

# **We the People (Sophomore Civics) Course Syllabus**

**Mr. Rider**

We The People is the study of citizenship and government. This one-semester course provides students with a basic understanding of our government's foundation, the structure and principles of our constitutional system, and which rights the American government guarantees its citizens. Through a variety of individual and small group assessment activities, students will be analyzing primary and secondary sources; developing historical arguments; making historical comparisons; and utilizing reasoning about contextualization, causation, and continuity and change over time. Proficiencies: Inquiry, History, Geography, Civics, Government and Society, Economics

## **Prerequisites:**

Global Studies

## **Course Standards:**

**Civics:** Students act as productive citizens by understanding the history, principles, and foundations of our American democracy, and acquire the ability to become engaged in civic and democratic processes.

**Inquiry:** Students make sense of the world through questioning and developing reasonable explanations to support such inquiry through the analysis of information.

## **Transferable Skills:**

- **Self-Direction:** The ability to independently see a task through to completion, meet due dates, and come to class prepared; and can communicate with the instructor ahead of time to arrange alternate due dates for extenuating circumstances.
- **Responsible & Involved Citizenship:** Students take responsibility for personal decisions and actions; works collaboratively with others; and uses technology and digital media responsibly.

## **Required Texts and Materials:**

The course has no formal text. Each unit has specific readings, PowerPoint and other formats for presenting materials. Each student will receive a copy of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. students will annotate and refer to these founding documents throughout the course.

## **Assessment Policy:**

1. **Pre-Assessments:** Students will respond to actual test questions before their learning to determine student readiness and monitor growth and progress throughout the unit of study's learning;
1. **Formative Assessments:** Students will be engaged in a variety of reading, writing, vocabulary, and film activities, all of which **MUST** be accomplished in order to take the unit's final assessment.

1. Unit (Summative) Assessment: Students will respond to reading and vocabulary questions as well as create an evidence-based argument from the unit of study’s Compelling Question.

4. Final Exam

**Course Outline:**

**Unit One – Foundations of Government**

This unit of study examines the question: “What is the purpose of government?” and “What is the best type of Government?” Students examine the ways in which ancient Greece and Rome, as well as Great Britain addressed these questions. Students also analyze how these questions are addressed in the Declaration of Independence and America’s first plan of government, the Articles of Confederation.

**Unit Two – The United States Constitution**

This unit examines the question “What principles of government are woven into the Constitution?” and “What is the structure of the Constitution?” Starting with the Preamble, students will closely examine Articles I-V of the Constitution to explore the concepts of popular sovereignty, checks and balances, limited government, and separation of powers of government.

**Unit Three – The Bill of Rights**

This unit examines the question “What are the rights and responsibilities of citizens?” Emphasis will be placed on the freedoms guaranteed in the First Amendment as well as the limits to these freedoms, privacy protections as outlined in the Fourth Amendment, the rights of the accused as outlined in the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Amendments, and the definition of “cruel and unusual punishment.”

## Standard and Course Scoring Procedures

To calculate standard scores for a reporting period, the default method would be to average the scores within a standard. The average of the proficiency is the **lowest score** a student could receive.

If the **trend** within the standard over time shows a growth of learning not represented by the average, the teacher has the right to **increase** the final standard score, **but not decrease it**.

For example, in Standard 1, the teacher might think the final score would be better represented by a score of 3.0 and the teacher could increase it (see the highlight score).

	Assignment 1	Assignment 2	Assignment 3	Assignment 4	Average	Trend
Standard 1	2.0		3.0	3.5	2.8	3.0
2	3.0	3.5		3.0	3.2	
3	2.5	3.0	3.5	3.0	3.0	
4	2.0		4.0		3.0	
				Course Score	3.0	3.1

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