



Principles of the Constitution through Time Separation of Powers



Learning Objective: The student will understand how the principles of the Constitution have been reflected in historical events.

TEKS: Texas History 7.13A, USH 8.15D, Government 6D

Materials Needed: Copy of vocabulary graphic organizer, copy of appropriate principle handout, and access to internet to show video.

Teacher Background: The following lesson plan is designed to accompany the LRE video series #LiamLearns. The lesson plan that is provided is designed to be used in the following subjects: Texas History, 8th Grade US History, US History 1877 to the present, and U.S. Government. Each of the stimulus pieces attached to each principle have been selected to allow the principle to be reviewed throughout the various courses. Note: The intended course is located at the bottom of each page.

Teaching Strategy:

1. Explain to students that they will be reviewing “Separation of Powers” one of the principles of the Constitution and that they will be watching a short video to remind them of the concept followed by analyzing the concept in history.
2. Provide each student with a vocabulary graphic organizer, and explain that as they watch the following video, that they need to be prepared to define the principle, provide a definition, and an example.

Have students watch the video on Separation of Powers

3. at the following link:
<http://www.texasre.org/liamlearns/>
4. When students have finished watching the video, give them time to complete their graphic organizer and check for student understanding by having students share their learning.
5. Once students have an understanding of the term, provide them with the appropriate document for their grade level and have them analyze using the questions provided.

Note: Strategies for various types of primary sources have been included in this lesson to help students with analyzing different types of sources. They are located at the end of this lesson plan.

Each grade level is hyperlinked to a Google Document. Suggested Units to use documents:

1. [Texas History](#) – Kennedy Assassination
2. [8th Grade US History](#)- New Nation Unit
3. [US History 1877 to present](#) – Great Depression
4. [Government](#) – Executive Unit

Document Analysis Suggested Answers

Below you will find suggested answers for each of the documents. Each bullet represents the questions asked on the documents.

7th Grade

- Text evidence could include: “to swear to perform the duties of the office and uphold and preserve the Constitution of the United States”

8th Grade

- Text evidence could include: “An Act to establish the Judicial Courts of the United States” or “the supreme court of the United States shall consist of a chief justice and five associate justices” or “and shall hold annually at the seat of government two sessions”.
- The Judiciary Act was necessary to establish the structure of the judicial branch.

US History 1877 to Present

- The document clearly shows three branches of government, the executive being the arms of the President, the legislative in the grasp of one of the hands, and an indication that the other hand is reaching for and seeking the judiciary.
- It shows that the President, in this case FDR, is increasing his power by attempting to control Congress and possibly the Judiciary.

Government

- The document shows the separation of powers between the legislative branch in Article I and the executive branch in article II.
- Students should be able to point to conflicts such as the Vietnam conflict and the President’s commitment of troops without a formal declaration of war. They might also point out that many individuals think that the President declares war.