

CONSTITUTIONS



LESSON SUMMARY

BENCHMARK
SS.4.CG.1.1 Explain why the Florida government has a written Constitution.
BENCHMARK CLARIFICATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Students will recognize that every state has a state constitution.■ Students will explain the relationship between a written constitution, the government established and the citizens.
CORRELATED FLORIDA STANDARDS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ ELA.4.C.2.1: <i>Present information orally, in a logical sequence, using nonverbal cues, appropriate volume, and clear pronunciation.</i>■ ELA.4.C.3.1: <i>Follow the rules of standard English grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling appropriate to grade level.</i>■ ELA.4.V.1.1: <i>Use grade-level academic vocabulary appropriately in speaking and writing.</i>■ ELA.4.V.1.3: <i>Use context clues, figurative language, word relationships, reference materials, and/or background knowledge to determine the meaning of multiple-meaning and unknown words and phrases, appropriate to grade level.</i>
ESSENTIAL QUESTION
Why does Florida have a constitution?
VOCABULARY
constitution
MATERIALS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Analogy Introduction slides■ Constitutions slides■ Optional: sticky notes or paper

ACTIVITY SEQUENCE

INTRODUCTION/HOOK

1. Display the “Analogy Introduction” slides. Using slide #1, highlight that a school has individual classes of students that make up the school. Pose the following question for students to complete the analogy: What makes up the United States? Hint: There are 50 of them in the country (states).
2. Use slide #2 to discuss the difference between school and classroom rules/routines. Explain that school rules and routines apply to all individuals within the school no matter which class they are in. There are a lot of other rules/routines that are left up to a teacher to determine for the students in their individual classrooms. Therefore, some rules and routines may look different from one classroom to another.
3. Use the speaker notes in the second slide to generate a discussion on different rules/routines for different classrooms.
4. Use slide #3 to explain to students that the relationship between a school and its classrooms in terms of rules/routines also exists between the United States and the 50 individual states.

ACTIVITY

5. Display the “Constitutions” slides. Review slide #1, reminding students that the rules/laws for the United States as a whole can be found in the U.S. Constitution. This document protects the rights of all people in America and outlines the organization for our national government. The Florida Constitution exists for the same purpose, but addresses the state and local government and the people of Florida specifically. A state constitution is something that every state has. Ask students: Why do you think our Founders gave the states power to make their own rules and constitutions? (See speaker notes for guided responses.)
6. Project slide #2 and read and interpret the language of the Tenth Amendment together. Explain to students that after the Founders set up our national government function, structure, and powers, they added the Tenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution to say that all of the rest of the powers and decisions would be left up to individual states. So this is why states write their own constitutions. These decisions include topics such as education, owning property, and maintaining roads in the state. Each state also has to decide how to organize their state and local government, which for the majority will resemble the national government.

Teacher Note: To assist with student understanding, continue to go back to the whole school/individual classrooms analogy from the introduction/hook.

7. Move to slide #3 to offer students a brief comparison of the U.S. Constitution and the Florida Constitution. Ask students to note similarities and differences.

Teacher Note: *Students should see that both establish the same structure/function of government but that the Florida constitution is more in-depth and has been changed more often.*

8. Use slide #4 to view the preambles of both the United States and Florida constitutions. The preamble is the part of the document in which we find the purpose of the government it is creating. Briefly have students scan the text to determine if the purpose stated in the U.S. Constitution is similar or different to the purpose stated in the Florida Constitution. (similar)

CLOSURE/FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

9. Using slide #5, work as a class to read and analyze the text of the Florida Preamble. Using the speaker notes to assist, discuss what the terms mean for the people of Florida, circling back to the documents' purposes of protecting people's rights as well as establishing a structure for government.
10. Have students answer the following question: How does the Florida Constitution serve, or protect, the people in the state?
 - a. Responses may include: The constitution protects rights, establishes the state's government, gives people power, protects freedoms, ensures peace, establishes rules for state needs etc.

Teacher Note: *You may have students post their responses on sticky notes on the board, verbally pair and share, or complete a whole group discussion.*

11. If time allows the students can also read interesting facts (slide #6) about some of the other state constitutions to see how diverse they all are.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

FJCC/LFI Website

ANSWER KEYS

n/a

SOURCES

n/a