

TITLE OF LESSON

American Government Unit 1 Lesson 39 – Research Essay Graphic Organizer  
*Why should government care about my issue?*

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TIME ESTIMATE FOR THIS LESSON

One class period

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ALIGNMENT WITH STANDARDS

California – History 12.2, 12.3

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MATERIALS

**Current Events 2** – Student Page  
**Research Guide** – Student Page  
**Action Plan** – Student Page  
**Essay Graphic Organizer** – Student Page  
**Persuasive Essay Assignment: Requirement 4d** – Student Page  
**Persuasive Essay Process and Grading Sheet** – Student Page  
**Sample Research Essay** – Teacher Page

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LESSON OBJECTIVES

- To synthesize the GIP research information and class notes into a graphic organizer
  - To become familiar with the scope and look of the full research essay project
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FOCUS AND MOTIVATE STUDENTS – WARM-UP ACTIVITY

- 1) Homework Check – Stamp/initial complete homework assignments. Pass back graded assignments.
  - 2) **Agenda** – Have students copy the goal, agenda, and homework onto the next clean page in their notebooks. Have students take out the **Persuasive Essay Process and Grading** sheet, their **Research Guide**, and their **Action Plan** sheets.
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ACTIVITIES – INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP

1. Review – When students have all of the pages listed above in front of them, briefly review the **Persuasive Essay Process and Grading Sheet**. Pay close attention to steps 1 through 4.
2. Organize Notes – Have students take out all of the research notes that address their problem. You might ask them to cut up the tables in their **Research Guide** to include the notes they took and the source information, or you may choose to ask them to make note cards from their **Research Guide** notes. Ask them to make three piles: pro, con, and both. Or you might have them write pro, con, or both next to the pieces of information on their Research Guide that they think they may want to use for their essay.
3. Choosing Powerful Supporting Evidence – (Teachers you may wish to have students choose their evidence after they have written their **Essay Graphic Organizer**.) From each of their piles, have students choose what they think is the most compelling evidence, keeping in mind the audience for this piece will be state government officials (or if you have chosen to keep the final project for unit 2 local, then their audience will be local government officials.) So they will need to be able to address why their audience should care which means also knowing what your audience cares about (e.g., funding - money and principles - Constitution usually.) Remind students that a solid argument can address/appreciate all sides of an issue regardless of the stance the author chooses to take.
4. Model Essay Organizer – Pass out the **Essay Graphic Organizer**. Students may create their own organizer, but for now, you are going to model a well thought out and organized outline using this organizer. Remind students

that this is a 5-paragraph essay and that in order to organize their notes and information they have received they need to use this sheet (or they may wish to create their own outline format). For those students wishing to complete a Flash Argument, they too should be completing an outline (**Flash Storyboard** or **Essay Graphic Organizer**) to prepare their project. On the overhead, post a copy of the **Essay Graphic Organizer**.

- a. Volunteer – Call on one student volunteer (or you may choose to develop your own essay organizer based on the **Sample Research Essay**, Teacher Page, and use that to walk students through how to outline an essay in this format). Wait until someone raises his/her hand. The privilege of volunteering first today is that the volunteer will have his/her organizer done in front of the class with help.
  - b. Thesis Statement – Then ask that student to formulate a thesis statement about his/her problem. Have the class help, if the student gets stuck. Write it on the overhead in the top box, where the thesis statement goes. The rest of the class can work on creating their own thesis statement for their individual problem here. If there are students that have the same problem as the volunteer, they may not use the ideas given in the model essay organizer. They must create unique ideas.
  - c. Supporting Ideas/Reasons – Next, ask the student to give three supporting ideas/reasons for their thesis statement. Again, use the class to generate ideas. Keep in mind and have the students keep in mind that this is not set in stone. They can change their ideas as they work through the drafting process. Write each of the supporting ideas in the top box under the thesis statement. Have the rest of the class formulate their supporting ideas and write them on their organizers. Note that the three ideas also have their own boxes in the second row of boxes and students should also write the ideas in there.
  - d. Supporting Evidence – Have your volunteer use the note cards they separated above to give at least 2 pieces of evidence to support each reason. Remind them they will need to explain how the evidence supports the reason in their essay. Again, use the class to generate ideas if the volunteer gets stuck. Write all of the evidence in the appropriate boxes. Have the rest of the class find and write their supporting evidence under the appropriate reasons, too. Finally, your volunteer should rewrite the thesis statement in a new and different way in the final box at the bottom of the page. The rest of the class should do the same. You can use this volunteer outline as the model to help students to write a first draft tomorrow. So do not throw it out.
5. Individual Essay Organizers – When students understand what is expected of them, have them get started on completing their individual organizer. Move around the class and help as many students as possible (this will also give you a good sense about which students have gaps in information and where they might need to do more research or need help finding information). Encourage students to move on if they get stuck or don't think they have the right information. If some students finish quickly, have them help others or share their organizer with others who have completed.
  6. Homework Review – With about 5 minutes left before class ends, briefly go over with students their responsibility to get this organizer done if they were unable to complete it. If they are missing information or don't have enough, this means they will have to make a trip to the library/computer lab on their own time. In addition, pass out the **Current Events 2** for homework.
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#### HOMEWORK

- 1) Complete essay or Flash outline.
  - 2) Draft 1: Final Essay or Flash Argument – Use your outline and the **Persuasive Essay Process and Grading** sheet and **Persuasive Essay Assignment: Requirement 4d** as your guides to write or create your first draft. If you are preparing a Flash argument and you have access to Flash, create the first draft of your Flash argument. Otherwise, you may create the Flash argument in class tomorrow.
  - 3) Complete the **Current Events 2**.
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#### GROUP ROLES

None

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#### DOCUMENTATION FOR PORTFOLIO

Action Plan

