



CIVICS CLASSROOM CURRICULUM

CITIZENS CLEAN ELECTIONS COMMISSION ★ YOUTH VOTER EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

4th - 6th
GRADE LEVELS

LESSON 3
**YOUR FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT AND YOU**



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Civics Classroom Curriculum

Your Federal Government and You

 AZCleanElections.gov



TOPICS 	GRADE LEVEL
Government branches	4 th - 6 th

INTRODUCTION

The Citizens Clean Elections Commission (CCEC), in partnership with expert curriculum writers, presents the Civics Classroom Curriculum lesson series, which covers a variety of relevant topics including democracy, elections, government, and the political party system. This is a part of CCEC's youth voter education and outreach initiative.

These lessons in Civic Education aim to promote an understanding and appreciation of the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy, encourage participation and civil dialogue, and develop civics skills such as critical thinking, researching, and determining fact versus fiction or opinion.

Research shows that lifelong voters cast their first votes early in life. The lesson plans adhere to Arizona's classroom teaching standards and are applicable within more than one subject. The respective subjects are listed in the Integrated State Standards section of this module. The lesson plans were designed with teachers in mind and with utmost admiration for their important work.



LESSON PLAN:

YOUR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND YOU



OVERVIEW

The following activities are designed for students in grades 4 through 6. It will be necessary for you to tailor your actual lesson to your grade level and student readiness. For instance, you may want to reduce the number of questions students are required to answer (for lower grades); simplify the questions (for different ability levels) or expand on them (enrichment); do the activities in groups or individually; have students explore (inquiry method) or lead them through the entire lesson (direct instruction); determine how they will present their findings, e.g., discussions, a poster, a presentation using technology, a worksheet, etc.; or assign part of the lesson as homework.

We would also recommend that your students do this lesson in groups, including the research, the multimedia creation, and the presentation. The students could even “present” digitally by recording it using a screencast program or just narrating PowerPoint slides. If they do this, it opens the possibility that they could post their learning artifacts in a digital space (such as Edmodo, Google Classroom, Canvas, etc.) and give each other feedback (which is another set of technology skills).

I. Materials needed

Access to the internet and a laptop or cellphone. Accompanying worksheet provided as an attachment. Teacher and students may reference the Citizens Clean Elections Commission website (azcleanelections.gov).

II. Lesson Aim/Objective(s)

Students will learn to access and browse a website to find important information. They will learn about the three branches of the federal government and their responsibilities. They will find a current event that supports their learning and relates to their lives and families or community.



III. Motivation

Ask students who they think runs the country. Ask when they have seen the President on TV and what they thought. Ask, What is the job of the President?

Ask what they know about Congress (and that it consists of the Senate and the House of Representatives).

Ask what they know about the Supreme Court.

Discuss the three branches of government - executive, legislative and judicial. Discuss “checks and balances” so students understand something about how each of the three branches of government limits the others.

Depending on time, interest and readiness, share that the President and Congress are elected (and discuss the terms and limits) and that the members of the Supreme Court are nominated by the President, approved by the Senate, and serve a life term (or until they retire).

Say, Now we’re going to take a look at each of the 3 branches of government and what they do.

IV. Do Now/Warm up

Front Load Key Vocabulary. Based on your grade level, have students look up and use in a sentence the definitions of: legislation; veto; bill/law; civil rights; executive order; budget (taxes and spending); the Census; judicial review; impeachment. Assign the worksheet.

V. Instruction

Create four student teams involving the entire class and assign each team to find a current events article about the President, the Senate, the House of Representatives and the Supreme Court to share in class. Ask students to summarize the article; tell how it relates to one or more of the powers of the office that were discussed; and give their opinion on the issue, including perhaps how it affects their family or community.

Depending on the time and grade level, ask students to use a technology tool to make their presentations to the class, e.g., PowerPoint, Prezi, etc.



Discussion topic: Say, The President is elected by the people of the United States (Decide if you want to tackle the Electoral College) for a four-year term. He or she may run again for a second four-year term but then is term limited. Senators are elected in the States to a six-year term with no term limits. Representatives are elected in the States to a two-year term with no term limits. Supreme Court Justices are appointed/nominated by the President and approved by the Senate and serve a life term (or until retirement). Discuss. Why do you think you think Supreme Court Justices are appointed (not elected) for life (no term limit)? Is this a good idea? Why do you think the President has a limit of two terms? Do you think Senators and Representatives should have term limits?

VI. Assessment

With students back in groups, have them discuss key takeaways...what did they learn? What was the most interesting thing they learned? Name a way that something you learned affects you or your family. Another possibility is to utilize a tool like Linoit.com to have a “conversation” about these same questions (students put “sticky notes” on the screen with their opinions) about the issues in class.

VII. Enrichment

Assign students to go to the Citizens Clean Elections Commission website (azcleanelections.gov). See “How Government Works”>State Offices>Governor (the Basics), State Senators & Representatives (the Basics). Write down the roles and responsibilities of each. Share with students that members of the Arizona Supreme Court are appointed and explain the role of the court. Compare the separation of powers at the federal level (Executive, Legislative, and Judicial) with the separation of powers at the state level.

WORKSHEET

- A. Go to the Citizens Clean Elections Commission website:
AZCleanElections.gov
- B. Click on the How Government Works tab
- C. Look at the State Offices. Students will answer the following questions and prepare a presentation to the class on their findings
- D. Answer the following questions for your presentation:
 - 1. What are the roles and responsibilities of your elected official? What powers do they have?
 - 2. What is the length of their term?
 - 3. Be sure to define any words that your audience might not understand, e.g., reprieves
- E. Prepare and present a brief summary of your findings for your classmates



INTEGRATED STATE STANDARDS

Choose from the following standards for your lesson

GRADE 4

4.SP3.2 Compare information provided by different sources about events and developments in the Americas.

4.C1.1 Analyze civic virtues and democratic principles or lack thereof within a variety of government structures, societies and/or communities within the Americas.

4.SP3.4 Use information about a source including the author, date, place of origin, intended audience and purpose to evaluate the extent to which the source is useful for studying a topic.

4.SP3.6 Present summaries of arguments and explanations using print, oral and digital technologies.

4.RI.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

4.RI.2 Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

4.RI.3 Explain events, procedures, ideas or concepts in a historical, scientific or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

4.RI.7 Interpret information presented visually, orally or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations or interactive elements on web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

4.RI.10 By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science and technical texts, in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 4.

4.W.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

- a. Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion and create an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer's purpose.
- b. Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details.

4.W.6 With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to complete a writing task.



4.W.8 Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes, categorize information and provide a list of sources.

GRADE 5

5.SP3.1 Develop compelling and supporting questions about the United States that are open to different interpretations.

5.SP3.2 Use distinctions among fact and opinion to determine the credibility of multiple sources.

5.SP3.4 Infer the intended audience and purpose of a source from information within the source itself.

5.E4.1 Describe how government decisions on taxation, spending, protections and regulation affected the national economy during the time-period being studied

5.RI.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

5.RI.2 Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.

5.RI.4 Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area.

5.RI.10 By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend informational text, including history/social studies, science and technological texts, in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 5.

5.RF.4 Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.

a. Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding.

5.W.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

a. Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer's purpose.

5.W.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

a. Introduce a topic clearly, provide a general observation and focus, and group related information logically; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

5.W.6 With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills in order to complete a writing task.

5.W.8 Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work and provide a list of sources.

5.SL.2 Summarize a written text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively and orally.

5.SL.4 Report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

5.SL.5 Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, sound) and visual displays in presentations when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes.

GRADE 6

6.SP3.5 Use questions generated about multiple sources to identify further areas of inquiry and additional sources.

6.SP3.7 Construct and present explanations using reasoning, correct sequence, examples and details with relevant information and data.

6.C2.1 Analyze the beliefs, experiences, perspectives and values that underlie points of view regarding civic issues in the time period and regions studied.

6.C4.1 Explain challenges and opportunities people and groups face when solving local, regional and/or global problems.

6.C4.2 Describe and apply civic virtues including deliberative processes that contribute to the common good and democratic principles in school, community and government. Key concepts include but are not limited to civility, respect for the rights of others, individual responsibility, respect for law, open mindedness, critical examination of issues, negotiation and compromise, civic mindedness, compassion, patriotism, conciliation and consensus building.

6.RI.2 Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

6.RI.7 Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.

6.RI.10 By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend informational texts and nonfiction in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 6.

6.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.

6.W.5 With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting or trying a new approach.

6.W.6 Use technology, including the internet, to type and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to complete a writing task in a single sitting.

6.W.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes and audiences.

TECHNOLOGY

Grade 4

PO 1. Analyze information using digital creativity tools to create original works and express ideas.

PO 1. Communicate digitally with others by selecting and using a variety of appropriate communication tools.

PO 1. Contribute to a cooperative learning project and demonstrate effective group behaviors while using digital collaborative resources.

PO 3. Differentiate between fact and opinion, bias and inaccurate information.

Grade 5

PO 1. Analyze information using digital creativity tools to create original works and express ideas.

PO 1. Communicate digitally with others by selecting and using a variety of appropriate communication tools.

PO 1. Contribute to a cooperative learning project and demonstrate effective group behaviors while using digital collaborative resources.

PO 3. Evaluate between fact and opinion, bias, inaccurate and misleading information by consulting more than one source.



Grade 6

PO 1. Analyze information using digital creativity tools to create original works and express ideas.

PO 1. Communicate digitally with others by selecting and using a variety of appropriate communication tools.

PO 1. Communicate and collaborate for the purpose of producing original works or solving problems.

PO 3. Evaluate information and media through determining facts, opinion, bias and inaccuracies by consulting multiple sources.