

## Unit 3: Governing a New Nation

### Key Connections:

- British colonial policies motivated the founders of the United States to fight for a representative government.
- The Constitution of the United States has been amended over time to better reflect the ideals contained in the Declaration of Independence

### Topic One: Rebellion to Revolution

**Connections to the unit content:** Students learn that revolution leads to a new government system. In the American colonies, revolution meant the overthrow of a monarchy and tyrannical king in favor of a democracy and a brand new country. In many ways, the conflict of the American Revolutionary War occurred because of the unwillingness to compromise by the British. A lack of representation in Parliament and continued economic exploitation of the colonies made many colonists feel that their only course of action was to fight. Not only did conflict change Great Britain's imperial territories, it created an entirely new country: the United States of America.

### Key Questions:

- What were the main colonial grievances that led to rebellion?
- How is the Declaration of Independence significant in United States history?
- What tactics did the colonists use leading up to the Revolution?
  - What were the effects of the American Revolution?

### Description:

Students investigate causes and effects of the American Revolution. Students begin by examining the relationship between Britain and the American colonies, including the main colonial grievances. Students analyze the Declaration of Independence and explain its significance. Finally, students identify the overall significance of the American Revolution and its impact on borders today.

### Activities:

- Students answer the following question: Why did the American revolution occur? They will consider colonial grievances, the Declaration of Independence, and the colonists' tactics leading up to the Revolution.

### Topic Two: Developing a Government

**Connections to the unit content:** Students learn about the role of compromise in setting up a democracy. A country is more than just territorial, geographic boundaries. A government is necessary for a country to function and provide for its people. The newly formed United States needed a government to meet the needs of a diverse range of states and individuals spanning a large geographic region. The Constitution, the document that laid the framework for the US federal government, was created through a series of compromises made by the Founding Fathers. Additionally, conflict with a tyrannical king weighed heavily on the minds of the Founding Fathers. As a result, the Constitution creates a system of checks & balances and federalism in order to limit the power of a single ruler. The Founders also added a Bill of Rights to protect the individual rights of citizens, another nod to their desire for limited government power.

### Key Questions:

- What role did the Founding Fathers play in the creation of the documents that shaped the United States?
- How have the United States democratic documents shaped the government's structure and functions?

### Description:

Students learn about the creation of the Constitution and explore its text in order to learn about the structure of the United States government.

### Activities:

- Students answer the following question: How does the US Constitution reflect the ideas of the Founding Fathers and the American Revolution?

### **Topic Three: Citizenship**

**Connections to the unit content:** Students learn that the role of citizens is critical to the functioning of democracy. Citizens have rights, responsibilities, and duties all of which contribute to a functioning government. Students will learn that “all men are created equal” was only true for a select few in early American history. Conflict within the United States and the active protest of the country’s people led to the expansion of rights to women and people of color. Just as the patriots demanded their rights from Britain, citizens are obligated to do the same, while protecting the rights of others, within a functioning democracy.

#### **Key Questions:**

- Who did not receive the rights of full citizenship in early American history?
  - What are the rights, responsibilities, and duties of citizens?
    - What are the qualities of a good citizen?
  - How can good citizenship solve problems?

#### **Description:**

Students learn about the rights and responsibilities of citizens in the United States and how a person becomes a citizen of the United States. Students learn that women and African Americans were not given the rights of full citizenship at the founding of the United States, overtime they fought for the rights that were promised to them by the Constitution.

#### **Activities:**

- Students answer the following question: What is the role of the citizen in a democracy?
- Students answer the following question: How did the Civil Rights Movement impact the lives of African Americans?
  - Assessment on women’s suffrage

#### **Priority Content and Concepts:**

- Explain the difference between the opinions of the Loyalists and Patriots during the time of the American Revolution.
- Identify the founding fathers and explain how they were suited to draft the constitution.
- Discuss events leading up to the American Revolution, and explain why those events would cause colonists to declare independence (the Sugar Act, the Stamp Act, the Townshend Revenue Act, the Tea Act, the Intolerable Acts).
- Explain key events leading up to the American Revolution, why those events occurred, and what they accomplished (the Boston Massacre, the Boston Tea party, Battles of Lexington and Concord).
- Explain the effects of the American Revolution (a new nation is born and the new America has to figure out how to govern itself and keep its economy running separate from Britain, many loyalists leave the U.S. to live elsewhere).
- Discuss how voting rights expanded from the founding of the United States through the Civil Rights Era (white male landowners were the only voters when the U.S. was founded, all white males, African American men, all women, and Native Americans gained the right to vote later through social movements).

- Explain the purpose and importance of major protests of the civil rights movement (historic lunch-counter sit-ins, Montgomery bus boycott, and the march on Washington for jobs and freedom).
- Explain the purpose and impact of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.
- Explain how the civil rights movement impacted and changed the culture of the U.S.
- Explain ways that women were successful in achieving voting rights between 1848 and the 1920s (Seneca Falls convention, the passage of the 19th amendment).
- Explain what an amendment to the constitution is.
- Explain what the Bill of Rights is, why it was created, and what rights are protected within it.
- Determine the purpose of the 14th amendment to the Constitution, and what rights and privileges that amendment protects.
- Explain what it means for a citizen to be denied the right to vote, and discuss discriminatory practices to try and block voting at points in American history (literacy tests, poll taxes).
- Explain how the ruling in the case Plessy v. Ferguson related to the 14th amendment, and how Brown v. Board of Education interpreted the result differently.
- Explain the major grievances the colonists had with King George III in the Declaration of Independence.
- Explain the type of government the colonists wanted, as expressed in the Declaration of Independence.
- Explain what the Preamble to the Constitution requires of the U.S. government to preserve America as a republic.
- Identify the key people, groups, and jobs for each branch of government.
- Identify the checks and balances for the three branches of government.
- Explain why the founding fathers created a separation of powers, and how the separation of powers reflects the ideals of the Declaration of Independence and Preamble to the Constitution
- Define and identify what rights and responsibilities are
  - Rights: freedoms listed in the bill of rights, plus voting; run for elected office; the freedom to pursue “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”.
  - Responsibilities: support and defend the constitution; stay informed on issues affecting your community; participate in the democratic process, respect and obey federal, state, and local laws; respect the rights, beliefs, and opinions of others; participate in your local community; pay taxes honestly and on time to federal, state, and local authorities; serve on a jury when called upon, defend the country if the need should arise
- Explain why it’s important for citizens to have both rights and responsibilities.
- Explain why voting is such an important right for citizens and why many groups have fought for and gained the right to vote.
- Explain how citizens can strengthen their community by embracing their rights and responsibilities (being an informed voter, advocating for everyone’s rights).
- Identify qualities of citizens that help to solve current issues (self-starter, leader, persistent).
- Explain how civic engagement can solve issues in a student’s community and provide examples.
- Explain why the British government imposed the tax acts on the colonies.
- Identify services the British government provided colonists through taxes (protection).