Unit Plan: Re-writing the Constitution for the 21st Century –
A Year Long Examination of the United States Constitution,
Its Foundation and Interpretation Over Time

Grade Level: 11th Grade

Unit Plan at a Glance:

This outlines a plan for a cohesive unit designed for 11th grade students. It includes suggested lessons, one fully developed lesson, Freedom of Religion, and a final overall unit assessment. The final assessment involves the appointment of students as representatives to the 21st Century Constitutional Convention. “Delegates” are called to re-write the Constitution and make amendments to meet the needs of the 21st century.
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Content Standards

11.1 Students analyze the significant events in the founding of the nation and its attempts to realize the philosophy of government described in the Declaration of Independence.
   1. Describe the Enlightenment and the rise of democratic ideas as the context in which the nation was founded.
   2. Analyze the ideological origins of the American Revolution, the Founding Fathers’ philosophy of divinely bestowed unalienable natural rights, the debates on the drafting and ratification of the Constitution, and the addition of the Bill of Rights.
   3. Understand the history of the Constitution after 1787 with emphasis on federal versus state authority and growing democratization.

11.3 Students analyze the role religion played in the founding of America, its lasting moral, social, and political impacts, and issues regarding religious liberty.
   5. Describe the principles of religious liberty found in the Establishment and Free Exercise clauses of the First Amendment, including the debate on the issue of separation of church and state.

11.5 Students analyze the major political, social, economic, technological, and cultural developments of the 1920s.
   3. Examine the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution and the Volstead Act (Prohibition).
   4. Analyze the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment and the changing role of women in society

11.6 Students analyze the different explanations for the Great Depression and how the New Deal fundamentally changed the role of the federal government.
   4. Analyze the effects of and the controversies arising from New Deal economic policies and the expanded role of the federal government in society and the economy since the 1930s (e.g., Works Progress Administration, Social Security, National Labor Relations Board, farm programs, regional development policies, and energy development projects such as the Tennessee Valley Authority, California Central Valley Project, and Bonneville Dam).
### Content Standards: History Social Science

#### 11.7 Students analyze America’s participation in World War II.

5. Discuss the constitutional issues and impact of events on the U.S. home front, including the internment of Japanese Americans (e.g., *Fred Korematsu v. United States of America*) and the restrictions on German and Italian resident aliens; the response of the administration to Hitler’s atrocities against Jews and other groups; the roles of women in military production; and the roles and growing political demands of African Americans.

#### 11.8 Students analyze the economic boom and social transformation of post–World War II America.

4. Analyze new federal government spending on defense, welfare, interest on the national debt, and federal and state spending on education, including the California Master Plan.

5. Describe the increased powers of the presidency in response to the Great Depression, World War II, and the Cold War.

#### 11.9 Students analyze U.S. foreign policy since World War II.

4. List the effects of foreign policy on domestic policies and vice versa (e.g., protests during the war in Vietnam, the “nuclear freeze” movement).

#### 11.10 Students analyze the development of federal civil rights and voting rights.


6. Analyze the passage and effects of civil rights and voting rights legislation (e.g., 1964 Civil Rights Act, Voting Rights Act of 1965) and the Twenty-Fourth Amendment, with an emphasis on equality of access to education and to the political process.

7. Analyze the women’s rights movement from the era of Elizabeth Stanton and Susan Anthony and the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the movement launched in the 1960s, including differing perspectives on the roles of women.

#### 11.11 Students analyze the major social problems and domestic policy issues in contemporary American society.

1. Discuss the reasons for the nation’s changing immigration policy, with emphasis on how the Immigration Act of 1965 and successor acts have transformed American society.
Common Core State Standards for ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects K-5

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening K-5

Comprehension and Collaboration

1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

3. Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects Grades 11-12 Students

Key Ideas and Details

1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts, attending to important distinctions the author makes and to any gaps or inconsistencies in the account.

2. Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; summarize complex concepts, processes, or information presented in a text by paraphrasing them in simpler but still accurate terms.

3. Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Evaluate the hypotheses, data, analysis, and conclusions in a science or technical text, verifying the data when possible and corroborating or challenging conclusions with other sources of information.

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### Big Ideas:
- The strength of a democracy is equal to the strength of its citizens
- E Pluribus Unum: out of many, one
- Through actions come change, and change in the political process involves participation. (*The political process involves participation; understanding requires student engagement. Integration and application of new learning in multiple learning modalities helps students deepen understanding.*)

### Essential Questions or Issues:
- How has history influenced the interpretation of the United States Constitution?
- How do the amendments to the Constitution reflect the changes in American society?
- Should the constitution be strictly or loosely interpreted? Why? How?

### Concepts and Skills Students Will Be Taught in This Unit:

**Lesson One (Foundations of US History)**
- State of Nature/John Locke activity – Understanding why government is necessary

**Lesson Two (Foundations of US History)**
- Constitutional Pursuit Game – Students learn about the constitution through a game

**Lesson Three (Foundations of US History)**
- Freedom of Religion – Exercise/Establishment Clause and recent cases (Sikh *kirpans* in school, SF circumcision ban, “Under God” in pledge etc.)

**Lesson Four (Progressives)**
- Immigration – historical context/constitutional foundation for current debate re 14th amendment (anchor babies)

**Lesson Five (Foreign Policy)**
- How is the constitution interpreted or re-interpreted in times of war – Espionage and Sedition Acts
**Concepts and Skills Students Will Be Taught in This Unit: (continued)**

Lesson Six (The 1920’s)
- Nineteenth Amendment

Lesson Seven (Great Depression)
- Socratic Seminar on role of government – Was the New Deal unconstitutional?

Lesson Eight (World War II)
- Japanese Internment *Fred Korematsu v. United States of America*

Lesson Nine (Cold War)
- Symbolic Speech *Tinker v. Des Moines*

Lesson Ten (Civil Rights)
- Voting Rights Act
- Equal Rights Amendment

Lesson Eleven (Postwar Domestic)
- Powers of the President – Watergate
- Balancing Civil Liberties with security in post 9/11 – Patriot Act

Lesson Twelve – Culminating Experience – End of Unit Assessment:
- Constitutional Convention
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End of Unit GRASPS and Rubrics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRASPS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal</strong></td>
<td>Develop a proposal to re-write, and amend as necessary, the Constitution of the United States for a modern audience.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Role</strong></td>
<td>You are a delegate to the 21\textsuperscript{st} Constitutional Convention assigned to one of the committees below:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Executive Branch</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Legislative Branch</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Judicial Branch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bill of Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audience</strong></td>
<td>Delegates of the 21\textsuperscript{st} Century Constitutional Convention and the American people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Situation</strong></td>
<td>You have been appointed to represent your state at the 21\textsuperscript{st} Century Constitutional Convention. Scholars, elected officials, activists, and educators are concerned with how few Americans understand how their government works and the rights guaranteed and protected in the Constitution. They believe it is time to re-visit the Constitution and re-write it for the 21\textsuperscript{st} century. Your task at the convention is to re-write the Constitution in modern and simple language. Furthermore, the Convention has asked that delegates also amend the existing Constitution to meet the needs of the 21\textsuperscript{st} Century. All delegates have been sworn to uphold and defend the ideals of liberty, democracy, equality, rights, and opportunity as expressed in the Declaration of Independence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Performance</strong></td>
<td>You will submit a written proposal to your Committee which includes a draft Article of the Constitution for the 21\textsuperscript{st} Century relating to your committee’s assignment. You written proposal must also include an historical justification for your proposal and a rationale based on the American ideals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Your committee will debate the merits of each proposal and complete a final draft to be submitted to Full Assembly Meeting of the 21\textsuperscript{st} Century Constitutional Convention for their approval.</td>
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Writing Rubric:

**Standard 11.1** Students analyze the significant events in the founding of the nation and its attempts to realize the philosophy of government described in the Declaration of Independence. 11.11 Students analyze the major social problems and domestic policy issues in contemporary American society.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Below Basic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Re-written and revised Article of Constitution</td>
<td>Proposal demonstrates a thorough understanding of the Article through its modern translation. Proposal has many creative revisions to Article to address the historical and current debates surrounding the Article’s interpretation.</td>
<td>Proposal demonstrates an understanding of the Article through its modern translation. Proposal also demonstrates the historical and modern debates surrounding the Article’s interpretation with the revisions made.</td>
<td>Proposal demonstrates a confused or incomplete understanding of the Article through its modern translation. Proposal has few revisions which do not address historical and modern debates.</td>
<td>Proposal does not demonstrate an understanding of the Article. It is confused and/or lacking significant aspects of the Article. Proposal lacks any revisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Context</td>
<td>Includes relevant, specific and sufficient historical background on the assigned section of Constitution. Thoroughly explains how it has been interpreted and applied throughout history.</td>
<td>Includes relevant and sufficient historical background on the assigned section of Constitution. Demonstrates an understanding of how it has been interpreted and applied throughout history.</td>
<td>Includes some historical background but it is not sufficient to understand how assigned section of Constitution has been interpreted and applied throughout history.</td>
<td>The proposal does not provide relevant historical background.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>Includes a rationale for section and demonstrates how proposal meets each of the American founding ideals of democracy, rights, liberty, opportunity, and equality.</td>
<td>Includes a rationale for section based on American founding ideals of democracy, rights, liberty, opportunity, and equality.</td>
<td>Includes a rationale but it does not address the founding ideals.</td>
<td>The proposal does not include a rationale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics and Language Use</td>
<td>Few errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and usage. Use of rich vocabulary and varied sentence structure.</td>
<td>Few errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and usage. Occasional use of rich vocabulary and sentence variety.</td>
<td>Errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and usage; repetitious vocabulary; simple sentence structure.</td>
<td>Multiple errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and usage; weak vocabulary; simple sentence structure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Group Work Rubric:

**Standard 11.1** Students analyze the significant events in the founding of the nation and its attempts to realize the philosophy of government described in the Declaration of Independence. 11.11 Students analyze the major social problems and domestic policy issues in contemporary American society.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus on the task and participation</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Below Basic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consistently stayed focused on the task; contributed a lot of effort and encouraged the effort of group members</td>
<td>Focused on the task most of the time; contributed to group work</td>
<td>Focused on task some of the time; had to be reminded to stay on task by teacher or group members</td>
<td>Rarely focused on task and let others in group do the work</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listening, Questioning and Discussing</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Basic</th>
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<tr>
<td>Respectfully listens, interacts, discusses and poses questions to all members of the team during discussions and helps direct the group in reaching consensus.</td>
<td>Respectfully listens, interacts, discusses and poses questions to others during discussions.</td>
<td>Has some difficulty respectfully listening and discussing, and tends to dominate discussions.</td>
<td>Has great difficulty listening, argues with teammates, and is unwilling to consider other opinions. Impedes group from reaching consensus.</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Demonstrates effective interpersonal skills</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Below Basic</th>
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<tr>
<td>Actively and consistently helps promote effective group interaction and expresses ideas and opinions in ways that are sensitive to the feelings or knowledge base of others</td>
<td>Consistently participates in group interaction without prompting and expresses ideas and opinions in ways that are sensitive to the feelings and knowledge base of others</td>
<td>Sporadically participates and expresses ideas and opinions in ways that are sensitive to the feelings and knowledge base of others</td>
<td>Rarely, if ever, participates in group interaction without prompting and expresses ideas and opinions in ways that are sensitive to the feelings and knowledge base of others</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Final Group Product</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Below Basic</th>
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<td>Proposal reflects the best efforts of the group to identify the strengths of each individual proposals; proposal includes new creative ideas developed during the group discussions</td>
<td>Proposal reflects the efforts of the group to identify the strengths of each individual proposals to create one group proposal to submit to entire Convention</td>
<td>Proposal only includes ideas from a few of the individual proposals and little change was made based on the groups discussions.</td>
<td>Proposal only reflects the ideas from one proposal and/or no changes made from individual proposal(s) based on group discussion</td>
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Developed Lesson Plan

- Freedom of Religion