

NOTE: You will need to sign up for the computer lab (and/or library) for Lessons 14, 27, and 38, 40, 41 and 42. The library should be requested specifically for Lessons 14 and 38 and the computer lab should be requested specifically for Lessons 27, 40, 41 and 42.

TITLE OF LESSON

American Government Unit 1 Lesson 1 – Class Introduction
What is Democracy?

ALIGNMENT WITH STANDARDS

California – History 12.4

TIME ESTIMATE FOR THIS LESSON

One class period

MATERIALS

Sample Class Syllabus (with Parent Letter) – Teacher Page (you will need to modify this with your specific course details)

Student Information Sheet – Student Page

Sample Portfolio – Teachers you will need to create this. Use the American Government Outline to identify the items that students will have in their portfolios. Then create a sample portfolio. If you have taught the class before, use an old student's portfolio (with the student's permission of course)

Sample Binder and Notebook – Teachers, you will need to create this, as well. Look over the lesson below and create binder and notebook accordingly. As the unit progresses, you may wish to keep all worksheets, notes, tests, assignments and vocabulary in these so that students who are absent can find the information they need.

Teacher Notes Lesson 1 – Teacher Page

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- To understand the content of the course by reviewing the course syllabus
 - To identify the central question(s) of the course and examine the culminating class project – Getting Involved Project Portfolio
-

FOCUS AND MOTIVATE STUDENTS – WARM-UP ACTIVITY

- 1) Information and Knowledge – Have students complete the **Student Information Sheet** (Student Page).
 - 2) **Agenda** – Post today's agenda on the board and have students copy it. For today, they will write their agenda on a separate sheet of paper that they should copy into their notebook once they have purchased it. Use the lesson plan to identify the significant pieces of the lesson that you want students to copy. Explain to students that every day, when they walk in the door, they should copy the agenda you post. In this way, if someone is absent, they can ask a peer for the missed assignments because all students will have copies of what they did for each lesson. Likewise, students will know what you are going to cover for the class. Tell students they will keep all of their agendas in the front of their binders.
-

ACTIVITIES – INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP

1. Information and Knowledge – As students enter the class for the first time, greet each one of them at the door and ask them to take a copy of the **Student Information Sheet** (Student Page) before they take their seat. When the class officially begins have students complete the sheet the best they can. Tell them not to worry if they cannot answer some of the questions, but they should try their best. After you have taken attendance and completed all paperwork check to see how far students have completed their sheets. When the majority of students have completed the sheet, briefly go over the answers to the American Government questions. Ask students to write in correct answers underneath their answers for future reference. Before students begin,

explain to them that this activity is only meant to give the teacher an idea of basic knowledge, facts and vocabulary that the students have.

2. Syllabus – Pass out the class syllabus (see the **Sample Class Syllabus** in the *Teacher Pages* – you will need to adjust this and create your own). Ask students to read it silently. Give students 2 - 3 minutes to look over it silently. Go over the entire syllabus in detail. Emphasize the central questions of the course (if time permits you might even want to have students give their opinions on them) and also the Getting Involved Project (GIP). Be sure to explain what will be expected of them for the GIP (e.g., service work, essays, lobbying, field trips) and show them a copy of a **Sample Portfolio** (Teacher Page). They will be completing a portfolio of their work over the course of the next two units.
3. Rules and Expectations – On the second page of the syllabus, review your rules and expectations of the course and draw particular attention to the binder/notebook requirement (show them the **Sample Binder and Notebook** you have created). Draw their attention to the parent letter, attached to the syllabus. Explain to students that their homework assignment for tonight will be threefold:
 - a) They must have their parents read the entire syllabus and sign the second page
 - b) They must bring a three-ring binder with five dividers (that will be used exclusively for this course)
 - c) They must bring a notebook with letter sized paper (that will be used exclusively for this course)

Tell students that they will have until the beginning of Lesson 3 to complete the above assignments, but that you strongly recommend that they get their work completed by Lesson 2.

4. Questions – Ask if students have any questions. Field as many as you can.
 5. Homework Review – At the end of each class, be sure you save time to review the homework assignments.
-

HOMEWORK

- 1) Have parents read and sign the second page of the syllabus.
 - 2) Get a three-ring binder with five dividers.
 - 3) Get a notebook with letter sized paper.
-

GROUP ROLES

None

DOCUMENTATION FOR PORTFOLIO

None