

Maine Learning Results



The Maine Learning Results for Social Studies is based on the belief that Social Studies is an integrated discipline that engages students in “inquiry, research, debate, and in-depth learning.” The study of Civics and Government is a key element to the Social Studies program. Within this discipline, “Students will learn the constitutional principles and the democratic foundations of national, state, and local systems and institutions.” Basic principles addressed are:

- understanding the distribution and expression of political power
- types and purposes of governments
- political relationships among the United States and other nations.

In SIRS’ study of the Maine Learning Results for Civics and Government, we see a direct correlation between the goals and objectives that are emphasized and the framework upon which SIRS Interactive Citizenship has been developed. SIRS Interactive Citizenship content emphasizes the generalizations and concepts that act as the framework for understanding democratic political institutions and their emergence throughout history, while the Discovery and Inquiry activities and related chapter lessons exemplify our commitment to critical thinking skills.

What Citizens Need to Know About Government, addresses the expectations for **Civics and Government** and presents a framework for understanding America’s ongoing struggle to realize the ideals of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution and each citizen’s role in this democracy. Through this framework, students are able to connect the past to the present as well as appreciate universal historical themes and dilemmas by accessing primary sources such as, biographies, documents, diaries, letters, legends and speeches and links to related articles and web sites while focusing on the basic concepts of government. Thus, students develop the higher order thinking skills deemed necessary by the Maine Learning Results.

<<http://www.state.me.us/education/lres.ss.htm>>[2002, January 17]



Maine Learning Results
correlation with
What Citizens Need to Know About Government



Civics and Government
Secondary Grades

A. Rights, Responsibilities, and Participation

Students will understand the rights and responsibilities of civic life and will employ the skills of effective civic participation. Students will be able to:

1. Develop and defend a position on a public policy issue within our democracy.
2. Assess the reasons why participation of an attentive, knowledgeable, and competent citizenry is important to constitutional democracy, using examples from personal or historical experience.
3. Describe the circumstances under which civil disobedience might be justified.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the processes of voter registration and voter participation.

- *Chapters 27 and 28 discuss national defense and foreign policy, respectively. Students can read about current policies from the related articles associated with the chapters.*
- *Chapter 9 provides historical examples of the social movements that affected change, such as Women’s Suffrage and Civil Rights.*
- *Chapter 15 examines the voting process. A link to the Electoral College can be accessed from an embedded text link.*

B. Purpose and types of government

Students will understand the types and purposes of governments, their evolution, and their relationship with the governed. Students will be able to:

1. Compare and contrast the purpose and structure of the United States government with other governments (parliamentary, dictatorship, monarchy) with respect to ideology, values, and histories.
2. Assess the different jurisdictions and roles of local, state, and federal governments in relations to an important public policy issue.
3. Analyze the major arguments for and against representative government as distinguished from direct democracy.
4. Assess the tension between the public’s need for government services and the varying availability of revenue through taxes at the local, state, and federal levels.

5. Evaluate the role of the media and public opinion in United States politics, including ways the government and media influence public opinion.

- *Chapter 1 identifies the various forms of government. Students can access tribal government web sites to learn about these entities. To extend their knowledge of Parliamentary governments, students can access a link to the British Parliament. Various forms of democratic governments are also explored.*
- *Chapter 2 discusses the jurisdiction of the federal government.*
- *Chapters 10 and 11 examine state and local governments.*
- *Chapter 12, Paying for Government, examines the federal, state, and local governments' ability to tax citizens. Other topics discussed include government expenditures and tax evasion.*
- *Chapter 13 explores the role the media and public opinion have in shaping U.S. politics and government policy.*

C. Fundamental principles of government and constitutions

Students will understand the constitutional principles and the democratic foundations of the political institutions of the United States. Students will be able to:

1. Explain the historical foundations of constitutional government in the United States (e.g., Magna Carta, Roman Republic, colonial experience, Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, Constitution of the United States).
2. Evaluate the Federalist and anti-Federalist positions on the ratification of the Constitution in light of historical developments.
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of the Constitution as a vehicle for change.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the meaning and importance of traditional democratic assumptions such as individual rights, the common good, self-government, justice, equality, and patriotism.
5. Demonstrate how the United States Constitution uses checks and balances in order to prevent the abuse of power (e.g., Marbury vs. Madison, Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, Watergate).
6. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on current issues regarding judicial protection and individual rights.
7. Examine civil rights issues related to well-known Supreme Court decisions.

- *Chapter 1 looks at the foundations of U.S. Constitutional government. Students can explore our European heritage by reading the writings of 18th century philosophers, such as Rousseau, Hobbes, Locke and Montesquieu, who influenced the thinking of the founding fathers. Documents such as the Magna Carta, Declaration of Independence, and Articles of Confederation are accessed through this chapter.*
- *From Chapter 3, students can read the U.S. Constitution.*
- *From Chapter 2, students can focus on the Federalist Papers to gain insight into the Federalist and anti-Federalist positions.*

- *Chapter 7, The Judiciary, contains links to landmark Supreme Court decisions, such as, Marbury v. Madison, that demonstrate the Constitution's protection against abuse of power.*
- *Chapter 17, Ethics, discusses issues raised by events such as Watergate and the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. Students may access a link to WashingtonPost.com to read the entire collection of Watergate articles as they appeared in the newspaper.*
- *Chapter 9 focuses on minority and civil rights with links to the Supreme Court decisions addressing individual rights.*

D. International Relations

Students will understand the political relationships among the United States and other nations. Students will be able to:

1. Analyze the processes used to develop foreign policy.
2. Trace the development of a current world event and predict the possible outcomes (e.g., population, global warming).
3. Demonstrate how domestic policy may impose constraints or obligations on United States actions in the world, using current examples.
4. Evaluate the benefits and difficulties of international cooperation, using specific examples.

- *Chapter 28 examines the process by which foreign policy is determined, the U.S. involvement in world affairs, and the conflicts and resolutions to current foreign policy issues.*
- *Students may read about the War on Terrorism from Chapter 27, National Defense. Current articles update this topic on a daily basis.*