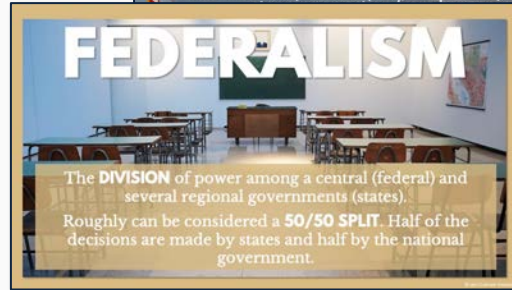
TAKE A PEEK *inside* **each** ACTIVITY



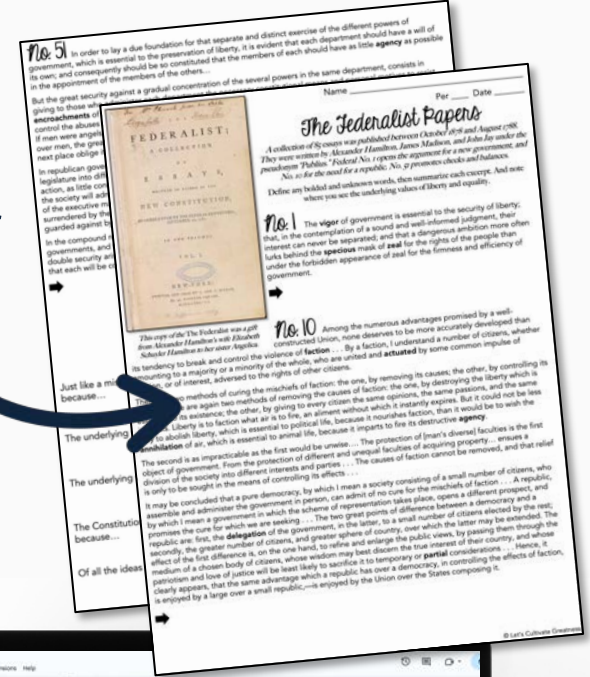
Student-friendly definitions



Real-life examples with images



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



When thinking about American democracy, is it

- 1 An **EVOLUTION** over time (then vs. now)
- 2 A **STRUGGLE** between our two core values (liberty vs. equality)
- 3 A **COLLECTIVE** effort to balance the two

Step-by-step essay support

How can you capture your overall position with these 3 claims in a single **THESIS SENTENCE**?

Instructional SLIDE DECK

FREQUENTLY ASKED *questions*

What do you mean by “inquiry-driven”?

Inquiry-driven means using an intriguing question to guide and focus the unit. They correct misconceptions, dig into paradoxes, and challenge ideas. This means activities are framed to deepen understanding and build on each other for students to develop a nuanced, supported answer by the end of the unit.

Traditional units tend to have self-contained activities that comprehensively cover each topic. These can be necessary if students have a state-created comprehensive EOC exam.

These inquiry units take a “less is more” approach. They cover core civics topics through focused angles to allow more time for critical thinking skills and real-world connections. This curriculum is best for teachers in a more flexible situation who are looking to dive deeper into skill building.

What do you mean by “project-based”?

Project-based means content and skills culminate in an authentic, real-world project that students work towards all unit long. Each unit contains one of these projects.

Will this work for middle school?

This curriculum is designed for a **high school level**. I use these units with my very mixed-ability on-level 12th-grade Civics class, but I don't recommend it for middle school unless you are willing to make edits and adaptations. Middle school teachers have had success with the smaller activity kits.

Is this editable?

Yes! All student materials come in both print PDF and editable Google versions, so you can customize them to meet your student's needs.

Is there a pacing guide? Is there a way to see everything at a glance?

Yes! A pacing guide with estimated class periods each lesson sequence will take is included. Also, within each lesson are estimated times each activity should take. Students also receive a unit-at-a-glance handout with review questions and an “I can...” standards checklist.