



Southmoreland School District American Issues (Civics) Curriculum Overview

AMERICAN ISSUES (Civics) Overview:

This course is a study of American Issues focuses on the origins, development, structure, functions and implementation of American Government. Topics include the Constitutional Framework; Federalism; the three branches of American Government, including the Bureaucracy; Civil Rights and Liberties: Political Participation and Behavior: Comparative Political and Economic Systems; and formation of public policy. Upon completion, students should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the basic concepts and participatory processes of the American Political System.

Module Titles:

Module 1: Foundations of American Government

Module 2: The Legislative Branch

Module 3: The Executive Branch

Module 4: The Judicial Branch

Module 5: Liberty and Justice for All (Constitutional Freedoms, Citizenship, Law In America)

Module 6: Participating in Government

Module 7: Public Policy and Services

Module 8: Political and Economic Systems

Module Overviews:

Module 1:

Students develop an understanding of the history and purpose of government through the analysis of ideas, historical documents and events that shaped the U.S. Constitution. Students analyze the structural features of the U.S. Constitution and Federalism.

Module 2:

The students explain the organizational structure and leadership of Congress, the powers of Congress, and the relationship between Congress and the Executive Branch. Students analyze and explain the lawmaking process.



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Module 3:

An overview of the organization and functions of the Executive Branch, the Presidential Powers are examined. Students analyze and evaluate the functions of the Federal Bureaucracy.

Module 4:

Students develop an understanding of the jurisdiction of federal courts and method of selecting Judges. Students explain the workings of the Supreme Court and how it shapes public policy.

Module 5:

The basic Constitutional Civil Liberties and the Constitutional Protections provided for them are reviewed. An understanding of the nature, rights and responsibilities of United States citizenship is developed, as well as the foundations of The American legal system and Civil and Criminal Law.

Module 6:

The functions of political parties are identified, as well as understanding the importance of an informed electorate. Students evaluate the impact of interest groups, as well as the impact of Mass Media.

Module 7:

Students develop an understanding of the Federal government's policies on taxing, budgeting and spending, as well as the process of social, domestic, and foreign policy making.

Module 8:

The characteristics of different political systems are analyzed, as well as an evaluation of the relationship between economic decision making and political freedom. A comprehensive overview of Capitalism, Socialism and Communism as well as an analysis of these systems.