



Lesson Plan: Separation of Powers and the Power Grab Game

Assessment:

Students will be evaluated through informal checks for understanding, teacher observation, self-reflections, and performing an authentic task (GRASPS) evaluated by a rubric. (See rubric and GRASPS)

	GRASPS: The purpose of this is to make the assessment (and therefore the lesson very realistic
GOAL	Your goal is to successfully check the powers of the other two branches of government.
Role	You will be assigned to one of the 3 branches of government defined by the United States Constitution. The roles will be either a congress person, a member of the President's Cabinet or a federal court judge.
Audience	Your audience will be the other two branches of government.
Situation	The year is 2015 and the United States Government has run rampant. The 3 branches of government have been trying to create and pass laws that go beyond their powers defined in the United States Constitution. A meeting has been called with representatives from each branch attending in order to check and balance the power once and for all. Situations that each branch has tried to pass will be brought to the table giving the other two branches the opportunity to check and stop that action from happening.
Performance	Your performance will take place in a secluded and secret meeting location, allowing you the opportunity to speak freely and voice your power over the other two branches.
Standards for Success	Armed with your copy of the constitution and your own knowledge of the power of your branch, you will race against the other branches to locate where a breach in the constitution has occurred by another branch. If you successfully check the other branch, points will be awarded to you. The group with the most points will be declared the winner. Once the game is over each group will be given five minutes to prepare a three-minute argument explaining why they believe their branch in reality is the most powerful branch of our government, as well as addressing the essential questions of the lesson.



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Curricula for K-12 Civics Education

Quality Criteria

Level of Understanding demonstrated	Advanced	Proficient	Basic	Below Basic
Argument for the most powerful branch	The groups' argument explaining why their branch of government was the most powerful showed clear understanding of the powers that their branch possesses and the powers of the other branches.	The groups' argument explaining why their branch of government was the most powerful showed clear understanding of the powers that their branch possesses, but was not as clear about the other branches powers.	The groups' argument explaining why their branch of government was the most powerful lacked a solid idea of the powers that they possessed. The group did not recognize any of the other branches powers.	There was no understanding of the concept of the separation of powers outlined by the constitution.
Essential questions	The group mastered the concepts of both essential questions. 1. Why did the founders of the Constitution want change to be hard in our democracy? 2. Does social capital strengthen a republic?	The group mastered one of the essentials but only showed proficiency on the other... 1. Why did the founders of the Constitution want change to be hard in our democracy? 2. Does social capital strengthen a republic?	The group had some knowledge of the essential questions but lacked the high level thinking. 1. Why did the founders of the Constitution want change to be hard in our democracy? 2. Does social capital strengthen a republic?	The group had only a basic understanding of the essentials, showing no ability to address any higher order thinking questions. 1. Why did the founders of the Constitution want change to be hard in our democracy? 2. Does social capital strengthen a republic?
Time Limit	2:55 -3:05	2:45-3:15	2:35-3:25	Below 2:35 Over 3:25