Course Syllabus

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Civics

**Course Description**: The study of civics is valuable to every student. Today, as in the Greek city-states of Plato and Aristotle, every citizen has the responsibility to learn about and participate in their government. This course provides a basic understanding of the nature of the American political system by examining citizenship and civic virtue, the foundations of our government, the constitution and its principles, the institutions and procedures of the three branches of government, and an overview of policy in the domestic and foreign spheres.

**Competencies**:

1. **Content Knowledge**: Students will demonstrate an understanding of the essential terms, facts and concepts related to the study of world religions.
2. **Acquiring Information:** Students will be able to acquire information from a variety of social studies resources.
3. **Connecting Information:** Students will be able to organize information using categories, chronologies and cause and effect relationships.
4. **Analyzing Information:** Students will be able to analyze, evaluate and utilize a variety of social studies sources.
5. **Communicating Information:** Students will be able to effectively communicate information.

**Standards**: The NH State frameworks for Civics and Government can be found at the following location:

<http://www.education.nh.gov/instruction/curriculum/social_studies/documents/frameworks.pdf> (pg 77-80)

**Grading Policy:** A variety of different assessment tools will be used to measure student performance that will include participation. Each assessment tool is designed to measure one of the course competencies, and my gradebook is structured accordingly. A mixture of formative and summative assessments will be used throughout the year to measure proficiency inside of each competency. Each assessment is given a weight expressed in points, with summative assessments weighed heavier than formative ones.

**Assignments:** No homework will be assigned, but students must complete all in-class projects and assignments by the due date for full credit.

**Missed-Work Policy:** Students will be expected to make up missed work during Advisory or by making another plan with Mrs. Luhtjarv.

**Classroom Expectations:** Students are strongly encouraged to be in their seat, with their binder, a textbook and a writing utensil when the bell rings. All students are expected to be respectful and responsible towards others and their property.Students should allow others to speak or work without interruption. Students are expected to treat classroom materials respectfully, to return all materials at the end of activities and to clean up their area before leaving.

**Syllabus Revision:** This syllabus is subject to change; students will be informed of changes in class.

**Timeline/Scope and Sequence/ Student Targets/ Major Summative Assessments**:

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| Quarter One | Quarter Two |
| **Unit Topic:** Foundations of American Government  **Essential Question:** How has the government evolved into what it is today?  **Targets:**   1. I can explain the purpose of government and give examples of its necessity. 2. I can justify the reasoning behind the American Revolution and the ratification of the US Constitution. 3. I can argue and understand the points of view of both Federalists and Anti-Federalists concerning the ratification of the US Constitution.   **Summative Assessments:**   1. Students will participate in a debate between Federalists and Anti-Federalists during a mock Continental Congress. 2. This final summative assessment will be in the form of a test complete with multiple choice, short answer, and an essay questions. | **Unit Topic:** Civil Rights and Civil Liberties  **Essential Question:** How does the Bill of Rights assist in the protection of American citizens?  **Targets:**   1. I can identify the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Bill of Rights. 2. I can explain in detail the rights of the first amendments and assess/analyze Supreme Court decisions regarding this amendment. 3. I can explain the importance and purpose of due process. 4. I can explain the importance of the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments.   **Summative Assessments:**   1. Students will research Supreme Court cases concerning freedom of speech. 2. This final summative assessment will be in the form of a test complete with multiple choice, short answer, and an essay questions. |
| **Unit Topic:** The Branches of American Government  **Essential Question:** How does the system of checks and balances affect our government?  **Targets:**   1. I can explain the purpose and function of the legislative branch of American government. 2. I can explain the purpose and function of the executive branch of American government. 3. I can explain the purpose and function of the judicial branch of American government. 4. I can explain the relationship between the three branches of government and assess the effectiveness of the system of checks and balances.   **Summative Assessments:**   1. Students will complete an essay explaining the purpose and function of each branch of government. 2. This final summative assessment will be in the form of a test complete with multiple choice, short answer, and an essay questions. | **Unit Topic:** State and Local Government  **Essential Question:** What are the purposes of State and Local Governments?  **Targets:**   1. I can compare and contrast state/local government systems to the federal government. 2. I can identify and explain each level of state and local government. 3. I can identify and explain the responsibilities of the state and local governments.   **Summative Assessments:**   1. Students will research a state senator or congressmen and a bill that they proposed. They will then write a letter to that senator/congressmen. 2. This final summative assessment will be in the form of a test complete with multiple choice, short answer, and an essay questions. |