

Lesson: Balance of Power

Grade: Adaptable to all grades

Opening Statement:

Ohio's government is divided into three branches: legislative, executive and judicial, just like the U.S. government. The three branches were created to prevent any one group or person from having too much power. This system also provides "checks and balances" to keep one branch from gaining control of the nation's government.

Activity: Worksheet Balance of Power

Key Vocabulary (Government):

benefit. That which is received as an improvement or advantage as the result of a decision.

bicameral. Composed of two legislative chambers.

civic. Of or pertaining to a city.

civil servant. A person who works for the government.

constitutional. In accordance with the laws of the constitution.

council. A law making group.

country. A unit of political space, the entire land area of a nation or state.

cultural institution. An established custom, practice or relationship of importance in a society.

cultural perspective. The complex set of meanings, attitudes, values, and ideas belonging to a cultural group.

cultural practice. A pattern of behavior accepted by a society.

culture. Learned behavior of a group of people, which includes their belief systems and languages, their social relationships, their institutions and organizations, and their material goods such as food, clothing, buildings, tools, and machines.

delegate. A person sent with power to act for another.

democracy. A system of government in which political control is exercised by all of the people, either directly or through their elected representatives.

dictatorship. A system of government in which those who rule usually acquire and maintain authority by force and cannot be held responsible to the will of the people.

diffusion. The spread of people, ideas, technology, and products among places.

direct democracy. A democratic system of government in which the people exercise political control and participate directly in decision making.

direct primary. The election of candidates by party members to run against candidates from other parties.

electoral college. Formal voters of the U.S. who elect the president and vice president.

executive branch. The part of government that puts laws into action.

federalism. A form of political organization in which governmental power is divided between a central government and territorial subdivisions – under the U.S. Constitution, between the national and state governments.

home rule. Local self government.

impeach. To officially charge a person in public office with wrongdoing.

initiative. The right of citizens or the legislature to introduce a matter for legislation either to the legislative body or directly to the citizens.

issue. A point, matter, or problem to be decided.

judicial branch. The branch of government that interprets the laws.

municipality. A town or city.

nation. A group of people bound together by a strong sense of shared values and cultural characteristics, including language, religion, and common history.

ordinance. Law made by a town or city government.

perspective. A specific point of view in understanding or judging things or events.

popular government. Government responsive to and representative of the people.

presidential democracy. A system of government characterized by a separation of powers between independent and coequal executive and legislative branches such as the United States.

recall. Remove an official from public office by popular vote.

referendum. The process in which a measure is passed by the legislature is submitted (referred) to the voters for final approval or rejection or a petition process by which a certain percentage of electors (voters) can order recently passed legislation be submitted to the electors (voters) for approval or rejection.

repeal. Do away with.

representative democracy (republic). A democratic system of government in which the people exercise political control and participate through elected representatives responsible for promoting the common welfare.

resolution. A statement voted upon.

responsibilities. The conditions or tasks for which a person is accountable or answerable.

right. Just claims that belong to a person by law, nature, or tradition.

slogan. A word or phrase used by a group or product to call attention; a motto.

standing committee. A permanent legislative committee, ready to work.

suffrage. Right to vote.

territory. An area of land; the land and waters under the jurisdiction of a state, nation, or sovereign.

township. A unit of land.

urban. Relating to a city.

veto. To refuse to agree, causing it to be considered or canceled.

Social Studies Content Standards:

Government (Role of Government)

- 1st. Recognize the role of authority figures in providing for the safety and security of individuals.
- 1st. Explain how voting can be used to make group decisions.
- 2nd. Identify leaders such as mayor, governor, and president and explain that they are elected by the people.

2nd. Explain how a system of government provides order to a group such as a school or community and why government is necessary including: a. Making and enforcing laws; b. Providing leadership; c. Providing services; d. Resolving disputes.

3rd. Explain the major functions of local government including: a. Promoting order and security; b. Making laws; c. Settling disputes; d. Providing public services; e. Protecting the rights of individuals.

3rd. Explain the structure of local governments and identify local leaders (e.g., township trustees, county commissioners, city council members, or mayor).

3rd. Identify the location of local government buildings and explain the functions of government that are carried out there.

3rd. Identify goods and services provided by local government, why people need them, and the source of funding (taxation).

3rd. Define power and authority.

3rd. Explain why the use of power without legitimate authority is unjust (e.g., bullying, stealing).

4th. Explain the major responsibilities of each of the three branches of government in Ohio: a. The legislative branch, headed by the General Assembly, makes state laws. b. The executive branch, headed by the governor, carries out and enforces laws made by the General Assembly. c. The judicial branch, headed by the Ohio Supreme Court, interprets and applies the law.

4th. Explain why elections are used to select leaders and decide issues.

5th. Explain major responsibilities of each of the three branches of the U.S. government: a. The legislative branch, headed by Congress, passes laws. b. The executive branch, headed by the president, carries out and enforces the laws made by Congress. c. The judicial branch, headed by the U.S. Supreme Court, interprets and applies the law.

5th. Explain the essential characteristics of American democracy including: a. The people are the source of the government's authority. b. All citizens have the right and responsibility to vote and influence the decisions of the government. The government is run directly by the people or through elected representatives. c. The powers of government are limited by law. d. Basic rights of individuals are guaranteed by the Constitution.

6th. Explain reasons for the creation of government such as: a. Protecting lives, liberty, and property; b. Providing services that individuals cannot provide for themselves.

8th. Explain how political parties developed as a result of attempts to resolve issues in the early years of the United States including: a. Payment of debt; b. Establishment of a national bank; c. Strict or loose interpretation of the Constitution.

11th. Analyze the actions of the U.S. government and evaluate the extent to which those actions reflect characteristics of American democracy and help to serve the public good.

11th. Explain, using examples, how political parties, interest groups, the media, and individuals influence the policy agenda and decision-making of government institutions.

11th. Describe the changing relationships among the branches of the national government, and evaluate applications of the principles of separation of powers and checks and balances for serving the public good and protecting individual rights.

11th. Explain the functions of local and state governments in Ohio and how their powers are derived from the Ohio constitution.

Government (Rules and Laws)

K. Identify purposes for having rules and way that they provide order, security, and safety in the home, school, and community.

1st. Recognize the need for rules in different settings and the need for fairness in such rules.

4th. Explain the purpose of a democratic constitution: a. To provide a framework for a government; b. To limit the power of government; c. To define authority of elected officials.

4th. Explain that the Ohio Constitution tells how the state government should be organized and guarantees the rights of individuals.

8th. Explain the political concepts expressed in the U.S. Constitution: a. Representative democracy; b. Federalism; c. Bicameralism; d. Separation of Powers; e. Checks and balances.

11th. Compare and analyze the powers granted to the national and state governments in the federal system with emphasis on: a. Concurrent powers; b. Reserved powers; c. Implied powers; d. Expressed powers.

Government (Systems of Government)

6th. Describe the defining characteristics of democracies, monarchies, and dictatorships.

7th. Compare direct and representative democracy using examples of ancient Athens, the Roman republic, and the United States today.

9th. Explain how various systems of governments acquire, use, and justify their power.

9th. Analyze the purposes, structures, and functions of various systems of government including: a. Absolute monarchies; b. Constitutional monarchies; c. Parliamentary democracies; d. Presidential democracies; e. Dictatorships; f. Theocracies.

11th. Explain the role of elections and political parties (including third parties) in facilitating the democratic process.

11th. Describe the ways in which public officials are held accountable for the public good including ways they can acquire and lose their offices with emphasis on: a. Appointments; b. Primary and general elections; c. The Electoral College; d. Recall; e. Impeachment.

12th. Identify and analyze issues related to the election process in the United States (e.g., election board policies, technology used in elections, media reporting of election results).

Citizenship (Participation)

4th. Describe the ways in which citizens can promote the common good and influence their government including: a. Voting; b. Communicating with officials; c. Participating in civic and service organizations; d. Performing voluntary service.

6th. Explain how opportunities for citizens to participate in and influence the political process differ under various systems of government.

7th. Explain how the participation of citizens differs under monarchy, direct democracy, and representative democracy.

9th. Describe and compare opportunities for citizen participation under different systems of government including: a. Absolute monarchies; b. Constitutional monarchies; c. Parliamentary democracies; d. Presidential democracies; e. Dictatorships; f. Theocracies.

9th. Analyze how governments and other groups have used propaganda to influence public opinion and behavior.

10th. Describe the ways in which government policy has been shaped and set by the influence of political parties, interest groups, lobbyists, the media, and public opinion with emphasis on: a. Extension of suffrage; b. Labor legislation; c. Civil rights legislation; d. Military policy; e. Environmental legislation; f. Business regulation; g. Educational policy.

11th. Explain how an individual participates in primary and general elections including: a. Registering to vote; b. Identifying the major duties, responsibilities, and qualifications required for a particular position; c. Becoming informed about candidates, and issues; d. Declaring or changing party affiliation; e. Obtaining, marking, and depositing a ballot.

12th. Practice forms of civic discussion and participation consistent with the ideals of citizens of a democratic republic: a. Persuasive speech; b. Panel discussion; c. Debate.

Citizenship (Rights and Responsibilities)

3rd. Describe the responsibilities of citizenship with emphasis on: a. Voting; b. Obeying laws; c. Respecting the rights of others; d. Being informed about current issues; e. Paying taxes.

4th. Explain the importance of leadership and public service.

4th. Explain why characteristics such as respect for the rights of others, fairness, reliability, honest, wisdom, and courage are desirable qualities in the people citizens select as their leaders.

6th. Compare the rights and responsibilities of citizens living under various systems of government.

8th. Show connections between the rights and responsibilities of citizenship including: a. Voting and staying informed on issues; b. Being tried by jury and serving on juries; c. Having rights and respecting the rights of others.

11th. Explain the meaning and importance of each of the rights guaranteed under the Bill of Rights and how they are secured through: a. Legislation; b. The role of the judiciary in upholding rights; c. The role of citizens exercising their rights.

11th. Explain how citizenship includes the exercise of personal responsibility and active participation in a democracy including: a. Behaving in a civil manner; b. Being fiscally responsible; c. Accepting responsibility for the consequences of one's actions; d. Practicing civil discourse; e. Becoming informed on public issues; f. Voting; g. Taking action on public issues; h. Providing public service; i. Serving on juries.

WORKSHEET: Ohio Government Balance of Power

Ohio Government: Balance of Power

Ohio's government is divided into three branches: legislative, executive and judicial, just like the U.S. government. The three branches were created to prevent any one group or person from having too much power. This system also provides "checks and balances" to keep one branch from gaining control of the nation's government.

Legislative:

*Headed by
General Assembly*

- Consists of Ohio Senate and House of Representatives
- Makes state laws
- Passes state laws
- Each legislator (member of General Assembly) represents Ohioans in certain areas of the state
- Can impeach

Executive:

Headed by governor

- Governor carries out the state laws and suggests new ones
- Commands Ohio National Guard
- Conducts ceremonial duties

Judicial:

*Headed by
Ohio Supreme Court*

- Interprets Ohio Constitution
- Reviews state laws to make sure they follow Ohio Constitution
- Decides cases involving if lower courts are challenged

Which branch of government is responsible for the following duties?

E Executive Branch

L Legislative Branch

J Judicial Branch

- _____ Participates in a ceremony to dedicate a new monument in Columbus.
- _____ Decides if a new state law goes against what the Ohio Constitution says.
- _____ Is the official leader of the Ohio National Guard during a war.
- _____ Writes a new law which affects all Ohioans.
- _____ Has the power to impeach (put out of office) government officials.
- _____ Has the power to decide a court case if a lower Ohio court can't.
- _____ Deals with governors of other states.