

Oklahoma Priority Academic Student Skills



The Oklahoma Priority Academic Student Skills integrates the social science content in an effort to promote civic competence.

The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world.

The goal of the Civics, Economics, and Government content is to "...develop informed, competent, and responsible citizens who are politically aware and active..."

In SIRS' study of the Oklahoma Priority Academic Student Skills, 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 the study of 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 Oklahoma Priority Academic Student Skills.

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Oklahoma Priority Academic Student Skills
correlation with
What Citizens Need to Know About Government



Government
Grades 9 – 12

The student will:

- I. Define government as the formal institution with the authority to make and implement binding decisions about such matters as distribution of resources, allocation of benefits and burdens, and management of conflicts.

- Chapter 1 defines government and explains how it has an impact on all aspects of an individual's life.

- II. Analyze the philosophical and historical development of government as an institution.

- A. Discuss the development of democracy in ancient Greece and Rome, England, and the American colonies.
B. Explain contributions of Locke, Hobbes, Rousseau, Montesquieu, and Blackstone.

- From Chapter 16, students learn about the development of democracy in Ancient Greece and Rome and explore the writings of Plato and Aristotle.
- Chapter 1 traces the roots of American democracy from its European heritage. Students can find information on the 18th century philosophes, Locke, Hobbes, Rousseau, and Montesquieu. Links to Locke's "Two Treaties of Government," Hobbes' "Leviathan," Rousseau's "The Social Contract" and Montesquieu's "The Spirit of Laws" are embedded in the chapter.
- From Chapter 2, students may link to Blackstone's "Commentaries on the Law."

- III. Describe the purpose of government and analyze how its powers are acquired, used, and justified.

- A. Examine political authority, its sources and functions, and the difference between authority and power without authority.

- B. Outline examples of formal institutions with the authority to control and direct the behavior of those in a society (e.g., tribal councils, courts, monarchies, and democratic legislatures).

- *Chapter 1 compares various political systems, command, custom, and consent. Students can explore tribal governments through a link from the National Congress of American Indians web page and then investigate parliamentary governments by accessing the link to the British Parliament web site.*

- IV. Describe and analyze examples of fundamental United States constitutional principles contained in the Magna Carta, English Bill of Rights, Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, United States Constitution, Federalist Papers, and the Bill of Rights.

- *Fundamental constitutional principles may be examined when students access the following primary source documents from embedded links in Chapter 1:*

- *Magna Carta*
- *English Bill of Rights*
- *Declaration of Independence*
- *Articles of Confederation*

- *From Chapter 3 students have access to the U.S. Constitution.*

- *From Chapter 2 students have access to the Federalist Papers.*

- *From Chapter 9 students have access to the Bill of Rights.*

- V. Identify and explain the fundamental concepts of the system of government of the United States.

- A. The equality of all citizens under the law
- B. Majority rule and minority rights
- C. The fundamental worth and dignity of the individual
- D. The necessity of compromise
- E. Individual freedom
- F. The rule of law
- G. Constitutionalism and limited government
- H. Democracy and republicanism
- I. Consent of the governed
- J. Liberties, privileges, rights, and responsibilities

- *Chapters 2 and 3 discuss the fundamental concepts of U.S. government.*

VI. Analyze the United States Constitution:

- A. Purposes expressed in the Preamble
- B. Branches of government
- C. Powers and limitations
- D. Amendment process

- *Chapter 3 contains a link to the U.S. Constitution. After reading this document, students may then read about the structure of the Constitution, how the Constitution is interpreted and how amendments are proposed and ratified.*

VII. Compare and contrast the roles of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government at the federal, state, and local levels:

- A. Structures, functions, and authority of each
- B. Federalism
- C. Separation of powers
- D. Checks and balances
- E. The extent to which power is shared rather than divided or separated
- F. Procedures for constitutional amendment

- *Chapter 2 explores the federal government. Students learn about the concepts of separation of powers and checks and balances.*

- *Chapter 10 explores state governments and explains delegated, concurrent, and reserved powers. Students learn about each branch of state government, executive, legislative, and judicial.*

- *Chapter 11 focuses on local governments.*

- *The federal government's Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches are discussed in Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7 respectively.*

VIII. Analyze how the United States Constitution has evolved since 1789:

- A. The Constitutional Amendments, the conflicts they addressed, and the reasons for their adoption
- B. Landmark Supreme Court interpretations and executive orders which have addressed basic freedoms, due process, equal protection of the law, and government powers

- *Chapter 3 discusses the Amendment process and traces key Amendments.*

- *Chapter 9 explores the first 10 Amendments, known as the Bill of Rights.*

- *Chapter 9 contains links to landmark Supreme Court decisions addressing basic freedoms, due process, equal protection and government powers. For example, students may read the syllabi, concurring, and dissenting opinions for *Brown v. Board of Education (1954)*.*

IX. Explain and give contemporary examples of how political parties, interest groups, the media, and the individual influence the policy agenda and decision-making of government institutions.

- *Chapter 13, Press, Polls, Lobbies, provides specific examples of how these entities influence elected officials and the policies they set forth.*

X. Describe campaigns for national, state and local elective office:

- A. The nominating process
- B. Campaign funding and spending
- C. The influence of media coverage, campaign advertising, and public opinion polls
- D. Demographic causes and political effects of reapportionment and redistricting
- E. The impact of open/closed primaries, voter turnout and the constituencies of major political parties.
- F. The role of the Electoral College, and proposals for its reform
- G. The term limitation movement

- *Chapter 16 investigates the political process at national, state, and local levels. Students learn about the two-party system and the role that third parties and independents have. A link to the Electoral College Home Page allows students to continue their investigation.*

XI. Explain the rights, responsibilities, and benefits of citizenship in the United States, such as voting, jury duty, obedience to lawful authority, and private ownership of property.

- *Chapter 14 explains the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.*
- *Chapter 15 explores the voting process.*

XII. Compare the United States' political and economic systems with those of major democratic and authoritarian nations:

- A. The structures and powers of political institutions
- B. The rights and powers of the governed, such as grass roots citizens' movements
- C. Economic goals, institutions, and the role of government in the economy
- D. The relationships between economic freedom and political freedom
- E. The allocation of resources and its impact on productivity

- *The economy will be studied in a future Interactive Citizenship product.*

XIII. Explain how United States and Oklahoma legislature, executive, and judicial institutions make public policy:

- A. Legislation, regulations, executive orders, and judicial review
- B. Constitutional requirements and institutional procedures
- C. Specific policies related to foreign affairs, civil rights, and economics and the budget
- D. The role of regulatory agencies and bureaucracies

- *Students can explore Oklahoma government via a link embedded in Chapter 10 to learn how the state government makes public policy.*
- *Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7 examine the federal government's policy-making procedures.*

XIV. Identify and distinguish among the units of local governments in Oklahoma (i.e., counties, cities, towns, and regional authorities) by analyzing local public issues.

- *Students can explore local Oklahoma issues via the Cornell University Law School's State Legal Materials link to the Oklahoma Legal Matters web site found in Chapter 10.*

XV. Analyze in writing, discussion, and debate current issues confronting local, state, and national governments in terms of perennial challenges to democracies:

- A. Majority rule and minority rights
- B. Individual rights and the public interest/good
- C. Levels of taxations and the expectation of public services
- D. State and national authority in a federal system

- *Through the readings in Part I, Structure of Government, students are able to draw conclusions necessary to write about and discuss current issues confronting local, state, and national governments.*

XVI. Develop the skills needed for informed participation in public affairs.

- A. Analyze public issues.
- B. Evaluate candidates for public office.
- C. Evaluate the performance of public officials.
- D. Communicate with public officials.

- *Part II, Problems of Government, presents information on issues such as, education, poverty, health care, foreign policy and national defense. Students can research any or all of these issues as preparation for written or oral presentations.*