



CALIFORNIA ON MY HONOR

Curricula for K-12 Civics Education

Unit Plan: America's Promises Fulfilled ... or Broken?

Grade Level: 12

Unit at a Glance: This unit outline is designed for 12th grade students, and focuses on an in-depth understanding of the Constitution. It culminates in a mock trial in which “jurors” must decide if the United States is guilty of the breaking promises guaranteed in the Constitution.



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Content Standards

12.1 Students explain the fundamental principles and moral values of American democracy as expressed in the U.S. Constitution and other essential documents of American democracy.

1. Analyze the influence of ancient Greek, Roman, English, and leading European political thinkers such as John Locke, Charles-Louis Montesquieu, Niccolò Machiavelli, and William Blackstone on the development of American government.
3. Explain how the U.S. Constitution reflects a balance between the classical republican concern with promotion of the public good and the classical liberal concern with protecting individual rights; and discuss how the basic premises of liberal constitutionalism and democracy are joined in the Declaration of Independence as "self-evident truths."

12.2 Students evaluate and take and defend positions on the scope and limits of rights and obligations as democratic citizens, the relationships among them, and how they are secured.

1. Discuss the meaning and importance of each of the rights guaranteed under the Bill of Rights and how each is secured (e.g., freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, petition, privacy).
3. Discuss the individual's legal obligations to obey the law, serve as a juror, and pay taxes.
4. Understand the obligations of civic-mindedness, including voting, being informed on civic issues, volunteering and performing public service, and serving in the military or alternative service.
5. Describe the reciprocity between rights and obligations; that is, why enjoyment of one's rights entails respect for the rights of others.
6. Explain how one becomes a citizen of the United States, including the process of naturalization (e.g., literacy, language, and other requirements).

12.3 Students evaluate and take and defend positions on what the fundamental values and principles of civil society are (i.e., the autonomous sphere of voluntary personal, social, and economic relations that are not part of government), their interdependence, and the meaning and importance of those values and principles for a free society.

1. Explain how civil society provides opportunities for individuals to associate for social, cultural, religious, economic, and political purposes.
2. Explain how civil society makes it possible for people, individually or in association with others, to bring their influence to bear on government in ways other than voting and elections.



Common Core State Standards for ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading Grades 6-12

Key Ideas and Details

1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

Craft and Structure

4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing Grades 6-12

Production and Distribution of Writing

4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.



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Big Ideas

- The strength of a democracy is equal to the strength of its citizens
- Through actions come change, and change in the political process involves participation.

Essential Questions or Issues:

What does it mean to be a citizen?

Does legal documentation of citizenship change one's rights and responsibilities? Should it?

Why should we know our rights?

Concepts and skills students will be taught in this unit

Learners will understand the rights and responsibilities of people living in the U.S., as stated in the Constitution.

- I. Founding Principles
 - a. John Locke
 - b. Declaration of Independence
- II. Constitutional Rights
 - a. Bill of Rights
 - b. Amendments
- III. What difference does "having papers" make?
 - a. Requirements for legal documentation of citizenship
 - b. Naturalization
 - c. Rights and responsibilities of legally documented U.S. citizens
- IV. Knowing and Protecting our Rights
 - a. Scenarios
 - b. Appropriate Responses
 - c. Guest Speaker: Immigrant Rights Lawyer



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End of Unit Authentic Assessment (GRASPS and Rubrics)

	GRASPS
GOAL	You will participate in a mock trial in which the United States government has been charged with breaking its promises (located in the founding documents) to the people. You will find evidence that either defends or prosecutes the United States government.
Role	The United States has been accused of not fulfilling the promises it made to the people in the nation’s founding documents! As a defense or prosecuting attorney in this case, you will use your research and persuasion skills to convince the jury to rule on your side!
Audience	The jury will be comprised of United States citizens who have been selected as appropriate jurors for this case by the attorneys involved.
Situation	The ACLU has filed various lawsuits on behalf of immigrants, prisoners, members of the LGBT community, and the poor – accusing the United States government of breaking the promises found in the Constitution. Is the United States guilty or innocent?
Performance	In lawyer groups, develop convincing arguments supported by historical evidence and current events. You are responsible for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Opening Statement (2 minutes) 2. Evidence (7-9 minutes) 3. Witness Testimony (2 minutes) 4. Closing Statement (2 minutes)
Standards for Success	Your statements and arguments demonstrate a clear understanding of principles of democracy and constitutional liberties as stated in the Constitution and Declaration of Independence. You are able to apply the words of the founding documents to past and present events, and make convincing arguments about how well these principles have been upheld over time.



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Unit Lessons

Unit Title: Our Rights and Responsibilities

Developed Lesson:

Breaking up with the British