

# Unit 4

## Politics and the Role of the Citizen

- [Learning Plan \(Tasks\)](#)
- [Course Resources](#)
- [Scope & Sequence](#)

### Government

#### Unit Length and Description:

7 weeks

This unit focuses on the roles citizens play within government. Students will explore a variety of ways that citizens influence government by examining the roles of: voting, political parties, campaign finance, lobbyists, and special interests groups.

#### Standards:

C.5.1	Distinguish between personal, political, and economic rights of citizenship
C.5.2	Differentiate between civic duties and responsibilities, including various forms of civic participation
C.5.3	Describe how civil rights have evolved over time to include diverse groups of citizens
C.5.4	Evaluate the role of the media and public opinion in American politics, including the use and effects of propaganda techniques
C.5.5	Analyze the effects of campaigns, campaign finance, elections, the Electoral College, and the United States census in the American political system
C.5.6	Describe key platform positions of the major political parties and evaluate the impact of third parties in election outcomes
C.5.7	Explain historical and contemporary roles of special interest groups, lobbyists, and associations in United States politics

#### Enduring Understandings:

##### Content:

- Voting is both a right and responsibility.
- Political parties act as mediators between citizens and the government.
- Civil Rights have evolved over time.
- Political parties function to represent the views of the constituents within government.
- The Electoral College has both strengths and flaws.
- Propaganda exists at all levels of government and is employed to get votes.

#### Essential Questions:

##### Claim(s):

To what extent are individual citizens able to influence public policy? (Task 8)

##### Sub-Claim(s):

- How important is voting in a democracy? (Task 1)
- How have civil rights evolved over time to influence public policy? (Task 2)
- How do major political parties influence government? (Task 3)
- To what extent does the Electoral College play a role within the American Political System and public policy? (Task 4)

- Campaigns are financed through a variety of means: special interest groups, citizens, PAC's, etc.
- How effectively do campaign advertisements employ propaganda techniques? (Task 5)
- What are the arguments in favor and against campaign finance reform? (Task 6)
- What role do lobbyists and special interests groups play in the political process? (Task 7)

### Academic Vocabulary:

Foreign policy, isolationism, protectionism, globalization, diplomacy, embargo, sanctions, interventionism

### Learning Plan:

- [Task 1](#): Voting (Approximately 3-5 Class Periods)
- [Task 2](#): Extending Civil Rights to All Citizens (Approximately 2-4 Class Periods)
- [Task 3](#): Political Parties (Approximately 3-5 Class Periods)
- [Task 4](#): The Electoral College (Approximately 2-4 Class Periods)
- [Task 5](#): Campaign Ads (Approximately 3-5 Class Periods)
- [Task 6](#): Campaign Finance (Approximately 3-5 Class Periods)
- [Task 7](#): Lobbyist and Special Interest Groups (Approximately 1 Class Period)
- [Task 8](#): Culminating Task: Individual Citizens and Public Policy

**(OPTIONAL) [Government Unit 4 Consumable Handout](#)- This is provided with all the handouts for unit 1 attached together if the teacher wants to create a consumable for students.**

## Task 1

### Voting (Approximately 3-5 Class Periods)

#### Standards:

C.5.2	Differentiate between civic duties and responsibilities, including various forms of civic participation
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**Connection to the Claim:** Students examine voting as a right and responsibility of citizenship.

**Claim:** To what extent are individual citizens able to influence public policy?

**Sub-claim Question:** How important is voting in a democracy?

**Academic Vocabulary:** Voting, Right, Responsibility, Democracy, Citizenship

#### Materials:

- [Voting Handout with Graphic Organizers](#)
- [Citizenship and the US Constitution-Handout 1 Only](#)
- [What is Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act?](#)

- [The Fight for the Right to Vote in the United States \(Video\)](#)
- [Conversation Stems and Discussion Tracker](#)
- [Social Studies Extended Response Rubric-Voting](#)
- [Suffrage Timeline Completed](#)

### Multimedia Resources:

- Discovery Education video segment- [Women Gain the Right to Vote](#) (includes information on Title IX)

### Instructional Process:

1. Project and read aloud the following definition for *political power*:
  - influence over a government's institutions, leadership, or policies
2. Say: "While this definition may seem obvious, *political power* is necessary to achieve policy goals. **So who holds political power in the United States?**"
3. Take notes of student responses on the board. Ask provocative questions to encourage a lively discussion but do not insert judgment on the relative power of different groups and individuals in society.
4. Conclude the discussion while students are still actively disagreeing with one another by saying, "This is the question we will be considering throughout the course of this unit."
5. Project and read aloud the definition for *citizenship* found in step two of the [Citizenship and the US Constitution](#) lesson by the Center for Civic Education.
6. Continue playing the role of the provocateur. Say: "According to this definition, all power in a democracy ultimately resides with citizens. Sounds good in theory..."
7. Allow a few students to express ideas but interrupt the discussion while the class is still very actively engaged. At an opportune time, say, "Well maybe we need to step back and take a closer look at what it means to be a citizen before we can assess how much relative power an ordinary citizen wields."
8. Provide students with access to the following sources and their graphic organizers. Each source will be used in conjunction to answer the claim question/investigative question of: *How important is voting in a democracy?*
  - Source 1: [The Fight for the Right to Vote in the United States \(Video\)](#)
  - Source 2: Citizenship and the US Constitution-Handout 1
  - Source 3: Tables 5 and 7
  - Source 4: [What is Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act?](#)

### Part 1: Suffrage

9. Post and read aloud the next supporting question: "How well should we protect right to vote?" Have students provide a response to this question prior to watching the video.
10. Provide the students with a copy of the Suffrage Timeline.
11. Project and direct students to view [The Fight for the Right to Vote in the United States](#) from TED-Ed as a class. Instruct students to record and describe important suffrage information at each date on the Suffrage Timeline.

12. **Formative Assessment:** Following the video, review the timeline with students. Following the review of the timeline, ask students, "how was voting protected since the birth of the US Constitution?"

### **Part 2: Voting a Right or Responsibility?**

13. Direct students to read Student Handout 1 from the Citizenship and the US Constitution lesson. Provide students with a copy of the split-page notes for students to be used as they read the text.
14. As students engage in the text, consider having students annotate the text based on the questions being asked using the Split-page notes.
15. **Formative Assessment:** Finally, say: "Voting is listed twice, as both a right and a responsibility. Explain." Ask students, "to what extent is voting considered a right and/or responsibility?" Consider having students cite evidence to back their claim. If conducting a discussion, consider having students use the Conversation Stems for "Digging Deeper" and "New Ways of Thinking" from the conversation chart.

### **Part 3: Who Votes?**

16. Post and read aloud the supporting question for the task: "Who votes?"
17. Provide students with access to Table 5 and Figure 7 from "Who Votes and Who Doesn't?" (pages 13-15) from *Fault Lines in Our Democracy Civic Knowledge, Voting Behavior, and Civic Engagement in the United States* by Richard J. Coley.
18. Instruct students to read and analyze each table independently and record their answers to following questions:
  - Table 5:
    - In the November 2010 election, which reason for not voting was the highest?
    - Of all those who did not vote, what percentage made up the ones who were high school dropouts with no GED?
  - Figure 7:
    - What total percentage of the population voted in 2008?
    - Which ethnicity had the highest percentage of voter turnout?
    - Which age group had the highest percentage of voter turnout?
    - Which degree level had the highest percentage of voter turnout?
    - Which total family income had the highest percentage of voter turnout?
    - What are the implications of these voting patterns in terms of political power?
19. **Formative Assessment:** Direct each student to create a bulleted list of three suggestions for increasing voter turnout. Compile suggestions on the board. Conduct a brief class discussion about the likely effectiveness and feasibility of the proposed suggestions.

### **Part 4: The Voting Rights Act**

20. Divide the class into groups according to an established classroom routine. Direct groups to search their copies of the US Constitution (Article 1, Section II, Clause I

and Amendments 12, 14, 15, 17, 19, 24, & 26) for references to voting rights.

21. Provide students with "[What is Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act?](#)", from Procon.org: The Leading Source for Pros & Cons.
22. Using the graphic organizer, have students document what each document says regarding voting as well as how it protects the right of voting.
23. **Formative Assessment:** Discuss as a class. During this discussion consider having students use the conversation stem sections based on "Digging Deeper" and "New Ways of Thinking." Possible questions:
  - Is voting treated (by state legislatures, the courts, and the public) more like a right or a privilege in the United States? Cite Evidence.
  - How well protected is the right to vote? Cite Evidence.
  - Is a constitutional amendment protecting the right to vote necessary? Why?
  - How likely is such an amendment to be enacted?
24. **Summative Assessment:** Direct students to write an essay in response to the compelling question for the task: *How important is voting in a democracy?* Use the social studies extended response rubric to grade this assessment. Note: Customize the Content portion of the rubric for this assessment to reflect the content presented on voting. Use the Claims portion of the rubric as written.

## Task 2

### Extending Civil Rights to all Americans (Approximately 2-4 Class Periods)

#### Standards:

C.5.3	Describe how civil rights have evolved over time to include diverse groups of citizens
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**Connection to the Claim:** Students consider the progress of voting expanded to diverse groups of citizens.

**Claim:** To what extent are individual citizens able to influence public policy?

**Sub-Claim:** How have civil rights evolved over time to influence public policy?

**Academic Vocabulary:** Civil Rights, Voting, Diversity, Evolve

#### Materials List:

- [Extending Civil Rights with Graphic Organizer](#)
- [Voting Rights Timeline](#)
- Teacher resource- [Shelby County v. Holder](#)
- Teacher resource- [The Voting Rights Act of 1965](#)
- [Voting Rights Act \(1965\)](#)
- [Article- Between the Lines of the Voting Rights Act Opinion](#)
- [Social Studies Extended Response Rubric-Extending Civil Rights](#)

### Multimedia Resources:

- History Channel video segment- [Civil Rights Act](#)
- You Tube video segment- [Voting Rights Act of 1965](#)
- Discovery Education video segment- [The Twentieth-sixth Amendment](#) (stop at 1:13)

### Instructional Process:

1. **Connecting Background Knowledge:** Ask students to think of various groups of Americans that have been denied basic civil rights enjoyed by United States citizens today (e.g., voting, equal treatment under the law). List the groups on the board. Discuss the circumstances in which these groups were denied civil rights (e.g., women, African Americans). For example, women were not allowed to vote in most states because they were viewed by society as weak, naive, or incapable of acquiring a “man’s wisdom” and judgment to participate in the political process.

### Part 1: Extending Civil Rights

2. **Setting the Stage:** Throughout the course of American history, five groups: the “common man,” African Americans, Native Americans, women, and youth (under 21)(OPTIONAL), have been denied their basic rights of citizenship such as the right to vote, hold public office, or have equal treatment under the law. These groups over long periods of time and with great effort have come to enjoy the same rights as all Americans today.
3. Using the Extending Civil Rights handout as a guide, have students use *split-page note taking* to record obstacles that prevented these groups from enjoying full civil rights, the events and movements that brought about change, important laws, amendments, or Supreme Court rulings associated with these changes. (See sample below.)

Group	Extending Civil Rights
The Common Man	<p>Obstacles: <i>requirement of owning property, poll taxes, and literacy tests restrict voting to the wealthy land-owning elite in many states.</i></p> <p>Event and Movements: <i>In 1792, New Hampshire is first state to eliminate property requirements; election of Andrew Jackson, first president of the “Log Cabin” presidents, encouraged change in the voter qualifications in many states removing property restrictions allowing all white males the right to vote in most states. In 1856, North Carolina is the last state to eliminate property requirement.</i></p> <p>Law, amendment, court rulings: <i>various state constitutional amendments, Constitutional Amendment 26</i></p>

4. Divide the class into five groups. Assign each group a different category of Americans who were denied full civil rights. **Note:** Resources are provided below for each jigsaw topic; however, other appropriate documents may be supplemented where appropriate. Student groups should use the following to research the obstacles that prevented these groups from obtaining full civil rights, the events and movements that brought about change, and the important laws, amendments, or Supreme Court rulings associated with these changes:
  - Native Americans:
    - ["The American Indians and Civil Rights," American University](#)
  - The Common Man:
    - ["Andrew Jackson and the Common Man"](#)
  - African Americans
    - ["Nixon's Records on Civil Rights"](#)
  - Women
    - ["The Fight for Women's Rights"](#)
  - Youth (21 and Under)
    - [26<sup>th</sup> Amendment and 18 year old suffrage](#)
5. **Developing a Claim:** Students should use the Extending Civil Rights handout to take notes on their research. Following the analysis of the document, have students cite evidence using the graphic organizer that would assist in backing up a claim to the sub-claim question or compelling question.
6. Have each group check their research for accuracy and make a short presentation or poster for the whole class to view in a gallery walk. Using the graphic organizer, have students visit other groups posters to discuss how the extension of civil rights impacted public policy overtime. The other students should take notes from the presentations, give appropriate feedback for each group presenting and provide additional information when necessary.
7. **Formative Assessment:** Following the gallery walk, have students discuss the following questions:
  - How have civil rights evolved over time?
  - To what extent has each group evolved over time in terms of voting?
  - How do these changes influence public policy today?

## Part 2: Analyzing the Supreme Court and Voting

8. Remind students that the issue of civil rights is ongoing and that laws can always be changed. A recent example of this is the Supreme Court decision in *Shelby County v. Holder*.
9. **Connection from Task 1:** Review the provisions of the [Voting Rights Act of 1965](#), placing emphasis on Sections 4 and 5. Explain that [Section 4](#) established a formula to determine areas of the United States in which racial discrimination in voting was more prevalent and provided for more stringent remedies where appropriate. [Section 5](#) relates to the jurisdictions identified in Section 4 and was originally written as temporary legislation, although it was extended several times.
10. **Optional:** The website, [Justice](#) provides historical background information as well as information on the amendments to the Voting Rights Act that were passed by Congress in 1970, 1975, 1982, and 2006.
11. Provide students with a copy of the article, ["Between the Lines of the Voting Rights Act Opinion."](#) Do not pre-teach any information about the article or the Supreme Court decision before students read the article; they should do a "cold" reading on their own. Because of the length of the article, teachers may choose to divide it into three parts: the Opinion of the Court from Chief Justice Roberts, the Concurring Opinion from Justice Thomas, and the Dissenting Opinion from Justice Ginsberg. If the article is divided into parts, the teacher should be sure to include the introductory paragraphs in all three parts. The teacher may then choose to divide the class into three groups and then assign each group one part of the article. Students will then use Close Reading to analyze portions of the Supreme Court ruling in the case of *Shelby County v. Holder*. For more information on Close Reading, see the Course Resources at the top of the unit.
12. **Check for Understanding:** As the students read through the article the first time, have them circle any words that are unfamiliar to them. When the students have completed this task, the teacher should conduct a vocabulary activity of his/her choice (define words, vocabulary notecards, etc.) in order for students to gain understanding of the unfamiliar terms. Once this is done, have the students circle or highlight the name of the case at the top of the page. Ask the students to predict where Shelby County is located (*in the south, specifically Alabama*) and who Holder is (*Eric Holder, the U.S. Attorney General*)
13. Using the SOAPStone graphic organizer, have students analyze the article



again focusing on citing evidence using the graphic organizer.

14. **Formative Assessment:** As students read the article a third time, have them answer the following text dependent questions. Students can answer questions individually or in small groups.

- The author states in the introductory paragraphs that the Supreme Court delivered a 5-4 ruling and the author then lists the Justices that voted on each side of the decision. What is significant about the way the decision was reached? (*the Justices split along political/ideological lines*)
- In the Opinion of the Court, Chief Justice Roberts relates Amendment X to the provisions of the Voting Rights Act. What relationship does he draw between the two and how is this argument used in the opinion? Cite evidence from the Opinion of the Court to support your answer. (*Justice Roberts argues that the Voting Rights Act "sharply departs" from the principles established in the 10<sup>th</sup> Amendment. He also states that the parts of the Act only apply to "nine States {and several additional counties}, which he contends is against the "tradition of equal sovereignty" among the states.*)
- How does Chief Justice Roberts explain the Court's decision regarding Section 5? Cite evidence from the Court's Opinion to support your answer. (*Chief Justice Roberts explains that the issue is not with Section 5 itself, rather it is with the coverage formula. He states that "Congress may draft another formula based on current conditions."*)
- With regard to Section 5, how does Justice Thomas' opinion differ from the ruling of the Court? Cite evidence from the excerpt of the Concurring Opinion to support your answer. (*Justice Thomas says that the "Court needlessly prolongs the demise of that provision" and "for the reasons stated in the Court's opinion, I would find §5 unconstitutional."*)
- Why does the author provide background information on Justice Ginsburg and not the other Justices? (*Answers will vary, but students may reply that her background as a civil rights attorney lends her some expertise on this particular topic. They might also reply that her background as a civil rights attorney informed her vote on the matter. This may lead to a class discussion on the background of the justices, intended or unintended bias on certain matters, the role of a Supreme Court Justice, etc.*)
- How does Justice Ginsburg evoke the concept of checks and balances in her Dissenting Opinion? (*she questions the Court's decision based on Congress's repeated reauthorization of Section 5 and quotes another Supreme Court case, Katzenbach v. Morgan, stating "It is not for us to review the congressional resolution of [the need for its chosen remedy]. It is enough that we be able to perceive a basis upon which the Congress might resolve the conflict as it did."*)
- Why does Justice Ginsburg state that "history repeats itself"? What evidence does she provide in her Dissenting opinion to support this statement? (*She cites evidence from the 2006 reauthorization regarding barriers to second generation barriers to voting rights and reiterates the original purpose of the Voting Rights Act.*)

15. **Summative Assessment (Expressing a Claim):** Following the discussion/answering of the questions, have students write a claim, evidence, reasoning response to the following prompt: How have civil rights evolved over time to influence public policy? Students can use evidence from the entire task to develop their response. Use the social studies content and claims rubric to score the students response.

### Task 3

#### Political Parties (Approximately 3-5 Class Periods)

##### Standards:

C.5.6	Describe key platform positions of the major political parties and evaluate the impact of third parties in election outcomes
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**Connection to the Claim:** Students investigate how political parties act as a mediating institution between citizens and government.

**Claim:** To what extent are individual citizens able to influence public policy?

**Sub-claim Question:** How do political parties play a role within government?

**Academic Vocabulary:** Political Parties, Electorate, Party, Two-Party System, Independent

##### Materials:

- [Political Parties Handout with Graphic Organizers](#)
- [Social Studies Extended Response Rubric-Political Parties](#)

##### Instructional Process:

1. Say: "Next we will explore how political parties act as the middleman between voters and elected leaders."
2. Project and read aloud the following definition for political party:
  - groups of people with similar interests who work together to create and implement policies
3. Say: "Sounds innocent enough, right? But how does it really work?"
4. To maintain a high level of engagement, allow one or two students to comment but end discussion before everyone who wants to speak has had

an opportunity.

5. Read aloud the following text:

- *"If the purpose of political parties is to work together to create and implement policies by winning elections, how do they accomplish this task, and who actually participates in the process? The answer was fairly straightforward in the early days of the republic when parties were little more than electoral coalitions of like-minded, elite politicians. But improvements in strategy and changes in the electorate forced the parties to become far more complex organizations that operate on several levels in the US political arena. Modern political parties consist of three components identified by political scientist V. O. Key: the party in the electorate (the voters); the party organization (which helps to coordinate everything the party does in its quest for office); and the party in office (the office holders). To understand how these various elements work together, we begin by thinking about a key first step in influencing policy in any democracy: winning elections."*

6. On the board, write:

- party in the electorate
- party organization
- party in office

### **Part 1: Party in the Electorate**

7. Provide students with a copy of "The Party in the Electorate" from OpenStax American Government contained within the Political Parties Handout. Using the compelling question, have students annotate the text for how the Party Electorate plays a role within our government. Consider using groups or pairs for students to engage in the text.
8. **Developing a Claim:** As students engage in the text, have students summarize or provide GISTs for each chunk. Additionally, have students make connections to the compelling question to assist in formulating the development of a claim. Finally, allow students to make connections using the chart to the electorate, generation, and the party affiliate.
9. **Formative Assessment:** Conduct a brief discussion. Possible questions:
- What are the benefits of becoming a member of the party in the electorate?
  - Why do people choose to identify as independents?
  - How does the party system influence each generation?
  - Any trends from the chart that are outliers?

## Part 2: Party Organization

10. Provide students with a copy of "The Party Organization" from OpenStax American Government contained within the Political Parties Handout. Direct students to read the and highlight functions at each level of the party structure (local, state, national).
11. **Developing a Claim:** Once students have read the text the first time, have students explore the text again to denote similarities and differences amongst the three levels. Once students have explored the text again and noted evidence from sources 2-4, have students write a claim using the sub-claim question: How do political parties play a role within government?
12. **Formative Assessment:** Discuss briefly as a class. Possible questions:
  - How do the different levels of the party organization interact and work together?
  - Why do voters pay more attention to the national level of the party organization?
  - What role do citizens play in the party organization?
  - How could citizen volunteers use the party organization system to gain political influence?

## Part 3: The Party in Government

13. Provide students with a copy of "The Party in Government" from OpenStax American Government contained within the Political Parties Handout. Direct students to read the article in groups/pairs and then answer the following questions with a partner using the split-page notes:
  - How does the party in government select its leadership?
  - How does the party in government attempt to keep its member in line?
  - Why do challenges to party unity occur?
14. **Developing a Claim:** Direct students' attention to the three components of political parties written on the board. Discuss the role of the citizen in each of the components. Ask: "Which component is most impenetrable to the ordinary citizen?"
15. **Formative Assessment:** Lead a class discussion on the emergence of political parties and the two-party system in the United States. Parties emerged from the debate between Federalists and Anti-Federalists.

## Part 4: The Two Party System

16. Provide students with a copy of "Election Rules and the Two-Party System." Direct them to read and annotate the text and then answer the following questions with a partner using the split-page notes:
- Why does a winner-take-all system make it harder for third parties to compete?
  - In a winner-take-all system, why does plurality voting, as opposed to majoritarian voting, make it even more difficult for third parties to compete?
  - How do proportional electoral systems differ from winner-take-all systems?
  - What are the advantages and disadvantages of a proportional electoral system?
  - Besides the winner-take-all system, what other factors contribute to the dominance of two political parties in the United States?
17. **Formative Assessment:** Discuss the following quote from the text as a class: "Given the obstacles to the formation of third parties, it is unlikely that serious challenges to the US two-party system will emerge." Say: "Evaluate this claim given the current political climate."
18. **Summative Assessment (Expressing a Claim):** Following the discussion/answering of the questions, have students write a claim, evidence, reasoning response to the following prompt: do political parties play a role within government? Students can use evidence from the entire task to develop their response. Use the social studies content and claims rubric to score the students response.

**Optional Extension Activity:**

19. Both the modern Democratic and Republican parties are in some ways descendants of those groups. Both political parties have embraced various platforms over the years and carried different names but represent two main ideas: conservative and liberal ideologies. Conservative ideology primarily embraces the status quo or traditional ways. Liberal ideology primarily desires to bring about change or reform. American democracy has supported only two major parties due to the winner-take-all system. This makes it difficult for additional political parties to gain a foothold in the political system as opposed to proportional systems. Proportional systems allow political parties to gain the number of seats in the congress or parliament equal to the percentage of the votes won in the election.
20. Smaller parties do exist in the United States, but third parties have only played a meaningful role in close elections. When a third party's platform is similar to a major party's platform, third parties play the role of "spoiler"

in close elections as they receive votes that normally would go for one of the major parties. Such a situation occurred in 1992 when, Bill Clinton, a Democrat, defeated George H.W. Bush, a Republican, by a narrow margin. Ross Perot, a Reform Party candidate, received a small percentage of the vote. Without Perot's running as a third party candidate, many of Perot's supporters would have voted for Bush, potentially changing the outcome. Have students reflect in their on the role third parties play in the American democracy. Call on students to share their responses with the class. Provide appropriate feedback and correct student responses when necessary.

21. Working in pairs, have students examine the Democratic and Republican parties' position on these issues: health care reform, the environment, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, other foreign policy issues, domestic spending, and energy. Have students use the Internet or provide copies of the current position or party platforms on the issues.
22. Have students record the parties' positions on a *graphic organizer* (See the example which follows).

The Issue	Democratic Platform	Republican Platform
Immigration Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Securing the border from illegal traffic in both directions</li> <li>• Hold business accountable for exploiting undocumented workers</li> <li>• Provide an acceptable path to citizenship for undocumented workers in good standing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Securing the border by completing a border fence, using complementary strategies at our ports of entry, and increase enforcement of existing laws to reduce illegal immigration</li> <li>• Require employers to use the E-Verify system to ensure workers are here legally and prevent identify theft</li> <li>• Opposes amnesty</li> </ul>

23. Call on students to share their research on the Democratic and Republican parties' platforms with the class. Provide appropriate feedback and correct student responses when necessary. Have students identify and explain which political party platform has been traditionally consistent with the following position.
24. **Formative Assessment:** Use the following prompt to conduct a Socratic discussion: The government should play an active role in preventing

discrimination based on race, creed, or gender in the workplace.

## Task 4

### Electoral College (Approximately 2-4 Class Periods)

#### Standards:

C.5.5	Analyze the effects of campaigns, campaign finance, elections, the Electoral College, and the United States census in the American political system
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**Connection to the Claim:** Students dissect the Electoral College's effectiveness and impact within our political system.

**Claim:** To what extent are individual citizens able to influence public policy?

**Sub-Claim:** To what extent does the Electoral College play a role within the American Political System and public policy?

#### Academic Vocabulary:

#### Materials:

- [What is the Electoral College](#) (Background)
- [Article II United States Constitution](#) (Background)
- [The Electoral College Handout with Graphic Organizers](#)
- [United States Map BLM](#)
- [Electoral College Votes](#)
- [Social Studies Extended Response Rubric-Electoral College](#)

#### Instructional Process:

##### Part 1: Initial Discussion and Article II of the Constitution

1. **Building Context:** Begin the lesson by introducing the Electoral College and its history. Explain to students that this process was created by the founders of our country and is articulated in Article II of the United States Constitution. Many American citizens do not understand the purpose or workings of the Electoral College and its function in the selection of the president and vice president of the United States. Many people think that we should do away with the Electoral College and establish a popular vote in order to elect the president.
2. **Building Context:** Next, provide background information on the following elections: the elections of 1800, 1824, 1876, and 1888. If you provide and pre-teach these elections and provide and an overview of the electoral

college within these the following documents will have more meaning and relevance. For example, you can conduct a Socratic Seminar and have students engage in a meaningful discussion on the Electoral College.

3. **Formative Assessment:** Share Article II of the United States Constitution handout with students. Have students read the document before leading a discussion. Once students have read, lead a discussion with the class on the premises that these documents are the foundation for how we elect a president and that Article II established the Electoral College system. Ensure that all students have grasped this concept throughout your discussion prior to moving on to the documents.

### **Part 2: What is the Electoral College?**

4. The teacher then “share reads”, “What Is the Electoral College?” with the students. This is done by having the students follow along silently while the teacher begins reading aloud. The teacher models prosody, inflection, and punctuation. The teacher then asks the class to join in with the reading after a few sentences while the teacher continues to read along with the students, still serving as the model for the class. This technique will support struggling readers as well as English Language Learners (ELL). Additionally, have students make annotations by underlining or highlighting points of interest to help them summarize the text. Once the share read is complete, have students discuss the meaning and interpretation of the text with a partner. This helps students gather thoughts and analyzations from another’s perspectives.

### **Part 3: Arguments For and Against the Electoral College**

5. Provide the two pieces “Arguments for the Electoral College” and “Arguments against the Electoral College.” Have the students read them in small groups or individually. (Contained in the Electoral College Handout)
6. **Reading #1:** As the students read through the articles the first time, have them circle any words that are unfamiliar to them. When the students have completed this task, the teacher should conduct a vocabulary activity of his/her choice (define words, vocabulary notecards, etc.) in order for students to gain understanding of the unfamiliar terms. Once this is done, have students generate inferences and/or hypothesis to why people support or denounce the Electoral College. Inform students that as you read, you are going to test your theory and those theories may often change perspective or meaning throughout this process. (The more time you have students analyze the better your Socratic Seminar will be for discussion and engagement)



**Arguments Against:**

- *the possibility of electing a minority (someone not receiving the majority of votes) president*
- *the risk of so-called "faithless" Electors*
- *the possible role of the Electoral College in depressing voter turnout*
- *its failure to accurately reflect the national popular will*

**Arguments For:**

- *contributes to the cohesiveness of the country by requiring a distribution of popular support to be elected president*
- *contributes to the political stability of the nation by encouraging a two-party system*
- *Maintains a federal system of government and representation.*

7. **Reading #2:** As students read the article a second time, have them reconsider their original inferences. Lead a discussion to how they have changed or have been added to.
8. **Reading #3 Developing a Claim:** As students read the article a third time, have them answer the following text dependent questions using the Understanding the Electoral College BLM. Emphasize the text dependency here as you want your students to generate an argument for or against the Electoral College that is supported throughout the text. Students can answer questions individually or in small groups.

**Part 4: Socratic Seminar and Writing**

9. **Formative Assessment (Expressing a Claim):** Prior to having students engage in the writing task, provide students with an opportunity to discuss their findings and theories in a meaningful way. Conduct a Socratic Seminar using the following questions to guide the discussion and engage students.
  - *Why would someone support the Electoral College? What is the best piece of textual evidence that drives the support?*
  - *Why would someone argue against the Electoral College? What is the best piece of textual evidence that drives the support?*
  - *Finally, should the Electoral College be re-configured? Why or why not, but evidence demonstrates that it works as intended or is malfunctioning?*
10. **Summative Assessment (Expressing a Claim):** After the students have read the articles and completed "The Electoral College: Addressing the Issues," hand out the "The Best Way to Elect the President of the United States BLM" and have students write an essay addressing the prompt. Emphasize to the students that all of the arguments in their essays must be backed up with textual evidence taken directly from the documents that

you have given them. This essay can be used as an assessment grade using the Social Studies Extended Response Rubric.

**Optional Additional Resource/Extension Activity:**

11. Using the blank United States map, have students plot the numbers for each state. Explain to students what the numbers mean how the change every ten years due to the Census data collected. For example, Louisiana currently has 8 electoral votes; however, prior to 2010 we had 9. Why is that taking place? What is causing us to lose votes? (Hurricane Katrina and its impact drove populations to other surrounding states)

## Task 5

### Campaign Ads (Approximately 3-5 Class Periods)

**Standards:**

C.5.4	Evaluate the role of the media and public opinion in American politics, including the use and effects of propaganda techniques
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**Connection to the Claim:** Students examine television campaign advertisements from several elections to identify propaganda techniques and evaluate the use of attack ads.

**Claim:** To what extent are individual citizens able to influence public policy?

**Sub-Claim:** How effectively do campaign advertisements employ propaganda techniques?

**Academic Vocabulary:** Propaganda, Advertisements, Platform

**Materials:**

- [Campaign Advertising Handout](#)

**Instructional Process:**

1. **Connection to the Task:** Begin this task by asking students how candidates spread their messages as they campaign in the months before elections. Answers will likely include the following: they give speeches; they participate in debates; they travel around the country making public appearances; they participate in interviews; they appear in television commercials; etc. Explain that although students cannot remember a time when television commercials were not a part of political campaigns, it wasn't until 1952 that presidential candidates began using them to attract voters. Dwight D. Eisenhower, who became the country's 34<sup>th</sup> president and served two terms, successfully incorporated short television commercials into his campaign against Illinois Governor Adlai Stevenson.

2. Provide students with a copy of the Campaign Advertising Handout.

### **Part 1: Propaganda throughout History**

3. Play "[Ike for President](#)," "[Sturdy Lifeboat](#)," and "[Bus Driver](#)" for students. Ask students just to watch the commercials the first time they are played.
4. Then play each commercial a second time, having students answer the questions on their A Commercial's Worth a Thousand Words handout contained within the Campaign Advertising handouts as they watch.
5. **Formative Assessment:** After students have viewed the commercials a second time, discuss their answers to the questions.
6. Play "[Adlai to You](#)" and "[Platform Double Talk](#)" for students. Ask students just to watch both commercials the first time they are played.
7. Then play each commercial a second time, having students answer the questions on their A Commercial's Worth a Thousand Words handout contained within the Campaign Advertising handouts as they watch.
8. After students have viewed the Stevenson commercials a second time, discuss the answers to their questions.
9. **Making Connections:** Explain that Eisenhower defeated Stevenson in a landslide victory, which is largely attributed to the success of his commercials. Share the following information with students:
  - Eisenhower was the first presidential candidate to make significant use of "spot" advertising in his campaign. These commercials, which generally ran between 20 seconds and a minute, were a departure

- from typical 30-minute segments that featured campaign speeches.
- Eisenhower ran a series of spot commercials entitled "Eisenhower Answers America" – an idea developed by Rosser Reeves, a Madison Avenue advertising executive who created the M&M "melts in your mouth, not in your hands" campaign. Each spot featured a different question posed by a voter, followed by Eisenhower's response. The purpose of the commercials was to present Eisenhower as a down-to-earth, accessible man with whom voters concerned about the high cost of living and the Korean War could identify.
  - On the other hand, Adlai Stevenson was much less comfortable with using television as a campaign medium. He did incorporate commercials into his campaign, but he expressed contempt for them, comparing them to advertising and acting.
  - Stevenson's spot advertising was much more simplistic than Eisenhower's, and he did not appear in his own commercials. Instead, he relied heavily on 30-minute speeches that aired several times a week but late at night, which reduced the number of viewers considerably. Source: The Living Room Candidate (<http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/>)

10. Explaining to students that Eisenhower's successful use of television commercials in his 1952 bid forever changed the way in which presidential campaigns are run in the US.

## Part 2: Propaganda Techniques

11. Provide students with access to "[Propaganda Techniques](#)" from PBS's "Reporting America at War." Direct students to read "[Propaganda Techniques](#)."
12. Have students watch the following selection of commercials spanning from 1960 to 2008: "[I Love the Gov](#)" (1952); "[Sills Family](#)" (1960); "[Convention](#)" (1968); "[Willie Horton](#)" (1988); and "[Country I Love](#)" (2008).
13. As they watch each commercial, ask them to identify what the candidate uses to attract voters. After students have watched all of the commercials, invite students to discuss the tactics that each commercial used and which tactics were the most successful.
14. Ask: "Should political ads be considered persuasive or propagandistic?"
15. Provide students with a copy of the Positive or Negative? Handout contained

within the Campaign Advertising handouts.

16. Have students watch the following four commercials from the 2008 election: "[Celeb](#)" and "[Original Mavericks](#)" (McCain campaign) and "[Country I Love](#)" and "[Embrace](#)." Ask them to answer the questions on their [Positive or Negative? handout](#) as they watch each commercial.
17. **Formative Assessment:** After students have watched all of the commercials, lead a discussion using these questions as a guide.
  - How does the commercial either promote the candidate or attack his opponent? What positive or negative messages does it convey?
  - What specific words does the candidate use to promote himself or attack his opponent?
  - What visual effects contribute to the commercial's positive or negative messages?
  - As a viewer (and future voter), which commercial worked the best? Why? Which commercial worked least well? Why?

### **Part 3: Negative Campaign Ads, do they work?**

18. Provide students with access to "[Do Negative Political Ads Work?](#)" by Donald Green from *Scientific American*. Direct students to read the article.
19. Using knowledge gained from the article, have students conclude the task having students create a Town Hall Wall about whether attack ads should be used in political campaigns. In a Town Hall Wall display, students respond "yes" or "no" to a specific question, providing reasons for their responses. Because it is displayed in a public location, as a Town Hall Wall grows, it serves as a tool for encouraging dialogue among individuals about pressing issues. Sample NCC Town Hall Walls about other current topics can be found at within the Campaign Advertising Handout.
20. **Summative Assessment:** For this assessment, pose the question "Should attack ads be used in political campaigns?" on a public display, like a large poster or bulletin board. Have students answer the question with a "yes" or "no" and reasons for their responses. Instruct students to write down their reasons and post them on the display. As the number of responses grows, consider moving the Town Hall Wall to an area of the school in which other students can participate as well.

## Task 6

### Campaign Finance (Approximately 3-5 Class Periods)

#### Standards:

C.5.5	Analyze the effects of campaigns, campaign finance, elections, the Electoral College, and the United States census in the American political system
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**Connection to the Claim:** Students weigh the need for campaign finance reform in the United States.

**Claim:** To what extent are individual citizens able to influence public policy?

**Sub-Claim:** What are the arguments in favor and against campaign finance?

**Academic Vocabulary:** Budget, Finance, Fundraiser, PAC

#### Materials:

- [Campaign Finance Handout with Graphic Organizers](#)

#### Instructional Process:

##### Part 1: Why so secretive?

1. Provide students with a copy of the Campaign Finance Handout.
2. To stage the task, divide the class into pairs according to an established classroom routine and direct pairs to read the sampler of political correspondence between political parties and their financiers.
3. **Formative Assessment:** Conduct a class discussion. Possible questions:
  - Who are the political parties writing about?
  - What do both sides hope to get out of the agreement?
  - Is the funding tied to favors?
4. Project the Center for Responsive Politics website at <http://www.opensecrets.org>. Navigate to the most recent completed election cycle and view the [amount raised by candidate in Louisiana](#). Explore a variety of other states looking for trends.
5. **Formative Assessment:** Discuss as a class. Possible questions:
  - How often are the winners the top fundraisers?
  - What differences do you observe between Senate and House races?
  - Why might some House races be more expensive than others?

- How do races with incumbents differ from open races?
- What other trends can you observe?
- What data did you find predictable versus surprising?

## Part 2: Where do they get their contributions?

6. Ask students to consider the following question as they examine a set of sources: Where do politicians get their campaign contributions?
7. Provide students with digital access or review the *New York Times* interactive page, "[From \\$25 to \\$10,000,000: A Guide to Political Donations](#)," together as a class. Instruct students to take notes (bulleted list with brief explanations) on the various ways individuals and companies can donate to political candidates and campaigns.
8. Watch [video clip](#) from C-SPAN explaining the *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* Supreme Court ruling of 2010.

## Part 3: Super PAC's

\*\*\*Disclaimer: Only use the specified page numbers within the PDF's for this task\*\*\*

9. Direct students pairs/groups to read "Super PAC Mania" by Robert Barnes ([pages 19-23 of original task](#); option to excerpt to first two pages). As students read, have students use the graphic organizer to gather their thoughts focusing on why PAC's are relevant within our elections today.
10. **Summative Assessment:** Instruct students to write two paragraphs defining what a super PAC is and what role they play in political campaigns. Collect and grade for content accuracy.
11. Direct students to read first six paragraphs of "[Money Wins Presidency and 9 of 10 Congressional Races in Priciest US Election Ever](#)" by the Center for Responsive Politics. Call on students to orally summarize key points.
12. **Formative Assessment:** Direct students to read the set of essays from *Freakonomics* ([pages 26-27 original task](#)) and then answer the following questions with a partner:
  - Summarize Robert Shrum's main argument in one sentence.
  - List examples Shrum uses to support this argument.
  - Summarize Jeffrey D. Milyo's argument in one sentence.
  - What evidence does Milyo use to support his argument?

13. **Summative Assessment:** Divide students into small groups. Instruct them to write a sketch for a satirical news program. In the sketch, the host should interview two political analysts, one in favor of campaign finance reform and one opposed.
14. Collect and grade the written sketches for demonstrated comprehension of key arguments on each side.

## Task 7

### Lobbyist and Special Interest Groups (Approximately 1 Class Period)

#### Standards:

C.5.7	Explain historical and contemporary roles of special interest groups, lobbyists, and associations in United States politics
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**Connection to the Claim:** Students explore the role of lobbyists and special interest groups in the political process.

**Claim:** To what extent are individual citizens able to influence public policy?

**Sub-Claim:** What role do lobbyists and special interest groups play in the political process?

**Academic Vocabulary:** Special Interest Group, Lobbyist

#### Materials:

- ["What Are Interest Groups and What Do They Want?"](#)
- [SOAPStone Graphic Organizer](#)

#### Instructional Process:

1. **Connection to previous task:** Say: "We have already investigated how political parties and the media serve as mediating institutions between individuals and the government. Lastly, we will investigate the role lobbyists and special interest groups play."
2. **Building Context:** Assess what students already know about lobbyists and special interest groups. Possible questions:
  - What do lobbyists and special interest groups do?
  - Can you come up with any examples of special interest groups?
  - Do lobbyists and special interest group have a more positive or negative impact on the political process?
3. **Developing a Claim:** Provide students with a copy of "What Are Interest



Groups and What Do They Want?” As students engage in the text, have them annotate the document focusing on the compelling question: what role do lobbyists and special interest groups play in the political process? Note: teachers may choose to chunk the text and have students develop GIST/Summaries for each section of the text for struggling readers. Direct them to read the article and answer the following questions with a partner using the split-page graphic organizer:

- What are the different categories of interest groups?
- What is the difference between inside and outside lobbying?
- What functions do interest groups serve?

4. Provide students with access to [“The Influence of Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Voters on American Politics”](#) by Martin Maximino. Direct students to independently read the article. Use the SOAPStone graphic organizer for students to organize their thoughts and make connections to the compelling question.
5. Discuss each of the key findings as a class. Conduct a class discussion.
6. **Formative Assessment:** Conduct a class discussion. Ask: “What are the values and limitations of Bentley’s perspective in making sense of the political process?” Conclude the task by asking, “How have your perceptions about lobbyists and interest groups evolved over the course of this task?”

## Task 8

### Culminating Task: Individual Citizens and Public Policy

#### Standards:

C.5.1	Distinguish between personal, political, and economic rights of citizenship
C.5.2	Differentiate between civic duties and responsibilities, including various forms of civic participation
C.5.3	Describe how civil rights have evolved over time to include diverse groups of citizens
C.5.4	Evaluate the role of the media and public opinion in American politics, including the use and effects of propaganda techniques
C.5.5	Analyze the effects of campaigns, campaign finance, elections, the Electoral College, and the United States census in the American political system
C.5.6	Describe key platform positions of the major political parties and evaluate the impact of third parties in election outcomes
C.5.7	Explain historical and contemporary roles of special interest groups, lobbyists, and associations in United States politics

**Connection to the Claim:** Students write a response that connects the influence of

citizens and the shape of public policy in American Government.

**Claim:** To what extent are individual citizens able to influence public policy?

**Materials:**

- [Essay Writing Outline](#)
- [Government Extended Response Checklist](#)
- [Social Studies Extended Response Rubric-Public Policy](#)

**Instructional Process:**

1. Using sources from Tasks 1-7, students will create an in depth response using the following question: To what extent are individual citizens able to influence public policy?
2. Consider reviewing the following outline with your students to transition them into the writing process where needed. Using the buckets and thesis builder, model for students how to create bucket labels and develop a thesis based on the information presented in the tasks.
3. A bucket and thesis may resemble the example below:

Citizens are able to influence the shape of public policy within American government by:	Voting
	Recognizing bias in political advertisements
	Analyzing how money is spent within the campaign

4. Have your students consider the following information as they craft their response:
  - Evaluate the extent in which the citizens can be a powerful piece to influences how the government functions:
    - The significance of voting within America (Task 1-2)
    - What are the rights, responsibilities, and duties of citizens (Task 1)

- Political Parties function as intermediaries between government and its citizens (Task 3)
- The Electoral College is effective/ineffective means of electing our President (Task 4)
- Propaganda is a major role player within the election process (Task 5)
- Campaign Finances are the key to winning elections at all levels of government (Task 6)
- Lobbyists and special interests groups play a vital role in the political process (Task 7)