

# 10 MODEL LESSONS

## GOVERNMENT UNITED STATES

TEACHER AND STUDENT  
RESOURCE MATERIAL

### GOVERNMENT & POLITICS ○ Contains

- Simulations
- New Constructional Convention
- Louisiana Literacy Test
- Personal Political Platform
- Local Government and More



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# Teacher's Guide

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## **New Constitutional Convention**

Reproduce page 1 for each student and follow the directions as listed. Students represent the delegates to this new convention. They should debate and vote on the proposed changes. Instructors may consider awarding extra credit if a change is enacted.

## **A New Government Simulation**

Reproduce pages 2–4 and assign and have students read the assignment for homework. Divide the class into groups and follow the directions on the bottom of page 3. Note: This new constitution is the old “Articles of Confederation” of the first U.S. Government after the American Revolution.

## **Louisiana Literacy Test**

Reproduce pages 5–8 Prior to being outlawed by the federal government, this literacy test was only given to blacks. Distribute the exams to the students. Students are to follow the directions listed on the exam. After the students have completed the exam, discuss the answers and the ambiguities that would have made it impossible to achieve a passing grade. No person ever passed this exam during the period of its administration.

## **Constitutional Vs. Unconstitutional Governmental Actions**

Reproduce pages 9–11 for each student. Students are to complete the assignment per the directions on the assignment. Answers to the questions appear below:

### *Answer Key*

1. B. No, it is unconstitutional. ARTICLE I SECTION 3 PARAGRAPH 3
2. B. No, it is unconstitutional. ARTICLE I SECTION 6 PARAGRAPH 1
3. B. No, it is unconstitutional. ARTICLE I SECTION 7 PARAGRAPH 2
4. A Yes, it is constitutional. ARTICLE 2 SECTION 2 PARAGRAPH 2
5. A Yes, it is constitutional. ARTICLE 2 SECTION 2 PARAGRAPH 2
6. B. No, it is unconstitutional. ARTICLE 5
7. B. No, it is unconstitutional ARTICLE I SECTION 6 PARAGRAPH 2
8. A. Yes, it is constitutional. ARTICLE I SECTION 6 PARAGRAPH 2
9. B. No, it is unconstitutional. ARTICLE I SECTION 8 PARAGRAPH 1

10. B. No, it is unconstitutional. ARTICLE VI 1st AMENDMENT OR SECTION PARAGRAPH 3

11. B. No, it is unconstitutional. ARTICLE 2 SECTION 1 PARAGRAPH 7

## **You Be The Judge, Legal Analysis Exercise**

Reproduce pages 12–13 for each student. Students should read both cases and answer the questions listed on each page. Page 10 demonstrates how to brief a case. There is no correct answer to this hypothetical question. Some states would allow recovery while others would not. Page 13 provides the law and students should be able to deduce the correct answer.

## **Constitutional War Powers & The War Powers Resolution Of 1973**

Reproduce pages 14–15 for each student. This handout summarizes the war powers of the President and Congress. It also provides the major provisions of the War Powers Resolution of 1973. The Founding Fathers deliberately divided the war powers between the President and Congress. Use the information and questions in these handouts for class discussion or as a writing assignment.

## **Terror At The 2004 Olympics**

Reproduce pages 17–18 for each student. Students may be divided into groups and discuss how the President should react to this crisis. Instructors may point out to the class, as background information, that U.S. governmental officials have admitted a lack of security at some nuclear power plants which has resulted in missing or unaccounted for discrepancies in nuclear materials. Also in light of the breakup of the Soviet Union, numerous officials publicly worry about the security of nuclear material. Students need to realize that although the President is considered the leader of the free world, his powers are not infinite. He must deal with foreign leaders who may have their own political agenda. Presidential actions have consequences. Try to make long-range and short-range projections for the United States based upon the action of each group.

## **Constitutional Issues**

Reproduce pages 19–21 for each student. Have students complete the assignment and then discuss the answers. The key is listed below:

### *Answer Key*

1. In the case of *Gideon vs. Wainwright*, the Supreme Court held that all defendants in felony trials are entitled to an attorney. In the class exercise, the conviction would be overturned.
2. This law would probably be held unconstitutional as a violation of the Second Amendment. However, the Second Amendment has never been applied to the

states via the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. This is still an open question.

3. Unless a defendant agrees to waive their right to a speedy trial, a criminal trial must take place within one year. This was the decision of the Supreme Court in *Soggett vs. U.S.*
4. The stolen stereo equipment could not be used as evidence. It is in violation of the Fourth Amendment. To stop a car, a policeman must have reasonable suspicion that a crime is afoot. Being young, or the wrong race in a particular area does not constitute *reasonable suspicion*. If the initial stop was illegal, all evidence discovered because of the search is inadmissible.
5. The naked women would be convicted. In free exercise cases, the court weighs the religious liberty of the person versus the rights of society. Here the right of society to reserve the peace is greater than the person's right to walk around naked.

## **Local Government**

Reproduce pages 22–25. Divide the students into groups of three. Students are to follow direction and complete the charts for all three local governmental areas and answer the application questions.

## **Personal Political Platforms**

Reproduce page 26 and distribute to class. This assignment requires the students to create their own political platforms and justify their positions. The students must be made aware that their positions on issues cannot be in opposition to each other. As an example, a student cannot be for both a balanced budget and increased spending policies. Alternative assignments might require the students to work in groups to reach a consensus on the issues or debate them in class.

# New Constitutional Convention

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## Background

Article V of the U.S. Constitution allows for amendments to the document. If three-fourths (38) of the fifty states call for a constitutional convention, Congress is required to convene such a meeting. All or any changes made to the constitution must also be ratified by three-fourths of the states before they take effect. Presently, 36 states, two short of the three-fourths needed to call a new constitutional convention, have voted for such a meeting to pass a “Balanced Budget Amendment.” Scholars have pointed out that a new constitutional convention could not be limited to any specific topic. This convention could clarify, amend, or completely rewrite any and all sections of the constitution.

## Simulation

A new constitutional convention has been convened by Congress at the request of  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the states. You are a delegate to this convention. What changes would you propose to our present constitution?

### Points to Remember

1. Read the entire Constitution and Amendments.
2. Formulate changes or new amendments for the document and know where they are to be located. (Article & Section or new amendment)
3. Formulate arguments to support your changes.
4. Align support for your ideas with other members.
5. Each student is limited to two constitutional changes.

## Format

1. The class may select or the instructor may assign a chairman to preside over the meeting.
2. Each student will read their proposals to the class.
3. Class will prioritize the changes and develop an agenda.
4. A majority is needed to pass a proposal.

# **A New Government: *Can It Work?***

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The year is 2015. You are an American astronaut who just returned to Earth from the planet Mars. You have been on Mars since the July of 2010. While you were on Mars a very unusual thing happened. In January of 2009, communications with Earth suddenly stopped. No matter how hard you tried, you could not contact anyone on Earth. In July of 2009, you were able to contact the American headquarters on the moon. They reported that they were having the same difficulty with their communications with Earth. During November and December your radio station on Mars started picking up short news broadcasts from Earth. The broadcasts described a revolution in the United States which had overthrown the existing government and replaced it with a new government. On January 7, 2010 a group of seven American astronauts, including yourself, boarded their space craft and headed for Earth. On January 10, 2015 your space craft landed at Los Angeles Interplanetary Airport.

When you stepped out of your spacecraft, you were immediately met by 12 police officers and taken to an underground room where one of the police officers described the present situation in the United States.

“Gentlemen, last September the government of the United States was overthrown by leaders from each of the fifty-one states. The states started the revolution because they believed the federal government had gained too much power. The central government which exists today is quite different. In just one minute I will give each of you a copy of the new constitution for you to examine. Become familiar with these new laws because you will have to live by them. Each of you no longer is employed by the federal government. You will have to find new jobs starting tomorrow. After you have read the new constitution you will remain in this room until 12:00 noon tomorrow. We will supply you with food and a place to sleep until that time.”

Everyone was in such a state of shock that there was only silence. Each of you is given a copy of the new constitution. The police leave your group alone in the room. Here is a summary of the powers which the central government now has under the new constitution.

## **Article 1**

The central government shall consist of a Congress having two to seven representatives from each of the 51 states (Puerto Rico became a state in 2001.) Each state, regardless of size, shall only have one vote in Congress. A two-thirds vote (34 states) will be needed to approve any legislation. A unanimous vote of all states will be required to change this constitution.

## **Article 2**

The representatives to the Congress will be paid by their own states and will vote as instructed by their own state governments.

### **Article 3**

The laws approved by the Congress will be enforced by the state governments. There will be no executive branch (no President) of the central government to enforce laws approved by Congress.

### **Article 4**

The Congress will not have the power to settle legal disputes between states. The state courts will have the power to settle legal disputes between the states. (No Supreme Court or federal courts)

### **Article 5**

The states, not Congress, will have the power to regulate trade agreements with foreign countries and trade between the states.

### **Article 6**

Congress has the power to print money in the form of gold and silver coins, but must ask the states for gold and silver. If Congress cannot obtain enough gold and silver to supply each state with adequate printed coins, then each state shall have the power to print its own money.

### **Article 7**

Congress shall have the power to declare war, but must ask the states for people to fill the ranks of the armed forces.

### **Article 8**

Congress shall have the power to tax the citizens, but the states shall be the only ones with the power to collect taxes.

### **Directions:**

Now that you have read the new constitution, you must apply it to the United States and see how it affects the whole country. Using the information in the new constitution, describe the problems which might arise in the following areas.

1. Trade with foreign countries.
2. Trade between the states.
3. Raising and maintaining the armed forces to defend the country against foreign invasion.
4. Obtaining adequate funds to finance the operation of the central government.



# Literacy Test

## The State of Louisiana

Literacy Test—This test is given to anyone who cannot prove a fifth grade education.

Do what you are told to do in each statement, nothing more, nothing less. Be careful as *one* wrong answer denotes failure of the test. You have ten minutes to complete the test.

1. Draw a line around the number or letter of this sentence.
2. Draw a line under the last word in this line.
3. Cross out the longest word in this line.
4. Draw a line around the shortest word in this line.
5. Circle the first, first letter of the alphabet in this line.
6. In the space below, draw three circles, one inside (engulfed by) the other.

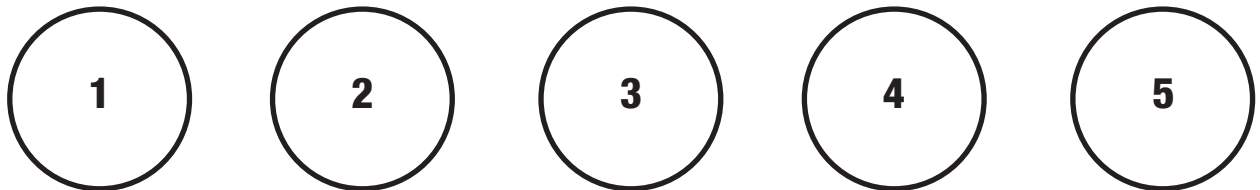
7. Above the letter X make a small cross.
8. Draw a line through the letter below that comes earliest in the alphabet.

Z V S B D M K I T P H C

9. Draw a line through the two letters below that come last in the alphabet.

Z V B D M K T P H S Y C

10. In the first circle below, write the last letter of the first word beginning with “L”



11. Cross out the number not necessary when making the number below one million.

10000000000

12. Draw a line from circle 2 to circle 5 that will pass below circle 3 and above circle 4.

