

LESSON ONE

Core Learning Goal: 1

The student will demonstrate an understanding of the historical development and current status of principles, institutions and processes of political systems.

Expectation: 1

The student will demonstrate understanding of the structure and functions of government and politics in the United States.

Indicator 1.1.1

The students will analyze historic documents to determine the basic principles of United States government and apply them to real-world situations.

Assessment Limits:

- ? *Documents: Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, **United States Constitution** and the Bill of Rights. Students are to know which rights / protections are addressed by the first ten amendments. Other documents and amendments may be assessed, but excerpts will be provided. Students are not expected to know the contents of any document by number.*
- ? *Basic principles: Representative democracy, limited government, **federalism**, separation of powers, checks and balances, and judicial review.*

Overview:

This lesson introduces the concept of federalism. Prior to this lesson, students should be aware of the three branches and different levels of the United States political system. The students will examine the Constitution to understand the federal system.

Lesson Objectives:

Students will identify the powers of national and state governments.
Students will evaluate the balance of national versus state power.

Materials:

Government textbooks
Student Handout: **Dividing the Powers of Government**
Student Handout: **Summary of Powers**
Copy of the United States Constitution (may be found in text)

Procedures:

1. Ask students the following question:
“What does the government do for its citizens?”
After some initial responses, have students list some things government does. Write these items on the chalkboard. Select one of these items and ask: “Which level of government handles this activity – the government in Washington D.C. or the government in Annapolis?” Repeat this question for a few more listed items.

4. Introduce the concept of federalism. Have students use their textbooks to define federalism. Ask students: “Why did the writers of the Constitution include federalism as a part of our system of government?”

4. Distribute the handout ***Dividing the Powers of Government*** and have students refer to the Constitution to complete this activity. Review student responses for accuracy.

4. Summarize by having students complete the handout ***Summary of Powers***. Discuss the balance of power between the federal and state governments in terms of:
 - legal system
 - safety/security issues
 - economic activities
 - lawmaking
 - education

Assessment of Indicator:

Have students answer this Brief Constructed Response item:

- ? Explain why the federal government has more power and responsibility than the state governments.
- ? Which one power of the federal government do you believe is most important? Justify your choice.
- ? Include details and examples to support your answer.

Use the Social Studies Rubric to score student responses.

This lesson was adapted from the Government Curriculum of the Cecil County Public Schools.

Dividing the Powers of Government

Directions:

Below is a list of real-life situations and activities that involve different levels of government. Decide which level of government has the power and responsibility for these actions.

Write an **"F"** next to a power that is given exclusively to the federal (national) government. Write an **"S"** next to a power that is given to a state government. Write a **"C"** next to a power that is a concurrent (shared) power between the state and national governments.

After each power, cite the section of the United States Constitution where you found the information.

- | | |
|---|-------|
| _____ 1. Grant marriage licenses | _____ |
| _____ 2. Declare war and make peace | _____ |
| _____ 3. Regulate state trade | _____ |
| _____ 4. Govern elections | _____ |
| _____ 5. Provide courts | _____ |
| _____ 6. Coin and print money | _____ |
| _____ 7. Regulate immigration | _____ |
| _____ 8.. Protect individual rights | _____ |
| _____ 9. Pass laws | _____ |
| _____ 10. Provide for defense | _____ |
| _____ 11. Make and ratify treaties | _____ |
| _____ 12. Regulate foreign trade | _____ |
| _____ 13. Administer national programs | _____ |
| _____ 14. Establish and operate post office | _____ |
| _____ 15. Train and equip an army | _____ |
| _____ 16. Impose and collect taxes | _____ |
| _____ 17. Determine voting qualifications | _____ |
| _____ 18. Build and maintain roads | _____ |

Summary of Powers

Directions:

Use the worksheet *Dividing the Powers of Government* to determine the specific powers granted to the state and federal governments.

Federal Powers

State Powers

Concurrent Powers