

# GEORGIA GOVERNMENT VOCABULARY

## SS8CG1 VOCABULARY– GEORGIA CONSTITUTION and CITIZENS

<b>Georgia State Constitution</b>	the document that outlines the rights, rules, regulations, and procedures for Georgia's citizens and government
<b>Preamble</b>	Introduction to a constitution that describes the purpose and principles of democracy.
<b>Articles</b>	Sections of a constitution that are organized and outlines the rights, rules, regulations, and procedures for both citizens and the state's government
<b>Amendments</b>	additional rules or rights added to a constitution; such as the Bill of Rights
<b>Bill of Rights</b>	a list of rights and freedoms found in both the Georgia and U.S. Constitutions
<b>Separation of Powers</b>	the constitutional principle that limits the powers vested in one person or branch of government
<b>Legislative branch</b>	government branch responsible for creating laws; Georgia General Assembly and US Congress
<b>Executive branch</b>	government branch responsible for enforcing laws and carrying out the daily operations of government programs
<b>Judicial branch</b>	branch of government responsible for interpreting the laws; and providing justice
<b>Checks and Balances</b>	a political system that allows one branch of government to veto or amend the acts of another to prevent one branch from having too much power
<b>Veto</b>	the power held by the executive branch to reject a law; vetoes can be overturned
<b>override</b>	Power of the legislative branch to pass a bill into law despite a president's veto; usually to override a veto requires a 2/3 majority vote
<b>Wisdom-Justice-Moderation</b>	Georgia's state motto; on state flag and official state seal; means experience for legislative branch, fairness for judicial branch, and good decisions and leadership for the executive branch
<b>Rights of Citizens</b>	found in the U.S. and Georgia Bill of Rights; life, liberty, and property; freedom of speech, religion, and the press; freedom from government oppression
<b>Responsibilities of Citizens</b>	duties that all citizens have; some are mandatory, like paying taxes and serving on juries; others are voluntary, such as voting and volunteering
<b>Jury duty</b>	Citizens randomly selected to participate in a trial to determine the innocence or guilt of a suspect
<b>Political Parties</b>	a group of like-minded individuals who share common beliefs and ideas that work together in hopes of electing their members to political office
<b>Democrats</b>	Liberals; left wing; voters typically believe the federal government should take a more active role in people's lives, particularly those who are in need; support equal opportunity, protecting the environment, healthcare for everyone, and labor unions. Popular presidents include Franklin D. Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy.
<b>Republicans</b>	Conservatives; right wing; voters typically believe the federal government should not play a big role in people's lives; favor less government intervention and spending on social programs; support personal responsibility, free market, low taxes, and a strong national defense; against labor unions. Popular presidents include Abraham Lincoln and Ronald Reagan.
<b>Primary Election</b>	election where members of the Republican and Democratic party vote for candidates to run for a specific office such as governor, lieutenant governor, and secretary of state; the winner from each political party then campaigns against the other in the general election in November

<b>General Election</b>	an election where the winning candidates of each party's primary, along with third party candidates and independents, run for political offices
<b>Run-off Election</b>	an election between candidates that did not receive 50% +1 of the vote
<b>Special Election</b>	an election that is used to present a special issue to voters or fill an office vacancy
<b>Nonpartisan</b>	an election where candidates are not officially affiliated with a political party
<b>Voting</b>	a way for the electorate (citizens) to select candidates for political office
<b>Voting Qualifications</b>	required criteria a person must have in order to vote; these include being 18 years of age and being a citizen of the United States, and a legal resident of a county
<b>Precinct</b>	a voting district within a county
<b>Polling Place</b>	location people are assigned to vote based on their residence
<b>Referendum</b>	a direct vote by the people

### SS8CG2 VOCABULARY – LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

<b>Georgia General Assembly</b>	Georgia's legislative branch; made up of a bicameral legislature consisting of the House of Representatives and the Senate
<b>Bill</b>	an idea that is proposed by a citizen or politician in hopes that it can become a law; it can be passed or vetoed
<b>Legislation</b>	acts passed by the legislative branch and approved by the executive branch
<b>Legislature</b>	the total elected body of legislators that includes the House of Representatives and the Senate
<b>Districts</b>	geographical areas drawn on a map to divide the state or county equally according to population; examples include Congressional, School, Representative, and Senate
<b>House of Representatives</b>	law making body that is made up of one of the chambers of a bicameral legislature; there are 180 members at the state level, and 435 members at the federal level
<b>Senate</b>	law making body that is the other chamber of a bicameral legislature; there are 56 members at the state level, and 100 at the federal level.
<b>Legislator</b>	a lawmaker; someone elected to create laws for a state or the federal government
<b>Resident</b>	a legal citizen of a city, county, or state
<b>Qualifications</b>	criteria used to determine if a political candidate is eligible to run for office
<b>Term</b>	a set number of years a politician can serve in office; for state legislators it is 2 years; 4 years for a governor and lieutenant governor, six years for state Supreme Court justices
<b>Election</b>	the event that registered citizens are able to vote for a particular candidate; examples include primary, general, run-off, nonpartisan, and special
<b>Duties</b>	responsibilities that politicians must perform; examples include legislators serving on committee, passing bills into law, and passing the state budget
<b>Georgia State Representative</b>	a member of the Georgia House of Representatives; must be 21 years of age, a resident of Georgia and their district for two years, and a U.S. citizen
<b>Georgia State Senator</b>	a member of the Georgia Senate; must be 25 years of age, a resident of Georgia and their district for two years, and a U.S. citizen
<b>Speaker of the House</b>	presiding officer of the House of Representatives; voted by

	members of the House; in charge of scheduling debates and assigning members to committees; 3 <sup>rd</sup> in line to succeed governor
<b>Majority Leader</b>	leader who is responsible for making sure members of his or her party vote for bills and agendas that the majority party favors
<b>Minority Leader</b>	leader who is responsible for making sure members of his or her party vote for bills and agendas that the minority party favors
<b>Floor Leader</b>	a representative who promotes the interest of the Governor on the house floor
<b>President Pro Tempore</b>	second highest position in the state Senate; a member of the majority party; replaces the president of the Senate (Lieutenant Governor) in the event of an emergency
<b>Committee system</b>	a system that places legislators (lawmakers) into specialized groups to study and discuss a bill
<b>Standing Committee</b>	a permanent committee that proposes bills that relate to a certain function of government; examples include Education, Agriculture, Ethics, Finance, Tax Reform, and Transportation
<b>Conference Committee</b>	created when the House and Senate writes differing versions of a bill; this committee must compromise to make the bill the same
<b>Joint Committee</b>	a committee made up of members of both the House and the Senate
<b>Interim committee</b>	members meet and work between sessions on matters that require in-depth study
<b>Ad Hoc Committee</b>	committee created for a special purpose

#### SS8CG4 VOCABULARY – JUDICIAL BRANCH

<b>Interpreting laws</b>	power of the judicial branch and courts; one of the checks that the judicial branch has over executive and legislative branches; a way to protect against “bad” laws and ensure justice for all of Georgia’s citizens
<b>Criminal Law</b>	laws that are created to protect from wrong-doers; serious offenses punishable by fines, community service, prison, and sometime death
<b>Misdemeanor</b>	a minor offense with a penalty of no more than one year in prison and/or a fine
<b>Felony</b>	a serious crime that can be punishable by no less than one year in prison
<b>Capital Crimes</b>	crimes that can be punished by the death penalty
<b>Suspect</b>	person who has been charged (accused) by law enforcement for committing a crime
<b>Civil law</b>	laws involving private disputes between individuals, groups, or businesses; usually involve compensation from one individual or group to another based on injury or wrong-doing
<b>tort</b>	a civil wrong doing against another individual; not a criminal act, but a civil act
<b>plaintiff</b>	a person who bring a civil case against another person, government, or business
<b>Defendant</b>	person who pleads not guilty of criminal charges or a wrong doing
<b>Jurisdiction</b>	types of cases a court can hear; also means a geographical area that law enforcement agencies (LEAs) have authority over; for example Dallas Police within Dallas city limits; Paulding County Sheriff Department within the county; Georgia State Patrol within the state; US military, Marshals, or FBI / CIA / DEA within US
<b>Trial Courts</b>	type of courts that involve civil, criminal or delinquent acts; examples include magistrate, probate, superior, state, and juvenile courts
<b>Magistrate Court</b>	a court in each county with the powers to issue search and arrest warrants; try minor criminal cases, civil cases for sum of \$15,000 or less, and civil disputes; judge can be elected or appointed
<b>Probate Court</b>	a court in each county with the power to rule on wills and estates, traffic violations, violations of game and fish laws, grant marriage and firearms licenses, appoint legal guardians, and prosecute misdemeanor offenses;

	judge elected to 4 year term
<b>State Court</b>	court responsible for ruling in misdemeanor cases, preliminary criminal case hearings, civil cases, and can issue search warrants; judge elected to 4 year term
<b>Superior Court</b>	court responsible for hearing civil and criminal trials, divorce cases, felony cases, and disputes involving land titles; judge elected to 4 year term
<b>Juvenile Court</b>	type of court involving cases of children / minors under the age of 17 who are charged with violating any law or are deemed runaways, ungovernable, or beyond parental control; this court also hears cases involving allegations of deprivation of children under the age of 18; judge appointed by superior court to 4 year term
<b>Appellate Courts</b>	courts whose responsibility is to review prior court cases based on appeals by the guilty party
<b>Court of Appeals</b>	court that reviews civil and criminal cases that have been heard by trial courts; 12 judges elected to 4 year terms
<b>State Supreme Court</b>	highest court in Georgia; reviews decisions made in civil or criminal cases by trial courts or Court of Appeal; determines the constitutionality of laws, changes to elections, and death sentences; 7 justices elected to 6 year terms
<b>Justices</b>	members of the State Supreme Court; elected for six year terms by popular vote
<b>Pretrial</b>	the steps in the legal process before a person goes to trial; involves arrest, booking, initial appearance, preliminary hearing, grand jury indictment, and arraignment
<b>Probable Cause</b>	when there is sufficient evidence that the suspect was involved in a crime
<b>Arrest</b>	when law enforcement has enough evidence to take a suspect into custody
<b>Booking</b>	stage at which law enforcement officers make an arrest report and hold the suspect in jail
<b>Initial Appearance</b>	when a suspect goes before a magistrate court to have charges against them explained and to determine bail
<b>Bail</b>	payment a suspect can pay to be released from custody until their trial date
<b>Preliminary Hearing</b>	when a magistrate judge determines if there was crime committed and if there is probable cause that the suspect was involved in the crime
<b>Grand Jury</b>	citizens examine evidence to determine if a suspect should be charged with a crime
<b>Indictment</b>	a formal accusation involving a grand jury that determines that there is enough evidence for the accused to be charged with a crime
<b>Arraigned</b>	a step in the criminal court pretrial process where the suspect has received an indictment and is brought before a superior court judge
<b>Plea Bargain</b>	the ability for a defendant to plead guilty to a lesser charge
<b>Custody</b>	when a suspect is being held based on evidence that they committed a crime
<b>Trial</b>	after a defendant pleads not guilty the process of examining evidence in a criminal or civil case begins to determine if defendant is guilty of a crime or wrong-doing
<b>Jury</b>	12 citizens selected to serve on a trial to determine innocence or guilt of the accused
<b>Jury selection</b>	prosecution lawyers and defense attorneys lawyers ask a pool of citizens questions to determine if they should serve on the trial; 12 citizens are eventually selected
<b>Opening Statements</b>	in a trial, attorneys for both the plaintiff and defense are given the opportunity to speak directly to the jury to explain what they hope to prove in the case
<b>Presentation of Evidence</b>	during a trial when witnesses are called to provide testimony
<b>Cross Examine</b>	when an attorney for the plaintiff or the defendant asks questions of witnesses called by the opposing side
<b>Closing Arguments</b>	after all evidence has been presented, and all of the witnesses have had

	a chance to speak (testify), then both attorneys (prosecution and defense) present their final arguments in the case before the jury deliberates
<b>Jury deliberation</b>	when the jury discusses the guilt or innocence of a defendant
<b>Verdict</b>	a determination of guilt or innocence by a jury or judge
<b>Penalty</b>	punishment for breaking a law or rule
<b>Sentencing</b>	after a jury finds a defendant guilty the judge determines the number of years the defendant will serve in prison or the amount of damages owed
<b>Appeal</b>	rights of those convicted of wrong doing can seek a new trial or reduced form of punishment; attempt may be granted or denied by an appellate court
<b>Compromise</b>	an agreement between two parties in order to solve a conflict
<b>mediator</b>	a third party person who helps people involved in a conflict come to an agreement

### SS8CG6 VOCABULARY – JUVENILE JUSTICE

<b>Juvenile</b>	children / minors under the age of 18
<b>Unruly Act</b>	an act committed by a juvenile that would NOT be a criminal offense for an adult
<b>Delinquent Act</b>	an act committed by a juvenile that would be a criminal offense by an adult
<b>Custody</b>	imprisonment of an offender; or the protective care / guardianship of a minor
<b>Intake Officer</b>	a law enforcement agent who decides if there is enough evidence to bring a charge against a juvenile
<b>Release</b>	a step in the juvenile justice process where it is determined if the juvenile should be released back to the custody of their parent or guardian
<b>Detain</b>	a step in the juvenile justice process if there is enough evidence to hold the minor in a juvenile detention center until their trial
<b>Informal Adjustment</b>	an optional step in the juvenile justice process where a juvenile who is a first time offender must admit guilt to the judge and is under the supervision of the court for 90 days
<b>Adjudicatory Hearing</b>	a step in the juvenile justice process where the judge determines the juvenile's guilt or innocence
<b>Disposition Hearing</b>	a step in the juvenile justice process where the judge hears witnesses and determines the sentencing or punishment for the juvenile; the minor can then appeal the verdict
<b>Rights of Juveniles</b>	juveniles have the following rights: two phone calls (parent and attorney); not to self-incriminate; to have their parents / guardians present during questioning; not have their names published in the press; not to be placed with adult offenders
<b>Aggravated</b>	to make an offense or criminal act more serious
<b>Murder</b>	criminal homicide; killing of another person with intent; 1st degree / capital is premeditated and very serious; 2 <sup>nd</sup> degree is intentionally killing without planning
<b>Voluntary manslaughter</b>	killing someone after provocation (being provoked) and losing self-control; crime of passion; not premeditated and no intent to kill
<b>Seven Delinquent Behaviors</b>	seven crimes that will automatically result in the juvenile being tried as an adult; these include murder, voluntary manslaughter, rape, aggravated sodomy, aggravated child molestation, aggravated sexual battery, and armed robbery with a firearm – I will not discuss these terms and definitions with you because of the sensitivity and maturity required to understand these crimes. Please ask your parents / guardians to explain if you have questions.

### SS8C3 VOCABULARY – EXECUTIVE BRANCH

<b>Department of Economic</b>	state department; responsible for improving the state economy by
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<b>Development</b>	recruiting businesses and promoting jobs, and “markets Georgia to the world by encouraging investment and trade and attracting tourists to Georgia.”
<b>Department of Education</b>	state department; made up of five offices: Curriculum and Instruction, Finance and Business Operations, Instructional Technology and Media, Policy and External Affairs, and Teacher and Student Support, and is led by the state superintendent, who is elected by the people of Georgia
<b>Department of Human Resources</b>	state department; “providing programs that enable older people to live at home longer; prevent children from developing lifelong disabilities; train poor single parents to find and hold jobs; help people with mental or physical disabilities live and work in their communities; and control the spread of disease.”
<b>Department of Natural Resources</b>	state department; responsible for enforcing laws concerning the states rivers and lakes and operating the state’s public parks and preserving the state’s historic sites
<b>Department of Public Safety</b>	state department; established to protect Georgia’s citizens and their property, and includes the Georgia Highway Patrol, the Capitol Police, and the Motor Carrier Compliance Division.
<b>Department of Transportation</b>	state department; responsible for planning, constructing, and maintaining Georgia’s roads and highways
<b>Governor</b>	elected leader who is responsible for overseeing the office of the executive branch;
<b>Lieutenant Governor</b>	second highest office of the executive branch; presides over the Georgia senate and takes on the role of the governor if the governor leaves the state; will take over the office if the governor dies or is impeached
<b>Gubernatorial</b>	election for state governor
<b>Special session</b>	the governor can order the state legislature to meet after the normal legislative session to complete unfinished tasks for the year; pass the budget or make budget cuts when the economy is bad, or to address special topics or emergencies like natural disasters

#### SS8CG5 VOCABULARY – LOCAL GOVERNMENT

<b>Board of Commissioners</b>	a group of individuals that have the power to adopt ordinances and oversee the daily operations of a county’s government
<b>City Manager</b>	individual hired by a city council to manage the day to day operations for the city
<b>Clerk of the Superior Court</b>	primary record keeper for a county government
<b>Council-Mayor System</b>	a form of city government where the mayor plays a ceremonial role but holds little power; most decisions for the county are made by the city council, and often a city manager is responsible for day to day operations
<b>County Commissioner</b>	an individual who has the power to adopt ordinances and oversee the daily operations of a county’s government
<b>Judge of the Probate Court</b>	an individual who oversees property deeds, marriage licenses, wills, and supervises elections in a county government
<b>Weak Mayor System</b>	a form of city government where the mayor holds some responsibilities, but the city council holds the majority of the power, duties, and responsibilities
<b>Municipal Charter</b>	a written document that sets up the structure of a city government
<b>Municipality</b>	a city or town
<b>Sheriff</b>	an individual who is responsible for enforcing the law, maintaining the peace, and serving as the jailer for a county government
<b>Special Purpose District</b>	government authorities created to serve a special function for the state or community (school districts, transportation authorities, etc...)
<b>Strong Mayor System</b>	a form of city government where the major holds major responsibilities and powers including acting as the city’s chief executive officer, administering the city’s budget, and vetoing legislation passed by the city



	council
<b>Tax Commissioner</b>	an individual who is responsible for receiving tax returns, maintaining tax records, and paying taxes for a county government
<b>County government</b>	level of local government governed by County Commissioners; School Districts / BOE; and special purpose districts; sheriff's department
<b>City government</b>	level of local government; municipality; city council, mayor, and / or city manager
<b>City Council</b>	elected members that govern a city and share power with a mayor or city manager

#### SS8E4 VOCABULARY – REVENUE SOURCES

<b>Revenue</b>	money collected by the local, state, or federal government
<b>Expenditures</b>	money spent by the local, state, or federal government
<b>Income tax</b>	largest source of revenue for state and federal governments collected from a worker's wages (job earnings); the more someone earns the more they pay in this tax.
<b>Sales tax</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> largest source of revenue for local governments; 4%-8% tax placed on items sold in retail stores.
<b>Property tax</b>	source of revenue for local governments from a tax placed on the market value of land, houses, and businesses.
<b>Federal grants</b>	source of revenue for state and local governments in the form of financial assistance from the federal government
<b>State budget</b>	Office of Planning and Budget of the executive branch is responsible for collecting revenue from taxes and then determining how much funding state departments and agencies receive for programs; by law this economic practice must be balanced.

<b>LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT</b>	<b>LEGISLATIVE BRANCH (makes laws)</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE BRANCH (enforces laws)</b>	<b>JUDICIAL BRANCH (interprets laws)</b>
<b>FEDERAL GOVERNMENT (central / national)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CONGRESS – bicameral legislature (US House of Representatives and US Senate)</li> <li>• US Capitol in Washington, D.C.</li> <li>• Members of Congress (435 members of the House of Representatives and 100 members of the Senate)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• President of the United States (POTUS) and Vice-President</li> <li>• Cabinet members / advisors</li> <li>• Departments: Defense, Education, Commerce, Agriculture, Health and Human Services, Energy, Justice, Labor, Homeland Security, Transportation, Treasury, etc...</li> <li>• FBI, NSA, CIA, DEA</li> <li>• White House in Washington, D.C.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• United States Supreme Court (1 Chief Justice and 8 Justices); appointed by President</li> <li>• U.S. Court of Appeals</li> <li>• U.S. District Courts</li> </ul>
<b>STATE GOVERNMENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GEORGIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY – bicameral legislature (State House of Representative and State Senate)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governor and Lieutenant Governor of Georgia</li> <li>• Departments: Education, Human Services, Transportation, Economic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Georgia State Supreme Court (1 Chief Justice and 6 Justices); elected by citizens</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Georgia state capitol in Atlanta</li> <li>• Members of General Assembly (180 members of the House of Representatives and 56 members of the Senate)</li> </ul>	Development, Public Safety, Natural Resources, etc...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State Court of Appeals</li> <li>• State Courts and Superior Courts</li> </ul>
<b>COUNTY GOVERNMENT (local)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Commissioners</li> <li>• Special- Purpose Governments (Paulding County School District; Paulding County Parks and Recreation; Airport Authority; MARTA transportation)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairman of the Board of Commissioners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Probate Court</li> <li>• Magistrate Court</li> <li>• Juvenile Court</li> </ul>
<b>CITY GOVERNMENT (local)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong Mayor</li> <li>• Weak Mayor</li> <li>• City Manager</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipal Courts</li> </ul>