

Lesson: Principles of the Constitution
Course: American Government or US History

Overview:

- The basic tenets of the United States Constitution

Standards:

USHC –1.5 Explain how the fundamental principle of limited government is protected by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, including democracy, republicanism, federalism, the separation of powers, the system of checks and balances, and individual rights.

USG-2.1 Summarize core principles of United States government, including limited government, federalism, checks and balances, separation of powers, rule of law, popular sovereignty, republicanism, individual rights, freedom, equality, and self-government

Materials:

1. Handout – Fundamental basis of the Constitution
2. US Constitution
3. United States History or American Government textbook

Instruction and Activity

1. Have students review the attached list tenets of the Constitution
 - a. Identify what each tenet means to you
 - b. Rank order each tenet from most to least importance
 - c. Look up correct identification of each tenet

Assessment:

- Basic tenets quiz
- Meet in small group to rank order of importance based on true definition

This lesson plan was created by 2011 SC Supreme Court Institute attendees; Heather Emmerton, Richard Webb, Paul Drohomirecky, and Jody Foreman.

BASIC TENETS of the CONSTITUTION

- ***POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY***
- ***LIMITED GOVERNMENT***
- ***SEPARATION of POWERS***
- ***CHECKS and BALANCES***
- ***FEDERALISM***
- ***JUDICIAL REVIEW***

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