

Brunswick School Department  
Social Studies  
Grade 7 Nation Building 1783-1815

**Unit Overview**

Students will study the structures and processes of the United States government and how they are framed by the United States Constitution and other primary resources. They also will learn about the rights, duties, and responsibilities of citizens in a constitutional democracy. The three branches of the United States government will be covered as will the concept of working for the common good. Geography will also be stressed as it relates to the Louisiana Purchase.

**Essential Understandings**

The democratic ideals that started our nation turned into constitutional principles supported by the Bill of Rights; all of which outline the rights and responsibilities of citizens working toward the common good.

**Priority Standards and Performance Indicators**

(as based on the Maine Learning Results)

**P.S. SS -1 Conduct and present original research that utilizes primary and secondary sources in order to analyze, interpret and explain historical (and/or) contemporary social studies topics.**

- a. Locate relevant information that includes multiple perspectives from varied sources.
- b. Demonstrate facility with notetaking, organizing information, and creating bibliographies.
- c. Distinguish between primary and secondary sources.
- d. Use information ethically and legally.

**PS.SS- 2 Draw on concepts from civics and government to understand political systems, power, authority, governance, civic ideals and practices, and the role of citizens.**

- a. Describe the structures and processes of the United States government and how they are framed by the United States Constitution and other primary resources.
- b. Explain the rights, duties, and responsibilities of citizens in a constitutional democracy.
- c. Demonstrate how people influence government and work for the common good including voting, writing to legislators, performing community service, and engaging in civil disobedience (being an active citizen).

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**P.S. SS-4 Utilize concepts and processes from geography to understand issues involving people, places, and environments in the United States and the world.**

d. Describe the dynamic relationship between geographic features and various cultures, including the cultures of Maine Native Americans, various historical groups in the United States, and other cultures in the world.

**P.S.SS-5 Draw on concepts and processes from history to develop historical perspective and understand issues of continuity and change in the community, Maine, the United States, and world.**

- a. Explain that history is the study of the written record of the past, based on available evidence from a variety of sources.
- b. Trace and explain the history of democratic ideals and constitutional principles and their importance in the history of the United States and the world.
- c. Identify and analyze major historical eras, major enduring themes, turning points, events, consequences, and people in the history of Maine, the United States and various regions of the world.

**Examples of Formative / Summative Assessments**

- Louisiana Purchase or Lewis and Clark's Expedition Projects (maps, journals, iMovies, essays, photo essays)
- Debate: Should the United States declare war on Great Britain, or keep negotiating? (War of 1812)
- Translate the Preamble to the Constitution into modern English
- Locate different elements are in the Constitution

**Sample Texts and Materials/Resources**

- "Citizenship Handbook," Davidson, James West. America: History of Our Nation. New Jersey, published in 2007 by Pearson Prentice Hall.
- "Launching a New Nation" (Chapter 8), Davidson, James West, America: History of Our Nation. New Jersey, published in 2007 by Pearson Prentice Hall
- Davidson, James West. America: History of Our Nation. New Jersey, published in 2007 by Pearson Prentice Hall.
- John Adams. 2008 by HBO Films.
- Bill of Rights Institute. <<http://billofrightsinstitute.org/resources/educator-resources/bill-of-rights-day/>>
- Representative Government Video from the Bill of Rights Institute: <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bVD0bZ5H4MY&feature=youtu.be>>
- iCivics, Inc. <[iCivics.org](http://iCivics.org)>