| **FOREIGN POLICY, DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES, AND HUMAN RIGHTS** |
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| **SS.912.CG.4.3** Explain how U.S. foreign policy supports democratic principles and protects human rights around the world. |

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| **2023 BENCHMARK UPDATES** |
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| * Updated from SS.912.C.4.3   + Changed from “~~Assess~~ human rights policies of the United States and ~~other countries~~.” to “Explain how U.S. foreign policy supports democratic principles and protects human rights around the world.” * Depth of Knowledge Changes within Benchmark   + Changed from “Assess” to “Explain” * Addition of Benchmark Clarifications   + Benchmark clarifications are an addition to the 2023-2024 high school civics and government benchmarks. Benchmark clarifications are listed in the lesson summary below. |

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## Essential Teacher Content Background Information

[*Teacher Content Notes Not Appropriate For Student Use*]

| **This section addresses the following topics:**   1. The U.S. Founding Documents’ Influence on Global Liberty 2. How U.S. Foreign Policy Supports Democratic Principles and Protects Human Rights |
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**1. The U.S. Founding Documents’ Influence on Global Liberty**

The founding documents of the United States, notably the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, as well as the ideas contained in the Bill of Rights, have had an immeasurable influence on the concept of liberty and the spread of democracy around the world.

The Declaration of Independence, with its pronouncement that “all men” are endowed with the “unalienable rights” to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”, has served ever since as an inspiration for independence and/or democracy movements in many of the world’s countries. Political leaders and freedom activists in various nations looked to the American Revolution as a model for achieving freedom from colonial or oppressive rule and bringing the ideals of popular sovereignty to their nations.

The Constitution, with its emphasis on limited government, individual rights, separation of powers, checks and balances, and consent of the governed, has been a key model for democratic governance worldwide since its ratification. Many nations since have enshrined similar principles into their own constitutions, promoting liberty and limiting the power of and potential for authoritarian rulers. What started in 1787 as a “great experiment” has become the world’s oldest active codified constitution worth emulating.

Like the Constitution itself, the Bill of Rights has also been influential in shaping the concept of human rights and civil liberties around the world. Ideas such as freedom of speech, religion, press, and protections such as due process, the rights of the accused, and protection from cruel and unusual punishment, have become fundamental principles that are enshrined in international conventions like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

**2. How U.S. Foreign Policy Supports Democratic Principles and Protects Human Rights**

Inspired by the documents above, the United States, as a global superpower, has used its foreign policy to protect liberty and advocate for democracy and human rights on the international stage. American leaders and organizations have often championed the cause of liberty and democratization, promoting democratic values and the rule of law in various parts of the world. The United States uses foreign policy methods such as foreign aid, military action, diplomatic agreements, economic policies, and intelligence gathering to support and promote these principles worldwide. From fighting in two world wars, to defeating communism in the Cold War, to the ongoing battles with the War on Terror, these foreign policy aims have dominated presidential agendas since the early 1900s.

The cabinet level department that is responsible for making and implementing foreign policy is the Department of State. According to the Department’s mission statement on Human Rights and Democracy:

*Supporting democracy not only promotes such fundamental American values as religious freedom and worker rights, but also helps create a more secure, stable, and prosperous global arena in which the United States can advance its national interests. In addition, democracy is the one national interest that helps to secure all the others. Democratically governed nations are more likely to secure the peace, deter aggression, expand open markets, promote economic development, protect American citizens, combat international terrorism and crime, uphold human and worker rights, avoid humanitarian crises and refugee flows, improve the global environment, and protect human health.*

*The United States uses a wide range of tools to advance a freedom agenda, including bilateral diplomacy, multilateral engagement, foreign assistance, reporting and public outreach, and economic sanctions. The Department of State works with democratic partners, international and regional organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and engaged citizens to support those seeking freedom.*

To support this policy issue, the Department of State also created a Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) to lead our efforts in promoting democracy and protecting human rights globally. There mission statement reads:

*The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) champions universal values, including respect for the rule of law, democratic institutions, and human rights.  The Bureau’s work helps bolster democratic institutions, confront democratic backsliding, promote accountability, uphold internationally recognized labor standards, and advance the rights and equity of members of marginalized racial, ethnic, and religious communities, indigenous persons, persons with disabilities, and LGBTQI+ persons.*

## **Lesson Summary**

| **BENCHMARK** |
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| **SS.912.CG.4.3** Explain how U.S. foreign policy supports democratic principles and protects human rights around the world. |
| **BENCHMARK CLARIFICATIONS** |
| * Students will explain how U.S. foreign policy aims to protect liberty around the world and describe how the founding documents support the extension of liberty to all mankind. |
| **FLORIDA CIVIC LITERACY EXAM COMPETENCY CONNECTION** |
| **Competency 1:** Understanding of the basic principles and practices of American democracy and how they are applied in our republican form of government |
| **OVERVIEW** |
| In this lesson, students will explain how U.S. foreign policy supports democratic principles and protects human rights around the world, and describe how the founding documents support this extension of liberty to all mankind. |
| **ESSENTIAL QUESTION** |
| How does the U.S. use foreign policy to support democratic principles and protect human rights around the world? |
| **GOVERNMENT CONTENT VOCABULARY** |
| * democracy, diplomacy, foreign policy, founding documents, founding principles, human rights, humanitarian efforts, international relations, liberty, natural rights, U.S. Department of State |
| **INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES** |
| Close reading of text Primary source analysis Current event connections |
| **MATERIALS** |
| * John Locke, Natural Rights video (external link) * Comparing Rights activity sheet * Day 1 Ticket Out The Door * Democracy and U.S. Foreign Policy slide * U.S. Department of State website (external link) * Presidential Foreign Policy Messages * Presidential Foreign Policy Messages Response Sheet |
| **B.E.S.T. STANDARDS** |
| The grade in which this lesson is taught will determine the specific B.E.S.T. standards correlation. Thematically, this lesson aligns to:   * ELA.R.3.2 Paraphrase and Summarize * ELA.V.1.1 Academic Vocabulary |

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## **Suggested Student Activity Sequence & Pace**

| **DAY** | **ACTIVITY SEQUENCE** |
| --- | --- |
| DAY 1 | 1. Begin the lesson by asking students to review the concept of natural rights. Ask them: What is meant by the term ‘*natural rights*’? 2. Give them a few moments to brainstorm and write responses. 3. Call on a few students to share responses. 4. Review with students that natural rights are rights that individuals are born with. They cannot be granted nor taken away by governments. 5. Play the “[John Locke, Natural Rights](https://safesha.re/3u0q)” video to review the concept further and remind students of its origin. 6. After the video, ask students if they can list some founding documents that reinforce Locke’s views on natural rights. (English Bill of Rights, Magna Carta, Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution, Bill of Rights, state constitutions, etc.) 7. Ask students: Do you think the ideas and writings of John Locke and Thomas Jefferson only apply to the people of Britain and the United States? Only democracies? Only that time period? (No) 8. Explain to students that the United States believes that the democratic principles our nation was founded on should be extended to all of mankind. 9. Pass out a “Comparing Rights” activity sheet to each student. 10. Preview the sheet together, noting the sources of the text excerpts. 11. Ask students: What was going on in the world in 1948? 12. Lead students to an understanding that in 1948, the United States had just finished fighting in WWII. Motivated by the defeat of Nazi and communist regimes and in response to the horrors of the Holocaust, the United States led the way in helping the United Nations develop a Universal Declaration of Human Rights. 13. Explain to students that their task is to compare some excerpts from the U.S. Constitution (mostly amendments) with excerpts from the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights to recognize the influence of one over the other. 14. While students read and identify similarities and differences, circulate the room to monitor for engagement and assist as needed. 15. After groups complete the handout, review their answers, taking a few responses for each question and allowing students to revise their answers based on their peers’ responses.   ***Teacher Note***: Use the answer key provided to guide the discussion.   1. End class by passing out the “Day 1 Ticket Out The Door,” having students reflect on what they have learned. |

| DAY 2 | 1. Display the “Democracy and U.S. Foreign Policy” slide and have students complete a quick write that defends whether they agree or disagree with the statement on slide 1. 2. Have students share some of their opinions. 3. Ask students: How can the United States use foreign policy to influence other nations? 4. Lead students in a short review of the ‘how and why’ the United States makes foreign policy decisions as a global leader. Topics may include: the interconnectedness of foreign and domestic policy, government and non-governmental agencies involved with foreign policy, and the impact foreign policy has on relationships with other nations.   ***Teacher Note:*** This information is all included in SS.912.CG.4.2.   1. Project the “[U.S. Department of State](https://www.state.gov/)” website. 2. Remind students that the U.S. State Department plays one of the largest roles in implementing U.S. foreign policy. 3. Navigate to ‘Policy Issues’ in the top menu. Scroll through the list of policy issues that the United States focuses on when it comes to foreign policy. 4. Click on ‘Human Rights and Democracy’ and read this section together as a class. 5. Ask students: According to this statement, why is supporting democratic principles and protecting human rights around the world important? How (what tools) does the United States use to achieve this foreign policy goal? 6. Explore a little about the ‘Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL)’ as well.   ***Teacher Note***: If desired, you may copy this into a handout/reading for the students or encourage them to take notes.   1. Point out to students that the first paragraph on the ‘Human Rights and Democracy’ page alludes to the fact that this is not a new foreign policy initiative, but began with our founding. Explain to students that with the rest of class today, they will explore how U.S. foreign policy has had these same aims throughout history. 2. Divide students into 7 groups. 3. Assign each group one president to focus on in the “Presidential Foreign Policy Messages” and provide groups a copy of the “Presidential Foreign Policy Messages Response Sheet”. 4. In their groups, have students read the words of a former U.S. president on the topic of foreign policy. Encourage groups to mark text as they read. 5. During and after reading, groups should work together to complete the response sheet. 6. Provide groups time to work while you monitor the room for engagement and understanding. 7. After each group completes their reading, go around the room and provide time for each group to share what their president said. |
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## Government **Content Vocabulary**

| **Word/Term** | **Definition** |
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| **democracy** | a form of government in which political power is held by the people |
| **diplomacy** | the work of keeping good relations between the governments of different countries |
| **foreign policy** | a government’s decisions about relationships with other countries |
| **founding documents** | the documents that expressed the principles and ideas upon which the United States was founded, including the Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution, and the Bill of Rights |
| **founding principles** | principles the founding documents of the United States were based on: due process of law, equality of mankind, limited government, natural rights, consent of the governed, and the rule of law |
| **human rights** | the right to “have”; afforded to all people despite age, race, sex, religion, ethnicity, or any other status; subset of natural rights; often provided by governments and may change over time |
| **humanitarian efforts** | work focused on improving the health and happiness of other people |
| **international relations** | when countries have something to gain by working together to solve problems; countries may cooperate in order to avoid going to war or to manage a resource |
| **liberty** | the state of being free within society and able to act according to one’s own conscience |
| **natural rights** | rights individuals are born with; cannot be given or taken by government; ex: life, liberty, pursuit of happiness |
| **U.S. Department of State** | the cabinet level department in the U.S. government that makes and implements foreign policies; part of the executive branch of the national government |

## Additional Resources, Answer Keys, and Sources

| **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES** |
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| [Florida Department of Education: Florida Civic Literacy Exam Homepage](https://www.fldoe.org/accountability/assessments/k-12-student-assessment/fcle.stml)  Florida Department of Education’s Civic Literacy Reading List   * *English Declaration of Rights* by the Parliament of England * *Virginia Declaration of Rights* by George Mason |

| **ANSWER KEYS** |
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| Sample Answers: Comparing Rights activity sheet  Sample Answers: Presidential Foreign Policy Messages Response Sheet |

| **SOURCES** |
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| John Locke, Natural Rights video from NBC News Learn:<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T7-Abmn9lZY>  United Nations, Universal Declaration of Human Rights: <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>  U.S. Constitution: <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript>  An Open Letter to 2016 Presidential Candidates: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2016/03/16/the-u-s-must-put-democracy-at-the-center-of-its-foreign-policy/>  George W. Bush’s Second Inaugural Address: <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2005/01/20050120-1.html>  Woodrow Wilson’s Congressional Address 1917: <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/address-to-congress-declaration-of-war-against-germany>  FDR Fireside Chat 16 on the “Arsenal of Democracy”: <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/december-29-1940-fireside-chat-16-arsenal-democracy>  Acceptance of Democratic Nomination for President from JFK Library: <https://www.jfklibrary.org/learn/about-jfk/historic-speeches/acceptance-of-democratic-nomination-for-president>  Bill Clinton’s Second Inaugural Address: <https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/clinton2.asp>  Jimmy Carter’s Farewell Address: <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/farewell-address-the-nation-0> Ronald Reagan’s Address to British Parliament: <https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/speech/address-members-british-parliament>  U.S. Department of State Website: <https://www.state.gov/> |