



# High School American Government Framework

## Introduction

The Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 13A.04.08.01, Requirements for Social Studies Instructional Programs for Grades Prekindergarten – 12 states that, “each local education agency shall provide in public schools an instructional program in social studies each year for all students in grades prekindergarten – 8; and offer in public schools a social studies program in grades 9 – 12 which enables students to meet graduation requirements and to select social studies electives.”

State Frameworks are developed by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to support local education agencies in providing high-quality instructional programs in social studies. State Frameworks are defined as supporting documents and provide guidance for implementing the State Standards in Social Studies which are reviewed and adopted by the Maryland State Board of Education every eight years. State Frameworks also provide consistency in learning expectations for students in social studies programs across the twenty-four local education agencies as local curriculum is developed and adopted using these documents as a foundation.

MSDE shall update the State Frameworks in Social Studies in the manner and time the State Superintendent of Schools determines is necessary to ensure alignment with best-in-class, research-based practices. Tenure and stability of State Frameworks affords local education agencies the necessary time to procure supporting instructional materials, provide professional development, and to measure student growth within the program. Educators, practitioners, and experts who participate in writing workgroups for State Frameworks represent the diversity of stakeholders across Maryland. State Frameworks in high school social studies were developed, reviewed, and revised by teams of Maryland educators and practitioners, including local education agency content curriculum specialists, classroom teachers, accessibility staff, and academic researchers and experts in close collaboration with MSDE.

The American Government Social Studies Framework was released in January 2018, updated in December 2022.

## Course Overview

American government provides Maryland students with the opportunity to learn the Constitutional framework and democratic process that structure the State and national political system. American Government establishes a knowledge base which supports the development of skills needed for citizens in a participatory democracy. Effective citizens possess a clear understanding of government: its structure, its purposes, and its processes. They gather, communicate, and utilize information in order to evaluate the competing goals and varying points of view related to public issues. Utilizing their knowledge and skills, effective citizens purposely choose to be involved in their political system and exert influence in a participatory democracy.

To assist students in acquiring these skills, the content of the course is arranged around five of the six state social studies standards:

STANDARD	DESCRIPTION OF STANDARD
<b>Standard 1.0: Civics</b>	Students shall inquire about the historical development of the fundamental concepts and processes of authority, power, and influence with particular emphasis on civic reasoning in order to become informed, responsible citizens, engage in the political process, and contribute to society.
<b>Standard 2.0: Peoples of the Nations and World</b>	Students shall inquire about the people of the United States and the world using a historically grounded, multidisciplinary approach in order to recognize multiple narratives and acknowledge the diversity and commonality of the human experience.
<b>Standard 3.0: Geography</b>	Students shall inquire about the role of culture, technology, and the environment in the location, distribution, and impact of human activities using geographic tools and spatial thinking in order to demonstrate a significance of place.
<b>Standard 4.0: Economics</b>	Students will inquire about decisions made by individuals and groups using economic reasoning in order to understand the historical development and current status of economic principles, institutions, and processes needed to be effective citizens, consumers, and workers participating in local communities, the nation, and the world.
<b>Standard 5.0: History</b>	Students will inquire about significant events, ideas, beliefs, and themes to identify patterns, trends, and to analyze how individuals and societies have changed over time to make connections to the present in their communities, Maryland, the United States, and the world.

STANDARD	DESCRIPTION OF STANDARD
<b>Standard 6.0: Skills and Processes</b>	Students will inquire about civics, geography, economics, history, and people and nations of the world using disciplinary literacy skills and processes to critically evaluate content through a variety of source materials across disciplines and use reading, writing, and other forms of communication to develop, defend, and critique arguments in order to take informed action.

### Weaving of Government Principles

The American Government course intentionally emphasizes the foundational principles of federalism, separation of powers, checks and balances, judicial review, representative democracy, limited government, rule of law, individual rights and responsibilities, consent of the governed, majority rule, popular sovereignty, and equal protection. These principles are introduced in the first unit and are revisited and assessed throughout the course. Students are expected to apply these principles to the outcome of Supreme Court decisions and the development and implementation of government policies.

### Standard 6.0

The four dimensions of The Inquiry Arc are reflected in Maryland’s Standard 6.0:

1. **Developing Questions & Planning Inquiries** – constructing compelling and supporting questions, planning inquiries, and determining helpful sources.
2. **Applying Disciplinary Concepts & Tools** – applying the disciplinary concepts and tools of civics, geography, economics, and history.
3. **Evaluating Sources & Using Evidence** – evaluating sources, identifying credible, relevant information contained in sources, using evidence to support and develop claims.
4. **Communicating and Critiquing Conclusions & Taking Informed Action** – communicating and presenting claims, critiquing claims, and identifying ways to address problems in their communities.

Throughout the course, students should be employing the social studies skills and processes delineated in the 6.0 Skills and Processes standard. Organizing these skills is the Inquiry Arc which provides a structure to facilitate effective instruction in social studies.

*The Inquiry Arc*

Within the Standard 6.0, students will be specifically assessed on the following skills:

- The student will evaluate the credibility of the sources by considering the authority, origin, type, context, and corroborative value of each source.
- The student will identify credible, relevant information contained in sources.
- The student will construct arguments using precise and knowledgeable claims, with evidence from multiple sources.

## Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP) Government Assessment

The MCAP government assessment will measure both students' understanding of the core content and the skills and processes outlined in the assessment limits.

The MCAP government assessment is an End of Course Assessment (EOC). An EOC assessment is a state-created assessment, incorporated into local courses as a final exam with a percentage counting towards the students' final grades. This stands in contrast to an exit exam where the student must pass the assessment for graduation. In Maryland, the State Board determined that the EOC would comprise 20 percent of the student's grade in the relevant course. (Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 13A.03.02.06).

The assessment will measure this understanding through selected response, constructed response items, and an Evidence Based Argument Set (EBAS). The EBAS set have been designed to comply with the parameters set forth by the Maryland General Assembly. In 2017, the Maryland General Assembly amended Md. Ed. Art §7-203 Education Accountability Program. The amendment called for an update to the high school level social studies assessment to allow for a new item type by stating that it should "Consist, to the greatest extent possible, of criterion-referenced, performance-based tasks that require students to utilize critical and historical thinking skills and analyze primary sources."

### *Item Types:*

#### **Evidence Based Argument Set (EBAS):** Standard 6.0

The EBAS is organized around a compelling question. In order to answer the compelling question, students are provided four to five sources; each source also includes source information. While all topics deal with government concepts, background information has also been provided to ensure the EBAS assesses skills and not content. Using the information provided by the EBAS set, students will answer skills-based, selected response questions. Then develop and support a claim to the compelling question using evidence from the sources.

#### **Content Selected Response:** Standards 1.0, 2.0, 3.0, 4.0

- **Multiple Choice-** Students will select their response to the question from four answer options based upon questions constructed from the social studies standards.
- **Technology Enhanced** - Students will manipulate information on the testing platform to demonstrate knowledge. This could involve highlighting text, moving statements into categories, or selecting multiple responses. Students who are taking the assessment in a paper form will have a paper variant of the on-line Technology Enhanced item.

**Content Constructed Response:** Standards 1.0, 2.0, 3.0, 4.0

- **Brief Constructed Response-** Students must develop the answer to an open-ended content-based question. Some of the questions require students to use information from a stimulus (map, political cartoon, excerpt, etc.), along with the content knowledge.

*Structure of Assessment:*

This high-level outline describes the structure of the MCAP government assessment, item types, and standards that are assessed in the MCAP government test. Although not indicated within the outline, field test items are placed throughout the assessment and vary in type and position from year to year.

SESSION	TIME	ITEM TYPES	STANDARDS ASSESSED IN SESSION
1	40 Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selected Response</li> <li>• Constructed Response</li> <li>• Technology Enhanced</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.0: Civics</li> <li>• 2.0: Peoples of the Nation and World</li> <li>• 3.0: Geography</li> <li>• 4.0: Economics</li> </ul>
2	40 Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selected Response</li> <li>• Constructed Response</li> <li>• Technology Enhanced</li> <li>• Evidence Based Argument Set</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.0: Civics</li> <li>• 2.0: Peoples of the Nation and World</li> <li>• 3.0: Geography</li> <li>• 4.0: Economics</li> <li>• 6.0: Skills and Processes</li> </ul>
3	40 Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selected Response</li> <li>• Constructed Response</li> <li>• Technology Enhanced</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.0: Civics</li> <li>• 2.0: Peoples of the Nation and World</li> <li>• 3.0: Geography</li> <li>• 4.0: Economics</li> </ul>

SESSION	TIME	ITEM TYPES	STANDARDS ASSESSED IN SESSION
4	40 Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Selected Response</li> <li>Constructed Response</li> <li>Technology Enhanced</li> <li>Evidence Based Argument Set</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.0: Civics</li> <li>2.0: Peoples of the Nation and World</li> <li>3.0: Geography</li> <li>4.0: Economics</li> <li>6.0: Skills and Processes</li> </ul>

This table indicates the breakdown of items on the MCAP government assessment by the Maryland Social Studies Standard reporting category.

STANDARD	Percentage
Standard 1.0: Civics	48%
Standard 2.0: Peoples of the Nations and World	12%
Standard 3.0: Geography	12%
Standard 4.0: Economics	15%
Standard 6.0: Skills and Processes	13%

## Using this document:

The organization of the framework is uniform throughout the entire document. On this page the key terms that are used are defined to support the use of the document.

### Sample Unit Template

**Unit Enduring Understanding:** An **enduring understanding** is the overarching, conceptual guideline for the unit. Enduring understandings explain why this unit is important and connect important concepts and processes to history and the world today.

**Unit Question:** A **unit question** connects the big ideas in the enduring understandings and essential questions to the period of study. Everything in the unit contributes to answering this question.

### Layout of Content

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p>The <b>content topic</b> indicates the umbrella under which several common topics are organized for study.</p>	<p><b>Essential questions</b> help students unpack the big ideas in the enduring understandings and social studies thinking skills. These are questions that can be asked and answered in different times and places.</p>	<p><b>Indicator</b> statements assist teachers in determining how to link specific content to be studied to the essential question.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Objectives</b> provide teachers with detailed information regarding what specific learning should occur.</li> </ul>	<p>Assessment limits designate the topics that can have questions written to measure student understanding. If topics do not appear in the assessment limits, then students cannot be held accountable for knowing that information.</p>

## Structure and Origins of Government

**Unit Enduring Understanding:** In the United States, principles and structures are employed to form a democratic system that serves the purposes of government and protects the rights and authority of citizens.

**Unit Question:** How do the principles and structures of the United States government assist and/or impede meeting the purposes of government while protecting the rights and authority of the citizens?

### Unit Content

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
Types of Government	Why do governments form?	<p>The student will analyze advantages and disadvantages of various types of governments throughout the world by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparing and describing the advantages and disadvantages of direct, representative, presidential, and parliamentary democracies.</li> <li>• Evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of democratic and authoritarian political systems.</li> <li>• Comparing authoritarian and democratic governments on distribution of power, efficiency of decision making, maintaining public order, protecting individual rights, and the ability to address a crisis.</li> </ul>	<p>→ Characteristics of political systems including: democratic (parliamentary, presidential) and authoritarian (absolute monarchy, oligarchy, dictatorship and totalitarian).</p> <p>→ Compare types of political systems on: distribution of power, efficiency of decision making, maintaining public order, protecting individual rights, and the ability to address a crisis.</p>

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p><b>Origins and Founding Principles</b></p>	<p><b>Where do the principles of democratic government originate?</b></p>	<p><b>Students will analyze historic documents to determine the basic principles of United States government and apply them to real world situations by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tracing the evolution of limited government and other principles from English common law through the Enlightenment philosophers to the foundations of American government.</li> <li>• Explaining representative democracy, popular sovereignty, and consent of the governed, and demonstrate how these concepts have ensured citizens’ power over time.</li> <li>• Describing how the Declaration of Independence articulates the philosophy of government founded on basic principles.</li> <li>• Analyzing how the Constitution reflects the basic principles and eliminated the weaknesses of the Articles of the Confederation.</li> <li>• Analyzing how the principles of government are applied to real world situations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Historic Documents: Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, United States Constitution, and the Bill of Rights.</li> <li>→ Principles: Federalism, separation of powers, checks and balances, judicial review, representative democracy, limited government, rule of law, individual rights and responsibilities, consent of the governed, majority rule, popular sovereignty, and equal protection.</li> <li>→ Students are not expected to know the contents of any document by number.</li> <li>→ Other documents, contemporary sources, and amendments may be assessed but excerpts will be provided.</li> </ul>

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p><b>Origins and Founding Principles</b></p>	<p><b>How does government structure affect how power is organized?</b></p>	<p><b>The student will evaluate how the principles of government assist or impede the functioning of government by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describing how the Constitution structures the government and provides for separation of powers, checks and balances, and judicial review, in such a way as to limit governmental power in favor of the people.</li> <li>• Explaining how the delegated, reserved, concurrent, and denied powers of government are divided in federalism and shared between national and state levels.</li> <li>• Describing the formal process for amending the Constitution and why this process is necessary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Historic Documents: Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, United States Constitution, and the Bill of Rights.</li> <li>→ Principles: Federalism, separation of powers, checks and balances, judicial review, representative democracy, limited government, rule of law, individual rights and responsibilities, consent of the governed, majority rule, popular sovereignty, and equal protection.</li> <li>→ Students are not expected to know the contents of any document by number.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Origins and Founding Principles</b></p>	<p><b>How do the principles of government influence the structure of government to protect the rights of individuals?</b></p>	<p><b>The student will evaluate how the principles of government assist or impede the functioning of government by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluating the balance between majority rule and the protection of individual rights.</li> <li>• Identifying the rights in the Bill of Rights and how they protect individuals and limit the power of government.</li> <li>• Analyzing the purpose of limited government and its impact on the structure, function, and processes of government.</li> <li>• Analyzing how principles are incorporated into the historic documents of American government and how those principles have been applied.</li> <li>• Analyzing how the principles of government are applied to real world situations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Basic principles: Federalism, separation of powers, checks and balances, judicial review, representative democracy, limited government, rule of law, individual rights and responsibilities, consent of the governed, majority rule, popular sovereignty, and equal protection.</li> <li>→ Historic Documents: Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, United States Constitution, and the Bill of Rights.</li> <li>→ Students are to know which rights/protections are addressed by the first ten amendments.</li> <li>→ Students are not expected to know the contents of any document by number.</li> <li>→ Other documents, contemporary sources, and amendments may be assessed but excerpts will be provided.</li> </ul>
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## The Legislative Branch

**Unit Enduring Understanding:** In the United States, principles and structures are employed to form a legislative branch that serves the purposes established in the Constitution and protects the rights and authority of citizens.

**Unit Question:** How do the foundational principles and structures of government assist or impede the functioning of government in the legislative branch?

### Unit Content

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p><b>Structure and Organization of Legislative Branch</b></p>	<p><b>How do principles of government influence the structure and organization of the legislative branch as established in the Constitution?</b></p>	<p><b>The student will evaluate how the principles of government assist or impede the functioning of the [Legislative Branch] of government by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describing the bicameral structure, powers, and organization of the United States Congress and the Maryland General Assembly.</li> <li>• Comparing and contrasting the powers and responsibilities of local, state, and national legislative bodies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Principles: Federalism, separation of powers, checks and balances, judicial review, representative democracy, limited government, rule of law, individual rights and responsibilities, consent of the governed, majority rule, popular sovereignty, and equal protection.</li> <li>→ Federal and Maryland state government: Legislative powers, structure, and organization.</li> <li>→ Local government will be assessed in terms of powers and responsibilities.</li> <li>→ Selection of national and Maryland state leaders via election/appointment process.</li> </ul>

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
Elections	<p>Are congressional elections organized to maintain a representative democracy?</p>	<p>The student will explain roles and analyze strategies individuals or groups may use to initiate change in governmental policy and institutions by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explaining tools used by political parties, interest groups, lobbyists, candidates, the media and citizens to impact elections, public policy, and public opinion.</li> <li>• Evaluating the effectiveness of tools used to impact elections, public policy, and public opinion.</li> <li>• Analyzing various methods that individuals or groups may use to influence laws, government policies, and elections including referendum, acts of civil disobedience, voting, boycotts, financial contributions, digital communication, and voting drives.</li> <li>• Evaluating how the election process, including open and closed primaries, affects political outcomes, individual voter behavior, and public opinion.</li> <li>• Analyzing how candidates, campaigns, political parties, and financial contributions influence the political process, policy, and public opinion.</li> <li>• Evaluating how the roles and strategies that individuals and groups use to influence government policy and institutions affect the concepts of government.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Impact of political parties, interest groups, lobbyists, candidates, the media, and citizens on elections, public policy, and public opinion.</li> <li>→ Tools utilized to impact elections, public policy, and opinion: Voter registration drives, Open and Closed Primaries, lobbying, Political Action Committees (PACs), financial contributions, referendums, civil disobedience, voting, boycotts, and digital communication.</li> </ul>

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
Elections	Are congressional elections organized to maintain a representative democracy?	<p>The student will evaluate demographic factors related to political participation, public policy, and government policies by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determining the impact of reapportionment, redistricting, and gerrymandering on government policies, fiscal decisions, and representation.</li> </ul>	<p>→ Political causes and effects of reapportionment, redistricting, gerrymandering, and voting patterns.</p>
Powers of Congress	Does Congress have the appropriate amount of power to fulfill its Constitutional responsibilities?	<p>The student will evaluate how the principles of government assist or impede the functioning of government by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describing the structure, powers, and organization of the legislative branch on the federal, state, and local level.</li> <li>Describing how the Constitution provides for separation of powers and checks and balances.</li> <li>Evaluating the Elastic Clause and how implied powers impact the function of government.</li> <li>Determining why Bills of Attainder, ex post facto laws, and the suspension of Habeas Corpus are denied powers.</li> </ul>	<p>→ Principles: Federalism, separation of powers, checks and balances, judicial review, representative democracy, limited government, rule of law, individual rights and responsibilities, consent of the governed, majority rule, popular sovereignty, and equal protection.</p> <p>→ Federal and Maryland State Government: Legislative powers, structure, and organization.</p>

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p>Lawmaking</p>	<p>How does the process of lawmaking assist and impede the functioning of the legislative branch?</p>	<p>The student will evaluate how the principles of government assist or impede the functioning of the [Legislative Branch] of government by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describing how laws are made and the tools that assist and/or impede the process.</li> </ul>	<p>→ Federal and Maryland State Government: Legislative powers, structure, and organization.</p>

## The Executive Branch

**Unit Enduring Understanding:** In the United States, principles and structures are employed to form an executive branch that serves the purposes established in the Constitution and protects the rights and authority of citizens.

**Unit Question:** How do the foundational principles and structures of government assist or impede the functioning of government in the executive branch?

**Unit Content:**

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p><b>Structure and Organization of the Executive Branch</b></p>	<p><b>How do the principles of government influence the structure of the executive branch as established in the Constitution?</b></p>	<p><b>The student will evaluate how the principles of government assist or impede the functioning of the [Executive Branch] of government by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describing the structure, power, and organization of the executive branch on the federal, state, and local levels.</li> <li>• Explaining how executive departments and regulatory agencies assist in protecting rights, maintaining order and protecting the safety of citizens.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Principles: Federalism, separation of powers, checks and balances, judicial review, representative democracy, limited government, rule of law, individual rights and responsibilities, consent of the governed, majority rule, popular sovereignty, and equal protection.</li> <li>→ Federal and Maryland State Government: Executive powers, structure, and organization.</li> <li>→ Local government will be assessed in terms of powers and responsibilities.</li> </ul>

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p><b>Elections</b></p>	<p><b>Are presidential elections organized to maintain a representative democracy?</b></p>	<p><b>The student will evaluate how the principles of government assist or impede the functioning of the [Executive Branch] of government by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determining how the nominating process, closed and open primaries, and general elections reflect the principles of representative democracy, consent of the governed, and majority rule.</li> <li>• Evaluating the utility of the Electoral College over time.</li> </ul>	<p>→ Selection of national and Maryland State leaders: Electoral College and election/appointment processes.</p>
<p><b>Powers of the Executive Branch</b></p>	<p><b>Do Governors and Presidents have the appropriate amount of power to fulfill his or her constitutional responsibilities?</b></p>	<p><b>The student will evaluate how the principles of government assist or impede the functioning of the [Executive Branch] of government by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparing and contrasting the powers, roles, and responsibilities of local, state and national executives.</li> </ul>	<p>→ Federal and Maryland State Government: Executive powers, structure, and organization.</p> <p>→ Local government will be assessed in terms of powers and responsibilities.</p>

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p><b>Powers of the Executive Branch</b></p>	<p><b>Do Governors and Presidents have the appropriate amount of power to fulfill his or her constitutional responsibilities?</b></p>	<p><b>The student will evaluate how the principles of government assist or impede the functioning of the [Executive Branch] of government by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparing and contrasting the powers, roles, and responsibilities of local, state and national executives.</li> <li>• The student will evaluate the impact of governmental decisions and actions that have affected the rights of individuals and groups in American society and/or have affected maintaining order and/or safety by:</li> <li>• Describing the purpose, limitations and impact of executive orders in protecting rights, maintaining order, and providing safety for citizens.</li> <li>• Analyzing the impact of crisis on expansion of state and federal government power.</li> <li>• Evaluating the role of the state and federal governments concerning issues related to public safety and maintaining order and how those decisions affect individuals and groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Presidential use of power and executive orders on rights, order, and/or safety.</li> <li>→ National government agencies actions affecting rights, order, and/or safety.</li> <li>→ State actions affecting rights, order, and/or safety.</li> </ul>

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p><b>Regulatory Policy</b></p>	<p><b>How has the government’s role and policies adapted to address various public issues?</b></p>	<p><b>The student will analyze regulatory agencies and their social, economic, and political impact on the country, a region, or on/within a state by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describing the role of regulatory agencies in carrying out the policies of the executive branch on the national and state level.</li> <li>• Describing the purpose, roles, and responsibilities of regulatory agencies: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Federal Trade Commission (FTC), Federal Communications Commission (FCC), Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).</li> <li>• Examining how regulatory agencies respond to social issues/concerns and/or market failures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ How regulatory agencies respond to social issues/concerns and/or market failures.</li> <li>→ Regulatory agencies that respond to social issues and/or market failures: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Federal Trade Commission (FTC), Federal Communications Commission (FCC), Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).</li> <li>→ Other national agencies, state, and local agencies can be used, but information will be provided in the item.</li> </ul>

## The Judicial Branch

**Unit Enduring Understanding:** In the United States, principles and structures are employed to form a judicial branch that serves the purposes established in the Constitution and protects the rights and authority of citizens.

**Unit Question:** How do the foundational principles and structures of government assist or impede the functioning of government in the judicial branch?

**Unit Content:**

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p><b>Structure and Powers of the Judiciary</b></p>	<p><b>How does the judicial branch uphold the principles of government, and why is the structure different from the other branches of government</b></p>	<p><b>The student will evaluate how the principles of government assist or impede the functioning of the [Judicial Branch] of Government by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describing the structure, power, and organization of the judicial branch on the federal, state, and local levels.</li> </ul>	<p>→ Principles: Federalism, separation of powers, checks and balances, judicial review, representative democracy, limited government, rule of law, individual rights and responsibilities, consent of the governed, majority rule, popular sovereignty, and equal protection.</p> <p>→ Federal and Maryland State government: Judicial powers, structure, and organization.</p> <p>→ Local government will be assessed in terms of powers and responsibilities.</p>

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p><b>Landmark Decisions and Historical Impact of the Court on American Government</b></p>	<p><b>How have the decisions of the Supreme Court impacted individual rights, government powers, and policies over time?</b></p>	<p><b>The student will analyze the impact of landmark Supreme Court decisions on governmental powers, rights, and responsibilities of citizens in our changing society by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyzing how the Supreme Court decisions in <i>Miranda v. Arizona</i> (1966), <i>Tinker v. Des Moines</i> (1969), and <i>T. L.O. v New Jersey</i> (1985) impacted individual liberty.</li> <li>Analyzing how the Supreme Court decisions in <i>McDonald v. Chicago</i> (2010) impacted federalism.</li> <li>Analyzing how the Supreme Court’s decision in the case of <i>United States v. Nixon</i> (1974) impacted the separation of powers.</li> <li>Analyzing how the Supreme Court’s decision in the case of <i>Marbury v. Madison</i> (1803) impacted limited government and checks and balances.</li> <li>Analyzing how the Supreme Court’s decision in <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> (1954) and <i>Baker v. Carr</i> (1962) impacted equal protection.</li> </ul>	<p>→ <i>Marbury v. Madison</i> (1803), <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> (1954), <i>Baker v. Carr</i> (1962), <i>Miranda v. Arizona</i> (1966), <i>Tinker v. Des Moines Board of Education</i> (1969), <i>U.S. v. Nixon</i> (1974), <i>New Jersey v. T.L.O</i> (1985), and <i>McDonald v. Chicago</i> (2010).</p> <p>→ Cases impact on individual liberty (<i>Tinker</i> and <i>T.L.O.</i>); federalism (<i>McDonald</i>); separation of power (<i>Nixon</i>), limited government and checks and balances (<i>Marbury</i>); equal protection (<i>Brown</i> and <i>Baker</i>).</p> <p>→ Other cases that address the same issues could be used, but information about these cases will be provided in the item.</p>

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p><b>Landmark Decisions and Historical Impact of the Court on American Government</b></p>	<p><b>How have the decisions of the Supreme Court impacted individual rights, government powers, and policies over time?</b></p>	<p><b>The student will evaluate the principle of due process by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explaining how the Supreme Court used the due process and equal protections clauses of the 14th Amendment to incorporate protection of individual rights and extend federal power.</li> </ul>	<p>→ Impact of judicial incorporation on federal power and individual rights.                      → Information about due process cases will be provided in the item.</p>

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p><b>Criminal and Civil Law</b></p>	<p><b>How do two court systems maintain order and uphold individual rights?</b></p>	<p><b>The student will analyze elements, proceedings, and decisions related to criminal and civil law by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describing the role of the courts in settling disputes between individuals.</li> <li>• Analyzing the effectiveness of out- of-court settlements, arbitration, and mediation as alternatives to litigation.</li> <li>• Identifying the elements of civil law including: plaintiff, defendant, contract, breach of contract, torts, damages, preponderance of evidence, and petit jury.</li> <li>• Identifying the elements of criminal law including: defendant, prosecutor, reasonable doubt, felony, misdemeanor, grand jury, indictment, probable cause, presumption of innocence, plea bargaining, writ of habeas corpus, and subpoena.</li> <li>• Comparing the proceedings of civil and criminal cases including: grand jury, petit jury, indictment, standards of proof (beyond a reasonable doubt and preponderance of the evidence), plea bargaining, probable cause, writ of habeas corpus, and subpoena.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Compare and contrast the elements, proceedings, and decisions in civil and criminal law.</li> <li>→ Civil law: Plaintiff, defendant, contract, breach of contract, torts, damages, preponderance of evidence, petit jury, and out-of-court settlements.</li> <li>→ Criminal law: Defendant, prosecutor, reasonable doubt, felony, misdemeanor, grand jury, indictment, probable cause, presumption of innocence, plea bargaining, writ of habeas corpus, and subpoena.</li> </ul>

## Economic Policy

**Unit Enduring Understanding:** United States economic policy is continually adapting to meet competing socio-economic goals.

**Unit Question:** How does the United States balance competing socio-economic goals?

**Unit Content:**

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p><b>Economic Systems</b></p>	<p><b>What kind of economic system should the United States have?</b></p>	<p><b>The student will evaluate how governments affect the answers to the basic economic questions of what to produce, how to produce, and for whom to produce by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explaining how traditional, command and market and mixed economies answer the basic economic questions of what to produce, how to produce and for whom to produce when resources are limited.</li> <li>• Determining how scarcity and opportunity cost affect government decision-making.</li> <li>• Evaluating the role of the United States government in answering the basic economic questions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Role of government in answering the basic economic questions in traditional, command, market, and mixed economies.</li> <li>→ The role of scarcity and opportunity cost in government decision-making.</li> </ul>

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p><b>Economic Goals and Indicators</b></p>	<p><b>How does the United States measure and establish its socio-economic goals?</b></p>	<p><b>The student will analyze the principles of economic costs and benefits and opportunity cost to evaluate the effectiveness of government policy in achieving socio- economic goals by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explaining how the Consumer Price Index (CPI), the unemployment rate, and the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) measure economic performance.</li> <li>• Explaining how the business cycle reflects economic instability, including periods of inflation and recession.</li> <li>• Explaining how governments prioritize the competing socio-economic goals of freedom, growth, stability, equity, national defense, environmental protection, and educational quality in response to changing economic, social, and political conditions.</li> <li>• Evaluating how the principles of economic costs, benefits, and opportunity cost affect public policy issues, such as environmental and healthcare concerns, defense and education policy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Measures of economic performance include Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Consumer Price Index (CPI), and the unemployment rate.</li> <li>→ Business cycle, monetary policy (Federal Reserve actions) and fiscal policy (Legislative and Executive actions) and their effect on economic performance, full employment, and price stability.</li> <li>→ Competing socio-economic goals of freedom, growth, stability, equity, national defense, environmental protection, and educational quality.</li> </ul>

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p><b>Fiscal Policy</b></p>	<p><b>How effective is fiscal policy at promoting full employment, price stability, and economic performance?</b></p>	<p><b>The student will evaluate the effectiveness of current monetary and fiscal policy on promoting full employment, price stability, and economic performance by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describing the role of the state and federal legislative branches in developing fiscal policy.</li> <li>• Analyzing the role of the executive in the budgetary process on the national, state and local level.</li> <li>• Describing how the legislative branch influences economic performance by using the tools of fiscal policy including increasing and decreasing taxes and tariffs and/or spending.</li> <li>• Evaluating the effectiveness of fiscal policy in achieving economic growth, full employment, and price stability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Tools of fiscal policy include increasing/decreasing taxes and tariffs and/or spending.</li> <li>→ Business cycle, monetary policy (Federal Reserve actions) and fiscal policy (Legislative and Executive actions) and their effect on economic performance, full employment, and price stability.</li> </ul>

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p><b>Monetary Policy</b></p>	<p><b>How effective is monetary policy at promoting full employment, price stability, and economic performance?</b></p>	<p><b>The student will evaluate the effectiveness of current monetary and fiscal policy on promoting full employment, price stability, and economic performance by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describing how the Federal Reserve System uses the three tools of monetary policy, including open market operations, changes in the discount rate, and changes in the reserve requirements to influence the economy.</li> <li>• Evaluating the effectiveness of monetary policy in achieving economic growth, full employment, and price stability.</li> </ul>	<p>→ Business cycle, monetary policy (Federal Reserve actions) and fiscal policy (Legislative and Executive actions) and their effect on economic performance, full employment, and price stability.</p>

## Domestic Policy

**Unit Enduring Understanding:** In the United States the government balances competing interests to develop domestic policy that promotes the common good.

**Unit Question:** How does the government balance competing interpretations of the common good in order to implement public policy?

**Unit Content:**

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p><b>Citizens and Public Policy</b></p>	<p><b>How do individuals and groups influence government policy?</b></p>	<p><b>The student will explain roles and analyze strategies individuals or groups may use to initiate change in governmental policy and institutions by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyzing how candidates, campaigns, political parties, the media lobbyists and financial contributions and citizens, influence the political process, policy, and public opinion.</li> <li>• Evaluating the tools that individuals or groups may use to influence laws, government policies, and elections including referendum, acts of civil disobedience, voting, boycotts, financial contributions, digital communication, and voting drives.</li> <li>• Identifying the voting patterns of various demographic groups and their impact on governmental policy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Impact of political parties, interest groups, lobbyists, candidates, the media and citizens on elections, public policy, and public opinion.</li> <li>→ Tools utilized to impact elections, public policy, and opinion: Voter registration drives, Open and Closed Primaries, lobbying, Political Action Committees (PAC), financial contributions, referendums, civil disobedience, voting, boycotts, and digital communication.</li> </ul>

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p><b>Regional Domestic Policy</b></p>	<p><b>How do regional interests shape the formation and implementation of government policy?</b></p>	<p><b>The student will analyze the roles and relationships of regions on the formation and implementation of government policy by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explaining how geographic characteristics and shared interests stimulate regional cooperation between governments and influence foreign policy and effect political decision-making.</li> <li>• Analyzing the importance of regional characteristics and interests including economic development, natural resources, climate and environmental issues, and population shifts in formulating local, state, and national government policy.</li> <li>• Analyzing patterns, trends, and projections of population and how these may affect environmental policy, education spending, health care, and social security.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ International, national, state, local, and/or regional interests that may shape government policy.</li> <li>→ Examples of the criteria used to define a region include economic development, natural resources, population, religion and climate. Regional means different areas within Maryland (e.g. Eastern Shore, mining region, Appalachia, Piedmont Plateau), the United States (e.g., Northeast, Sunbelt, mid-Atlantic regions) and the world.</li> <li>→ Patterns, trends, and projections of population growth in regions and how these may affect the environment, society, and government policy.</li> <li>→ Influence of demographic factors on government funding decisions including Social Security.</li> </ul>

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p><b>Public Policy</b></p>	<p><b>How do the principles of government and competing interests impact the formation and implementation of public policy?</b></p>	<p><b>The student will evaluate roles and policies the government has assumed regarding public issues by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describing how limited government impacts the development and implementation of government policies for entitlements, including social security, housing, and nutritional assistance.</li> <li>• Evaluating how the rights and responsibilities of citizens impact government policies regarding Public Health, including immunization, Medicare and Medicaid, and food safety.</li> <li>• Analyzing how federalism impacts government policies for Education, including Elementary and Secondary Education Act and school choice.</li> <li>• Describing the impact of the rights and responsibilities of citizens on crime and punishment and incarceration.</li> <li>• Analyzing the impact of limited government on government policies for Technology, including cybersecurity, censorship, and energy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Public issues: Entitlements (Social Security, housing and nutritional assistance); Public Health (Immunization, Medicare and Medicaid, food safety); Education (Elementary and Secondary Education Act, school choice); Crime and Punishment (law enforcement and incarceration) and Technology (Cybersecurity, censorship, energy.)</li> <li>→ Impact of the federal policies on federalism, limited government, and/or rights and responsibilities.</li> </ul>

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p><b>Public Policy</b></p>	<p><b>How do the principles of government and competing interests impact the formation and implementation of public policy?</b></p>	<p><b>The student will evaluate the role of government in addressing land use and other environmental issues by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluating the way national, state, and local governments develop policy to address land use and environmental issues, such as pollution, urban sprawl, property rights and land use/ zoning.</li> </ul>	<p>→ National, state, and/or local issues.</p> <p>→ Issues will include government policies related to pollution, urban sprawl, property rights, and land use/zoning.</p>

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p><b>Public Policy</b></p>	<p><b>How do the principles of government and competing interests impact the formation and implementation of public policy?</b></p>	<p><b>The student will analyze policies designed to protect the rights of individuals and groups and to promote equity in American society by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluating the effectiveness of governmental policies (legislation and executive orders) in promoting equity and civil rights for historically marginalized groups.</li> <li>• Examining the impact of equal protection on immigration and affirmative action policies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Policies that address the rights of historically marginalized groups.</li> <li>→ Policies that address immigration and affirmative action.</li> <li>→ Impact of equal protection on policies that address the rights of historically marginalized groups.</li> <li>→ Information about the above policies will be provided in the item.</li> </ul>

## Foreign Policy

**Unit Enduring Understanding:** In the United States, foreign policy is continually adapting to meet its competing foreign policy goals.

**Unit Question:** How does the United States balance competing foreign policy goals?

**Unit Content:**

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p><b>Foreign Policy Goals and Tools</b></p>	<p><b>How does the United States establish and achieve foreign policy goals?</b></p>	<p><b>The student will analyze economic, political, and social issues and their effect on foreign policies of the United States by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyzing the conflicting demands of the United States foreign policy goals of trade, national security, and human rights.</li> <li>• Contrasting isolationism versus interventionism in United States foreign policy.</li> <li>• Explaining the tools used by the president to develop and implement foreign policy.</li> <li>• Examining how the foreign policy tools of military intervention, economic sanctions, foreign aid, and diplomacy affect American relationships with other countries.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Policies of United States government that establish or hinder relationships with other countries include: trade, national security, and human rights.</li> <li>→ Tools used by the United States to affect international relationships: Military intervention, economic sanctions, foreign aid, and diplomacy.</li> </ul>

CONTENT TOPIC	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	INDICATOR AND OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT LIMITS
<p><b>The United States role in the international community</b></p>	<p><b>Does United States participation with international organizations help it achieve its foreign policy goals?</b></p>	<p><b>The student will evaluate the effectiveness of international alliances and organizations from the perspective of the United States by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explaining the military and security functions of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the United Nations (UN).</li> <li>• Explaining the humanitarian role of the Red Cross/Red Crescent and the United Nations.</li> <li>• Explaining the economic function of the United Nations (UN) and the World Trade Organization (WTO).</li> <li>• Analyze how the United States involvement in international organizations advances or hinders the achievement of foreign policy goals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Impact of international alliances and organizations on trade, national security, and/or human rights.</li> <li>→ International alliances and organizations: United Nations (UN), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), World Trade Organization (WTO), and International Red Cross/Red Crescent.</li> <li>→ Other examples of alliances and organizations in which the United States participates may be used, but information will be provided in the item.</li> </ul>