



# **Social Studies**

## **Law**

**2025-2026**

**Aligned with Ohio's Learning Standards  
for Social Studies (2018) and the College,  
Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework**

**Department of Academic Services  
Office of Teaching and Learning  
Curriculum Division**

**COLUMBUS CITY SCHOOLS**

## Curriculum Map

### Year-at-a-Glance

The Year-at-a-Glance provides a high-level overview of the course by grading period, including:

- Units;
- Standards/Learning Targets; and
- Timeframes.



### Scope and Sequence

The Scope and Sequence provides a detailed overview of each grading period, including:

- Units;
- Standards/Learning Targets;
- Timeframes;
- Big Ideas and Essential Questions; and
- Strategies and Activities.



### Curriculum and Instruction Guide

The Curriculum and Instruction Guide provides direction for standards-based instruction, including:

- Unpacked Standards / Clear Learning Targets;
- Content Elaborations;
- Sample Assessments;
- Instructional Strategies; and
- Instructional Resources.

## Year-at-a-Glance

<b>Grading Period 1 or 3</b>	<b>Unit 1. Constitutional Law</b>		<b>9 weeks</b>
	<p>I.1 Lawmaking - Law Learning Target 1</p> <p>I.2 First Amendment Rights - Law Learning Target 2</p> <p>I.3 Due Process, Privacy, and Equal Protection - Law Learning Target 2</p> <p>I.4 Immigration Law - Law Learning Target 2</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Dimensions 1-4 of the C3 Framework should be incorporated throughout the course:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Developing Questions and Planning Inquiries</li> <li>2. Applying Disciplinary Concepts and Tools</li> <li>3. Evaluating Sources and Using Evidence</li> <li>4. Communicating Conclusions and Taking Informed Action</li> </ol>		
<b>Grading Period 2 or 4</b>	<b>Unit 2. The Court System and Criminal Justice</b>	<b>4.5 weeks</b>	<b>Unit 3. Civil Law</b>
	<p>2.1 The Court System - Law Learning Target 3</p> <p>2.2 Crime and Criminal Law - Law Learning Target 3</p> <p>2.3 Juvenile Justice - Law Learning Target 3</p>		<p>3.1 Torts - Law Learning Target 4</p> <p>3.2 Consumer and Housing Law - Learning Target 4</p> <p>3.3 Family Law - Law Learning Target 4</p>

Note: The learning targets for this course were developed by CCS from multiple sources including Ohio's Learning Standards for Social Studies and the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework.

**Scope and Sequence**

		<b>Unit 1. Constitutional Law</b>		<b>9 weeks</b>
<b>Grading Period 1 or 3</b>	<b>Lesson</b>	<b>Standards / Learning Targets</b>	<b>Big Ideas / Essential Questions</b>	<b>Strategies/Activities</b>
	I.1 Lawmaking	<a href="#">1. Explain the purpose of law and compare the powers and responsibilities of each branch and level of government as they pertain to law and public policy.</a>	<b>Democracy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What does it mean to have a democracy?</li> </ul> <b>Change</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How can we be involved in the change process?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Imagine a nation without laws</li> <li>There ought to be a law writing prompt</li> <li>Unjust laws in American history brainstorm</li> <li>Graphic organizer on powers and responsibilities of each branch</li> </ul>
	I.2 First Amendment Rights	<a href="#">2. Apply the protections of the Constitution, Bill of Rights, and other amendments in a given scenario.</a>	<b>Democracy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does government work for the people?</li> <li>How should governments balance majority rule with minority rights?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bill of Rights graphic organizer</li> <li>Supreme Court case studies on the Bill of Rights</li> <li>News sources on issues related to the Bill of Rights</li> </ul>
	I.3 Due Process, Privacy, and Equal Protection	<a href="#">2. Apply the protections of the Constitution, Bill of Rights, and other amendments in a given scenario.</a>	<b>Justice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How does the Constitution establish justice?</li> <li>Are laws applied fairly?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supreme Court case studies equal protection, privacy, and due process</li> <li>Timeline of evolving interpretations of an amendment</li> </ul>
	I.4 Immigration Law	<a href="#">2. Apply the protections of the Constitution, Bill of Rights, and other amendments in a given scenario.</a>	<b>Diversity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What does it mean to value and respect diversity?</li> <li>How have diverse groups struggled for equality?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion on controversies and challenges of current immigration law</li> </ul>

		<b>Unit 2. The Court System and Criminal Justice</b>		<b>4.5 weeks</b>
<b>Grading Period 2 or 4</b>	<b>Lesson</b>	<b>Standards / Learning Targets</b>	<b>Big Ideas / Essential Questions</b>	<b>Strategies/Activities</b>
	2.1 The Court System	<a href="#">3. Evaluate the functions, successes, and failures of the U.S. legal and criminal justice systems.</a>	<b>Power</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does might make right?</li> <li>What makes a government legitimate?</li> </ul> <b>Democracy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does government work for the people?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocabulary word/concept map</li> <li>K-W-L Chart on courts and criminal justice</li> </ul>
	2.2 Crime and Criminal Law	<a href="#">3. Evaluate the functions, successes, and failures of the U.S. legal and criminal justice systems.</a>	<b>Justice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are laws applied fairly?</li> <li>Do we have a right to break unjust laws?</li> <li>What happens when justice is denied?</li> </ul> <b>Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do we make a strong argument?</li> </ul> <b>Power</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why is it important to speak truth to power?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluating criminal laws continuum</li> <li>Chart on types of crime</li> <li>Analyze crime rates and write claims based on data</li> <li>SPAR strategy on gun control as a way to reduce crime</li> <li>Flow chart on the criminal justice process</li> <li>Reasonable suspicion and probable cause scenarios</li> <li>Research on bias and injustice in the criminal justice system</li> </ul>
	2.3 Juvenile Justice	<a href="#">3. Evaluate the functions, successes, and failures of the U.S. legal and criminal justice systems.</a>	<b>Justice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are laws applied fairly?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read and discuss case examples of juveniles tried as adults</li> </ul>

**Unit 3. Civil Law**
**4.5 weeks**

Grading Period 2 or 4	Lesson	Standards / Learning Targets	Big Ideas / Essential Questions	Strategies/Activities
	3.1 Torts	<a href="#">4. Explain the practical value of understanding civil law, including torts, consumer and housing law, and family law.</a>	<b>Power</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does might make right?</li> <li>How is power attained and maintained?</li> <li>Why is it important to speak truth to power?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fictional civil case summaries- should the defendant pay damages?</li> <li>Tort case analysis - Were the damages reasonable</li> </ul>
	3.2 Consumer and Housing Law	<a href="#">4. Explain the practical value of understanding civil law, including torts, consumer and housing law, and family law.</a>	<b>Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do we know what to believe?</li> <li>Should we question everything?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read and analyze a sample contract</li> <li>Brainstorm and collective evidence of deceptive sales practices</li> </ul>
	3.3 Family Law	<a href="#">4. Explain the practical value of understanding civil law, including torts, consumer and housing law, and family law.</a>	<b>Diversity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why is it important to consider multiple diverse perspectives?</li> <li>How have diverse groups struggled for equality?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interview a social worker on family law</li> </ul>

## Curriculum and Instruction Guide

### Unpacked Standards / Clear Learning Targets

**C3 Framework Dimension 1. Construct compelling questions that focus on enduring issues and concerns.**

*Dimensions 1-4 of the C3 Framework should be incorporated throughout the course.*

**Essential Understanding**

Beginning the inquiry process with compelling questions

**Extended Understanding**

Developing original compelling questions

**Academic Vocabulary**

**Tier 2**

compelling questions  
enduring issues

**Ultimate Learning Target**  
**Type: Skill**

- Broad Learning Target:**
- The student can construct compelling questions that focus on enduring issues and concerns.
- Underpinning Knowledge Learning Target:**
- The student can explain points of agreement and disagreement experts have about a compelling question.
- Underpinning Reasoning Learning Targets:**
- The student can explain how a question reflects an enduring issue in the field.
  - The student can explain how supporting questions contribute to an inquiry.
  - The student can explain how, through engaging source work, new compelling and supporting questions emerge.
- Underpinning Skills Learning Target:**
- The student can determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of view represented in the sources, the types of sources available, and the potential uses of the sources.

### Content Elaborations

**From the *College, Career, and Civic Life Framework*:**

Central to a rich social studies experience is the capability for developing questions that can frame and advance an inquiry. Those questions come in two forms: compelling and supporting questions. Compelling questions focus on enduring issues and concerns. They deal with curiosities about how things work; interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts; and unresolved issues that require students to construct arguments in response. In contrast, supporting questions focus on descriptions, definitions, and processes on which there is general agreement within the social studies disciplines, and require students to construct explanations that advance claims of understanding in response.

### Instructional Strategies

Brainstorm a list of compelling questions students have about law. Sort and organize these compelling questions into categories. For each compelling question, create 2-3 supporting questions.

Use the Question Formulation Technique to help students learn to develop and ask their own questions about law.

### Instructional Resources

College , Career, and Civic Life Framework (C3) Framework – <http://www.socialstudies.org/system/files/c3/C3-Framework-for-Social-Studies.pdf>

C3 Teachers – database of inquiries covering various topics in social studies: <http://www.c3teachers.org/inquiries/>

Compelling and Supporting Questions C3 Videos: <https://youtu.be/0MNeeJ4bpSM> and <https://youtu.be/3BUdJwYksns>

Right Question Institute – Using the Question Formulation Technique, students learn to develop and ask their own questions. <http://rightquestion.org/education/>

Points of View Reference Center (INFOhio) – An extensive databse containing thousands of articles supporting pro and con sides of current issues. Helps students develop arguments to support positions with evidence. <https://www.infohio.org/students//er/grade/g9|2>.

**Unpacked Standards / Clear Learning Targets**

<p><b>C3 Framework Dimension 2. Apply disciplinary concepts and tools to address compelling questions.</b></p> <p><i>Dimensions 1-4 of the C3 Framework should be incorporated throughout the course.</i></p>	<p><b><u>Essential Understanding</u></b>        Using disciplinary skills and tools of law, civics, and political science</p> <p><b><u>Extended Understanding</u></b>        Application of skills and tools to address compelling questions</p>	<p><b><u>Academic Vocabulary</u></b></p> <p><b>Tier 2</b>        disciplinary concepts        compelling questions</p> <p><b>Tier 3</b>        governmental system        legal system</p>
<p><b>Ultimate Learning Target</b>  <b>Type: Reasoning</b></p>	<p><b><u>Broad Learning Target:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The student can apply disciplinary concepts and tools to address compelling questions.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Underpinning Knowledge Learning Targets:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The student can describe the fundamental principles and values of the American governmental and legal systems.</li> <li>- The student can explain how the law and the legal system impact their daily lives.</li> <li>- The student can summarize the rights guaranteed to individuals by the U.S. Constitution.</li> <li>- The student can explain basic court procedures in criminal, civil and juvenile cases.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Underpinning Reasoning Learning Targets:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The student can explain how the U.S. Constitution establishes a system of government that has powers, responsibilities, and limits that have changed over time and that are still contested.</li> <li>- The student can evaluate the successes and failures of the American legal system.</li> <li>- The student can analyze the role of citizens in the U.S. governmental and legal systems.</li> <li>- The student can evaluate public policies in terms of intended and unintended consequences.</li> <li>- The student can analyze historical and contemporary means of changing societies, promoting the common good, and protecting rights.</li> </ul>	

### Content Elaborations

**From the *College, Career, and Civic Life Framework*:**

In a constitutional democracy, productive civic engagement requires knowledge of the history, principles, and foundations of our American democracy, and the ability to participate in civic and democratic processes. People demonstrate civic engagement when they address public problems individually and collaboratively and when they maintain, strengthen, and improve communities and societies. Thus, civics is, in part, the study of how people participate in governing society.

**From Street Law.org:**

Street Law courses teach young people about law that is practical and relevant to their lives. Street Law courses strive to empower young people to be active, engaged citizens by equipping them with the knowledge and skills they need to successfully participate and create change in their communities.

### Instructional Strategies

Use [K-W-L Charts](#) (Know, Want to Know, Learned) to support effective pre-reading, during reading, and post-reading analysis of primary and secondary sources.

Create a [Thesis-Proof Chart](#) to consider a thesis and look for information that either supports or refutes a thesis.

Have students use a [History Frame](#) to map out the elements of historical events: Where and when did the event take place? Who was involved? What was the problem or goal that set events in motion? What were the key events? how was it resolved? and so what?

Students analyze a variety of primary source types using a three step process: [observe, reflect, and question](#).

When conducting an OUT ([Opening Up the Textbook](#)), the teacher juxtaposes a short excerpt from the course's textbook with an additional document or two. These documents are chosen to open up the textbook's story and engage students in comparing and crosschecking sources.

### Sample Assessments and Performance Tasks

Students can demonstrate the results of original research by writing a traditional research paper or investigation paper. An investigation paper is a written account of between 1,500 and 2,000 words divided into six sections: a plan of the investigation, a summary of evidence, an evaluation of sources, an analysis, a conclusion, and a bibliography or list of sources.

Create an original video documentary using primary and secondary sources, including photographs, texts, audio narration, and sound track.

*We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution* – a program that teaches the history and principles of the American constitutional democracy while enhancing students’ understanding of government. *We the People* has a built-in authentic performance assessment: simulated congressional hearings. The simulated hearings allow students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of constitutional principles. Students will have the opportunity to evaluate, take, and defend positions on relevant historical and contemporary issues. [http://ocltre.org/aws/OCLRE/pt/sp/programs\\_wethepeople](http://ocltre.org/aws/OCLRE/pt/sp/programs_wethepeople)

Project Citizen - [http://ocltre.org/aws/OCLRE/pt/sp/programs\\_projectcitizen](http://ocltre.org/aws/OCLRE/pt/sp/programs_projectcitizen) or Civic Action Project (CAP) - <http://www.crfcap.org>. Students can complete a civic action project to address a legal or criminal justice issue.

### Instructional Resources

*We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution* textbook and Teacher’s Guide (Center for Civic Education) - <http://www.civiced.org/programs/wtp>

Street Law: [www.streetlaw.org](http://www.streetlaw.org) - free mock trial cases and other resources for Street Law

Landmark Cases - <https://www.landmarkcases.org> - provides a full range of resources and activities to support the teaching of landmark Supreme court cases

Law and Justice Curriculum - <http://lawandjustice.edc.org> - The curriculum helps students develop knowledge and skills to contribute to and improve the legal and criminal justice systems, as youth now and as professionals tomorrow.

Washington Courts - [http://www.courts.wa.gov/education/lessons/?fa=education\\_lessons.lessons&class=H](http://www.courts.wa.gov/education/lessons/?fa=education_lessons.lessons&class=H) - collection of lessons designed for high school law classes

Street Law at the UW School of Law - <http://www.law.washington.edu/Clinics/Streetlaw/lessons.aspx> - lesson plans for high school street law class

Constitutional Rights Foundation: Bill of Rights in Action - <http://www.crf-usa.org/bill-of-rights-in-action/archives>

**Unpacked Standards / Clear Learning Targets**

**C3 Framework Dimension 3. Gather and evaluate sources and use evidence to support claims.**

*Dimensions 1-4 of the C3 Framework should be incorporated throughout the course.*

**Essential Understanding**

Using sources for evidence to support claims

**Extended Understanding**

Evaluating sources and refining claims from evidence

**Academic Vocabulary**

**Tier 2**  
 evaluate sources claims

**Ultimate Learning Target Type: Skill**

**Broad Learning Target:**

- The student can gather and evaluate sources and use evidence to support claims.

**Underpinning Skills Learning Target:**

- The student can gather relevant information from multiple sources representing a wide range of views.
- The student can use the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection of sources.
- The student can evaluate the credibility of a source by examining how experts value the source.
- The student can develop claims and counterclaims while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both.
- The student can identify evidence that draws information from multiple sources to detect inconsistencies in evidence in order to revise or strengthen claims.
- The student can refine claims and counterclaims attending to precision, significance, and knowledge conveyed through the claim while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both.

### Content Elaborations

#### **From the *College, Career, and Civic Life Framework***

Students should use various technologies and skills to find information and to express their responses to compelling and supporting questions through well-reasoned explanations and evidence-based arguments. Through the rigorous analysis of sources and application of information from those sources, students should make the evidence-based claims that will form the basis for their conclusions.

In contrast to opinions and explanations, argumentation involves the ability to understand the source-to-evidence relationship. That relationship emphasizes the development of claims and counterclaims and the purposeful selection of evidence in support of those claims and counterclaims. Students will learn to develop claims using evidence, but their initial claims will often be tentative and probing. As students delve deeper into the available sources, they construct more sophisticated claims and counterclaims that draw on evidence from multiple sources. Whether those claims are implicitly or explicitly stated in student products, they will reflect the evidence students have selected from the sources they have consulted.

### Instructional Strategies

Have students curate a collection of resources on a selected topic or issue. Based on a set of criteria, have students evaluate and rank the credibility of each source.

A [Structured Academic Controversy](#) is a discussion that moves students beyond either/or debates to a more nuanced historical synthesis. The SAC method provides an alternative to the "debate mindset" by shifting the goal from winning classroom discussions to understanding alternative positions and formulating historical syntheses.

In the [Philosophical Chairs](#) strategy, one student from each team will provide a summary of the viewpoints presented during the discussion by his/her team. A student in the neutral zone must take notes on both sides of the argument, and if his/her position changes, he/she must explain why he/she came to a new conclusion.

[Defeating Counterarguments Class Challenge](#): Students are put into groups of three and the whole class is given an argument that they must defend along with a counterargument. The groups have three minutes to come up with the best response to the counterargument that they can muster.

**Sample Assessments and Performance Tasks**

What type of evidence would support the following claim: \_\_\_\_\_?

Read the statement below. Which claim does the statement support?

Read the sources below. Then, choose the claim that historians could make based on these sources.

Using the data provided, support or refute the following claim: \_\_\_\_\_.

Using the sources below, construct a claim about \_\_\_\_\_ and provide two pieces of evidence that support it.

**Instructional Resources**

Reading Like a Historian: Evaluating Sources - <https://inquirygroup.org/history-lessons/evaluating-sources>

Civic Online Reasoning (Stanford History Education Group) - <https://cor.inquirygroup.org/>

Points of View Reference Center (INFOhio) - <https://www.infohio.org/students//er/grade/g912>.

Logic in Argumentative Writing - <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/659/01/>

The Writing Center at UNC-Chapel Hill: Evidence - <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/evidence/>

Thesis-Proof Chart (Reading Quest) - <http://www.readingquest.org/thesis.html>

**Unpacked Standards / Clear Learning Targets**

**C3 Framework Dimension 4. Communicate conclusions and take informed action.**

*Dimensions 1-4 of the C3 Framework should be incorporated throughout the course.*

**Essential Understanding**

Communicate arguments with sound reasoning and evidence

**Extended Understanding**

Take informed action based on reasoned arguments

**Academic Vocabulary**

**Tier 2**

conclusions  
 evidentiary  
 claims  
 counterclaims  
 deliberative

**Tier 3**

individual action  
 collective action

**Ultimate Learning Target**  
**Type: Skill**

**Broad Learning Target:**

- The student can communicate conclusions and take informed action.

**Underpinning Skills Learning Targets:**

- The student can construct arguments using precise claims, evidence and sound reasoning from multiple sources.
- The student can acknowledge counterclaims and evidentiary weaknesses of an argument.
- The student can critique the credibility and validity of claims, evidence and reasoning in arguments.
- The student can present arguments with meaningful ideas and perspectives on issues to a range of audiences outside the classroom.
- The student can use print and oral technologies and digital technologies to communicate ideas.

**Underpinning Reasoning Learning Targets:**

- The student can assess options for individual and collective action to address local, regional, and global problems.
- The student can apply a range of deliberative and democratic strategies to make decisions and take action in their classrooms, schools, and out-of-school civic contexts.

**Content Elaborations****From the *College, Career, and Civic Life Framework***

Having worked independently and collaboratively through the development of questions, the application of disciplinary knowledge and concepts, and the gathering of sources and use of evidence and information, students formalize their arguments and explanations. Products such as essays, reports, and multimedia presentations offer students opportunities to represent their ideas in a variety of forms and communicate their conclusions to a range of audiences. Students' primary audiences will likely be their teachers and classmates, but even young children benefit from opportunities to share their conclusions with audiences outside their classroom doors.

Social studies is the ideal staging ground for taking informed action because of its unique role in preparing students for civic life. In social studies, students use disciplinary knowledge, skills, and perspectives to inquire about problems involved in public issues; deliberate with other people about how to define and address issues; take constructive, independent, and collaborative action; reflect on their actions; and create and sustain groups. It is important to note that taking informed action intentionally comes at the end of Dimension 4, as student action should be grounded in and informed by the inquiries initiated and sustained within and among the disciplines. In that way, action is then a purposeful, informed, and reflective experience.

**Instructional Strategies**

Invite a group of policy makers and community leaders to a class forum and discuss recent efforts to address issues of systemic racism.

Start a social media hashtag/campaign in support or opposition to a public policy.

Write an editorial or create a public service announcement highlighting a social justice issue in the community or nation.

Write a letter or email to a legislator on a pending bill.

Create print or digital posters for publication/distribution advocating for a particular public policy change.

Provide testimony to the city council or school board for how local officials can address issues of racial prejudice, bias, and discrimination.

Prepare and deliver lessons to introduce law to middle or elementary school students.

### Sample Assessments and Performance Tasks

Identify two strategies that you could use to address criminal justice reform at the state or national level.

Which action below would be appropriate for addressing a justice issue in your local community?

How could you use social media to take informed action on racial prejudice, bias, and discrimination?

### Instructional Resources

PVLEGS - <http://pvlegs.com> - emphasize effective speaking and listening skills: Poise, Voice, Life, Eye Contact, Gestures, Speed

C3 Teachers: Taking Informed Action video - [https://youtu.be/PC6J4tc3\\_TY](https://youtu.be/PC6J4tc3_TY)

Civic Action Project (Constitutional Rights Foundation) - <https://www.crfcap.org/mod/page/view.php?id=205>

**Unit I. Constitutional Law**
**Unpacked Standards / Clear Learning Targets**

**Law Learning Target I. Explain the purpose of law and compare the powers and responsibilities of each branch and level of government as they pertain to law and public policy.**

**Essential Understanding**

The purpose of lawmaking and how laws are made and carried out in the U.S.

**Extended Understanding**

The role of citizens in lawmaking

**Academic Vocabulary**

law  
 legislative  
 executive  
 judicial

**Ultimate Learning Target  
 Type: Reasoning**

**Broad Learning Target:**

- The student can explain the purpose of law and compare the powers and responsibilities of each branch and level of government as they pertain to law and public policy.

**Underpinning Knowledge Learning Targets:**

- The student can define law and explain its purposes.
- The student can explain how laws reflect values.
- The student can explain the role of the legislative branch.
- The student can explain the role of the executive branch.
- The student can explain the role of the judicial branch.
- The student can describe methods by which individuals and organizations provide input on laws at each level of government.

**Underpinning Reasoning Learning Targets:**

- The student can categorize powers and responsibilities according to the branch and level of government that holds them.
- The student can explain why branches and levels of government may engage in collaboration and conflict as they attempt to address public policy issues.

### Content Elaborations

Laws are rules recognized as binding and enforced by a government. Public policy consists of institutional actions and procedures pursued by a government in carrying out its functions.

Every society that has ever existed has recognized the need for laws. A democratic system of government cannot function effectively unless society is based on the “rule of law.” Without laws, there would be chaos and disorder.

Laws generally reflect and promote a society’s moral, economic, or social values. This does not mean that all laws are inherently fair or even good.

Each of the three branches of government has a role related to law and the creation of public policy.

- Legislative Branch: makes laws
- Executive Branch: enforces the law
- Judicial Branch: interprets the law

The interactions among the branches range from instances where they work together in concert to instances involving the exercise of checks and balances.

The complexity of law and public policy issues may involve multiple levels and branches of government. These levels and branches may engage in collaboration or conflict as they attempt to address public policy issues.

Individuals and organizations engage government officials on law and public policy using several methods. Individuals and organizations can:

- lobby members of a legislature;
- provide testimony before legislative committees;
- propose laws to legislators;
- prepare briefs to present during judicial proceedings;
- offer comments during public meetings;
- conduct letter-writing campaigns; and
- hold public demonstrations.

Individuals and organizations must know the proper level and branch of government to engage at the various stages of making public policy.

### Instructional Strategies

Ask students to imagine a nation without laws. What would society be like? Think how laws have influenced your behaviors already today (e.g., speed limits, mandatory school attendance, etc.)

Have students respond to the writing prompt: There ought to be a law...Have students defend their proposal for a law with evidence and sound reasoning.

Brainstorm a list of laws through American history that have been unjust and discriminatory. Why were these laws enacted? What values did they reflect? What led to changes in these laws? Are there unjust laws today? How can citizens work to change unjust laws?

Create a graphic organizer (e.g., chart, diagram, photo display) to represent the powers and responsibilities of the three branches of government at the national, state, and local levels.

Use current news sources to identify a recently-enacted law. What was the purpose of the law? What role did each branch play in making and enforcing the law? Was the law challenged in the courts?

### Sample Assessments and Performance Tasks

Choose the branch and level of government that would be responsible for each action in the lawmaking process listed below.

How do laws reflect the values of a society?

Select the boxes to associate each branch of government to its respective powers.

You have been working with a group of citizens to advocate for a change in state law. Explain four strategies you could use to advocate for this change in law.

### Instructional Resources

Textbook: *Street Law*, 10th Edition, Unit 1: Introduction to Law and the Legal System - Chapters 1-3

Rule of Law (iCivics) - <https://www.icivics.org/teachers/lesson-plans/rule-law>

LawCraft Game (iCivics) - <https://www.icivics.org/games/lawcraft>

How a Bill Becomes a Law (Crash Course) - <https://thecrashcourse.com/video?id=66f4-NKEYz4>

Legislatures: Laying Down the Law (Annenberg Media) - <https://www.learner.org/series/democracy-in-america/legislatures-laying-down-the-law/>

**Unpacked Standards / Clear Learning Targets**

<p><b>Law Learning Target 2. Apply the protections of the Constitution, Bill of Rights, and other amendments in a given scenario.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Essential Understanding</u></b>          Constitutional protection in the Bill of Rights and other amendments</p> <p><b><u>Extended Understanding</u></b>          Applying constitutional protections to given scenarios</p>	<p><b><u>Academic Vocabulary</u></b>          Bill of Rights          Freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition          unreasonable search and seizure          cruel and unusual punishment          due process          equal protection</p>
<p><b>Ultimate Learning Target Type: Reasoning</b></p>	<p><b><u>Broad Learning Target:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The student can apply the protections of the Constitution, Bill of Rights, and other amendments in a given scenario.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Underpinning Knowledge Learning Targets:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The student can explain the constitutional protections of freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition.</li> <li>- The student can explain the constitutional protections against unreasonable search and seizure.</li> <li>- The student can explain the constitutional protections of due process.</li> <li>- The student can explain the constitutional protections in criminal prosecutions and civil lawsuits</li> <li>- The student can explain the constitutional protections against cruel and unusual punishment.</li> <li>- The student can explain the constitutional protections of due process and equal protection under the law.</li> <li>- The student can explain the constitutional protections of privacy.</li> <li>- The student can explain the constitutional protections of the right to vote.</li> <li>- The student can explain the constitutional provision for naturalization and summarize current immigration laws.</li> </ul>	

### Content Elaborations

People in the United States have claims to protection from government intrusion in certain aspects of their lives. These claims are called rights. The rights guaranteed in the Constitution are relative, not absolute. The exercise of rights must be balanced by the rights of others and by the common good.

The Bill of Rights was drafted to ensure the protection of civil liberties of the people and place limits on the federal government.

The protection of civil liberties and limits on the federal government found in the Bill of Rights include, but are not limited to:

- freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment: religion, assembly, press, petition, speech;
- the right to bear arms (Second Amendment);
- no unreasonable search and seizure, no warrants without probable cause (Fourth Amendment);
- no self-incrimination, protection against double jeopardy (Fifth Amendment);
- right to speedy and public trial by an impartial jury, right to be informed of the charges, the right to confront one's accuser(s), the right to counsel (Sixth and Seventh Amendments);
- no cruel or unusual punishment (Eighth Amendment); and,
- any power not given to the federal government is given to the states or the people (Ninth Amendment).

Later constitutional amendments protect additional individuals rights. The Thirteenth Amendment prohibits slavery and outlaws involuntary servitude, except as punishment for a crime. The Fourteenth Amendment requires equal protection of the laws for all citizens. It also provides that no state can deprive any citizen of "life, liberty, or property without due process of law." The U.S. Supreme Court, in its interpretation of the 14th Amendment's due process clause, has instituted the doctrine of incorporation meaning that most of the guarantees in the Bill of Rights also apply to state and local governments.

Several amendments protect and broaden the right to vote.

- Fifteenth Amendment - prohibits denying the right to vote based on race or color;
- Nineteenth Amendment - protects the right to vote for women;
- Twenty-third Amendment - gives citizens of Washington, D.C., the right to vote in presidential elections;
- Twenty-fourth Amendment - prohibits poll taxes; and
- Twenty-sixth Amendment - gives citizens 18 years of age or older the right to vote.

Since the 1960s, the U.S. Supreme Court has recognized a constitutional right to privacy, based on protections of the freedom of speech and association, freedom from unreasonable search and seizure, the right to remain silent, and the rights kept by the people.

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution authorizes Congress to establish naturalization laws. Naturalization is a legal process by which persons born in other countries can apply for U.S. citizenship. Historically, all immigration law has been considered a federal issue.

### Instructional Strategies

Create a graphic organizer or infographic to show the civil liberties and limits on the federal government found in the Bill of Rights.

Read Supreme Court case studies to apply the Bill of Rights and other amendments to specific scenarios. Have students read summaries of the arguments and discuss how they think the Supreme Court should rule.

Freedom of Speech and Press	<i>Schenck v. United States</i> , 1919 <i>West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette</i> , 1943 <i>Dennis v. United States</i> , 1951 (and due process)	<i>New York Times v. United States</i> , 1971 <i>Bethel School District v. Fraser</i> , 1986 <i>Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier</i> , 1988
Freedom of Religion	<i>Reynolds v. United States</i> , 1879 <i>Everson v. Board of Education</i> , 1947	<i>Wisconsin v. Yoder</i> , 1972 <i>Lee v. Weisman</i> , 1992
Unreasonable Search and Seizure, Privacy	<i>Weeks v. United States</i> , 1914 <i>Katz v. United States</i> , 1967	<i>Roe v. Wade</i> , 1973 <i>New Jersey v. T.L.O.</i> , 1985
Self incrimination	<i>Miranda v. Arizona</i> , 1966	<i>Arizona v. Fulminante</i> , 1991
Right to Counsel, Fair Trial	<i>Powell v. Alabama</i> , 1932 <i>Gideon v. Wainwright</i> , 1963	<i>Escobedo v. Illinois</i> , 1964 <i>Sheppard v. Maxwell</i> , 1966
Cruel and unusual punishment	<i>Gregg v. Georgia</i> , 1976 <i>Payne v. Tennessee</i> , 1991	<i>Miller v. Alabama</i> , 2012 <i>Kahler v. Kansas</i> , 2019
Equal Protection	<i>Plessy v. Ferguson</i> , 1896 <i>Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas</i> , 1954	<i>Reynolds v. Sims</i> , 1964 <i>Regents of the University of California v. Bakke</i> , 1978
Due Process	<i>Whitney v. California</i> , 1927 <i>Minersville School District v. Gobitis</i> , 1940	<i>Mapp v. Ohio</i> , 1961 <i>Engel v. Vitale</i> , 1962

Create a timeline or multimedia presentation showing how interpretations of a particular amendment have evolved over time.

Use news sources to examine recent issues or cases related to the Bill of Rights. Identify the specific rights involved and how courts have interpreted these rights.

Discuss current provisions of immigration law in the U.S. What controversies and challenges exist in this area of law?

### Sample Assessments and Performance Tasks

Select the three scenarios where freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment have been violated.

Explain the phrase “individual rights are relative, not absolute.” Give an example to support your explanation.

Read the information below about a Supreme Court decision. How did this ruling apply the Bill of Rights?

Hold a debate on a topic related to First Amendment protections. Possible topics include: censorship, hate speech, public photography/filming, free speech in schools, cyberbullying, flag desecration, rights of assembly for protestors, and religious exemptions to laws.

Conduct a class mock trial involving one or more constitutional protections, such as due process, equal protection, unreasonable search and seizure, cruel and unusual punishment.

Conduct a moot court challenging the constitutionality of a law based on protections in the Bill of Rights or other amendments.

### Instructional Resources

Textbook: *Street Law*, 10th Edition, Unit 6: Individual Rights and Liberties - Chapters 34-41; Unit 7: Contemporary Issues in Law - Chapters 42, 44

Interactive Constitution (National Constitution Center) - <https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/the-constitution>

Do I Have a Right? Game, Bill of Rights Edition (iCivics) - <https://www.icivics.org/node/322421/resource>

Landmark Cases (Street Law) - <https://www.landmarkcases.org/>

Bill of Rights in Action Archives - <https://www.crf-usa.org/bill-of-rights-in-action/bill-of-rights-in-action-archives-u-s-government.html>

Our Rights (Annenberg Classroom) - <https://www.annenbergclassroom.org/resource/our-rights/>

Are Students Protected by the First Amendment? (C3 Teachers) - <https://www.annenbergclassroom.org/resource/our-rights/>

Crash Course

- Search & Seizure - [https://thecrashcourse.com/video?id=\\_4O1OIGyTuU](https://thecrashcourse.com/video?id=_4O1OIGyTuU)
- Due Process of Law - <https://thecrashcourse.com/video?id=UyHWRXAAgmQ>
- Equal Protection - [https://thecrashcourse.com/video?id=qKK5KVI9\\_Q8](https://thecrashcourse.com/video?id=qKK5KVI9_Q8)

**Unit 2. The Court System and Criminal Justice**
**Unpacked Standards / Clear Learning Targets**

**Law Learning Target 3. Evaluate the functions, successes, and failures of the U.S. legal and criminal justice systems.**

**Essential Understanding**

Functions and processes of the criminal justice system

**Extended Understanding**

Successes and failures of the the criminal justice system

**Academic Vocabulary**

crime  
 criminal justice  
 probable cause  
 reasonable suspicion  
 beyond a reasonable doubt  
 felony  
 misdemeanor

**Ultimate Learning Target  
 Type: Reasoning**

**Broad Learning Target:**

- The student can evaluate the functions, successes, and failures of the U.S. legal and criminal justice systems.

**Underpinning Knowledge Learning Targets:**

- The student can explain factors that contribute to crime rates.
- The student can give examples of crimes against the person.
- The student can give examples of crimes against property.
- The student can describe the structure of the federal and state court systems.
- The student can describe the role of lawyers in the court system.
- The student can explain basic court procedures in criminal, civil and juvenile cases.
- The student can explain the standard of “beyond a reasonable doubt” for criminal convictions.
- The student can describe the steps in the criminal justice process.
- The student can explain how juveniles are treated differently than adults in the criminal justice system.

**Underpinning Skills Learning Targets:**

- The student can analyze data sets related to crime and criminal justice.
- The student can detect bias in criminal justice statistics and reporting.

**Underpinning Reasoning Learning Targets:**

- The student can classify and categorize crimes as state or federal crimes.
- The student can classify and categorize crimes as felonies or misdemeanors.
- The student can analyze case studies that demonstrate a miscarriage of justice.
- The student can assess the extent to which laws are applied fairly.

**Content Elaborations**

The U.S. has both federal court system and state court systems. Trial courts weigh evidence and decide the facts in a dispute. A losing party may ask an appeals court to overturn the decision of a trial court. Many state court systems have a structure similar to the federal court system. The U.S. Supreme Court is the highest court in the country; all lower courts must follow U.S. Supreme Court rulings.

A crime is an action that a person does or fails to do that violates the law. Disagreement exists over the causes of crime and potential solutions. Poverty, unemployment, lack of education, family instability, drug abuse, media influence, lenient courts and ineffective correctional systems have all been cited as factors contributing to increased crime rates.

Criminal laws and courts exist at both the state and federal levels. Based on severity, crimes may be classified as felonies or misdemeanors. A felony carries a potential prison sentence of more than one year. A misdemeanor can result in a jail term of one year or less.

Crimes against the person typically include severe punishments. These include assault, battery, homicide, kidnapping, and rape. Crimes against property are those in which property is destroyed (arson, vandalism), and those in which property is stolen (robbery, burglary, embezzlement, extortion).

The criminal justice process includes everything that happens to a person from arrest, prosecution, conviction or acquittal, sentencing, and imprisonment and/or release. People accused of a crime are entitled to: right to an attorney, trial by jury, speedy and public trial, confront witnesses, protection against self-incrimination, and the right of appeal.

In a criminal case, the prosecutor must prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant committed the crime with the required intent in order to get a conviction. In recent years, some people accused or convicted of a crime have been able to prove their innocence through DNA testing. As of 2019, the Innocence Project has worked on 189 successful DNA-based exonerations. They cite studies estimating that between 2.3% and 5% of all prisoners in the U.S. are innocent.

Many scholars have argued there is clear evidence of injustice and racial bias in the U.S. criminal justice system. Research has shown evidence of bias including racial profiling in police stops, searches, and arrests for marijuana possession and other misdemeanors; disproportionate use of force and police shootings against African Americans and Latinos; and racial disparities in the seriousness of charges, bail-setting, plea bargaining, pre-trial dismissals, jury selection, sentencing, and incarceration.

Juveniles are treated differently from adults in the criminal justice system. Juvenile systems are supposed to rehabilitate (help them make better decisions) rather than punish them. In some cases, however, juvenile offenders should be prosecuted in adult court depending on age and severity of crime.

### Instructional Strategies

Use a vocabulary word/concept map to unpack key vocabulary for this unit: criminal justice, probable cause, reasonable suspicion, beyond a reasonable doubt, felony, misdemeanor.

Use a K-W-L Chart to have students summarize what they already Know, Want to know, and Learned about courts and criminal justice in the U.S. Complete the K and W columns at the beginning of the unit and the L column at the end of the unit.

Have students assume the role of a commission established to evaluate criminal laws. Provide students with a series of actions. In each case, students should first decide whether or not the act should be treated as a crime. Then, use a [continuum activity](#) to have students rank the crimes from most serious to least serious. Write the scale on the board from: Very Serious, Serious, Undecided, Less Serious, Not Serious. Read each action one by one and have students move to the appropriate place on the spectrum and defend their position.

Create a chart to summarize the types of crimes, giving definitions and examples of each type.

Use spreadsheet software to analyze crime rates. Convert data tables in graphs and charts. Have students write claims based on the data and support the claims with evidence.

Use the [SPAR \(Spontaneous Argumentation\) strategy](#) to organize a structured proposition: Gun control is an effective way to reduce crime.

Create a flow chart to summarize the sequence of events in the criminal justice process from arrest to incarceration. The flow chart should detail each step and alternatives (plea bargaining vs. trial).

Discuss the concepts of probable cause and reasonable suspicion. Provide students with scenarios (real or fictional) and discuss whether police would have probable cause or reasonable suspicion to make a stop or search. In which scenarios should police be required to get a warrant before making a search?

Use current news sources to examine recent issues or cases related to bias or injustice in the criminal justice system. What arguments are presented? What evidence and reasoning supports the arguments?

Invite a prosecuting and/or defense attorney to speak to the class about the criminal justice system. Have them discuss the criminal justice process from their perspective and what they see as the successes, challenges, and failures of the criminal justice system.

Read and discuss cases in which juveniles were charged as adults. Discuss the factors of the case and decide whether the adult charges were warranted.

### Sample Assessments and Performance Tasks

What is the purpose of a trial court? What option is available to a party in a trial court?

Look at the table of crime data below. Which conclusion can be drawn from the data?

Which factors below are frequently cited as contributing to increased crime rates? Select all the correct answers.

Sort the crimes below into the correct columns as crimes against the person or crimes against property.

Which graphic below accurately reflects the sequence of events in the criminal justice process?

What is the standard for conviction in a criminal case? What accounts for the conviction of innocent people?

Explain two examples of bias or discrimination in the criminal justice system.

### Instructional Resources

Textbook: *Street Law*, 10th Edition, Unit 1: Introduction to Law and the Legal System - Chapters 5-6; Unit 2: Criminal Law and Juvenile Justice - Chapters 7-16

Structure of the Court System (Crash Course) - <https://thecrashcourse.com/video?id=IGyx5UEwgtA>

Legal System Basics (Crash Course) - <https://thecrashcourse.com/video?id=mXw-hEB263k>

Introduction to the American Criminal Justice System - <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/introduction-to-the-american-criminal-justice-system>

Juvenile Justice: What Should We Do With Children Who Break the Law? (Constitutional Rights Foundation) - <https://www.crf-usa.org/bill-of-rights-in-action/bria-11-2-c-juvenile-justice-what-should-we-do-with-children-who-break-the-law>

How Reliable Are Eyewitnesses? (Constitutional Rights Foundation) - <https://teachdemocracy.org/bill-of-rights-in-action/bria-13-3-c-how-reliable-are-eyewitnesses>

There's overwhelming evidence that the criminal justice system is racist. Here's the proof. (Washington Post) - <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/opinions/systemic-racism-police-evidence-criminal-justice-system/>

**Unit 3. Civil Law**
**Unpacked Standards / Clear Learning Targets**

<b>Law Learning Target 4. Explain the practical value of understanding civil law, including torts, consumer and housing law, and family law.</b>	<b><u>Essential Understanding</u></b> How civil law applies to everyday life  <b><u>Extended Understanding</u></b> Applying civil law to life situations and experiences	<b><u>Academic Vocabulary</u></b> tort plaintiff defendant liability negligence contract consumer law
<b>Ultimate Learning Target</b> <b>Type: Knowledge</b>	<p><b><u>Broad Learning Target:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The student can explain the practical value of understanding civil law, including torts, consumer and housing law, and family law.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Underpinning Knowledge Learning Targets:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The student can explain the difference between criminal law and civil law.</li> <li>- The student can describe the litigation process in a civil case.</li> <li>- The student can define tort and identify three types of tort liability.</li> <li>- The student can explain the requirements for a binding contract.</li> <li>- The student can explain government actions taken to protect consumers.</li> <li>- The student can explain the responsibilities of parents under family law.</li> <li>- The student can describe matters handled in divorce cases.</li> <li>- The student can identify ways the government intervenes in family situations.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Underpinning Reasoning Learning Targets:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The student can evaluate the arguments for tort reform.</li> <li>- The student can assess the merits of a civil claim.</li> </ul>	

**Content Elaborations**

Civil law is the system of law concerned with private relations between individuals rather than criminal matters.

**Torts**

Wrongs committed under civil law are called torts. Tort law deals with disputes between individuals or groups of individuals. A plaintiff can sue a person believed to be legally responsible for harm (a defendant). Unlike criminal law, defendants cannot be sent to prison. Tort law is based on the principle that people should act with reasonable care toward others and their property. There are three major types of tort liability: intentional wrongs, acts of negligence, and strict liability. Tort reform is a movement to address concerns about the tort system, including unreasonably high awards to plaintiffs.

**Consumer and Housing Law**

A contract is an agreement between two or more individuals to exchange something of value. To be legally binding, a contract must have: an offer, an acceptance, and an exchange of consideration. A party breaches (breaks) a contract by failing to live up to the agreement. Although minors may make contracts, they cannot generally be legally held to the terms of it.

People that buy a home typically secure a loan, called a mortgage, to help pay for the purchase. Many people choose to rent an apartment or house instead. A lease is a contract between a landlord who owns a property and a tenant who pays rent to use the property.

Governments have passed laws to protect consumers, including outlawing deceptive practices (false advertising), creating standards for quality and safety of products, establishing consumer protection agencies, and protecting consumers against discrimination.

**Family Law**

While state laws generally control marriage and divorce, the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that states must grant marriage certificates to same-sex couples.

Couples who cannot resolve their differences may choose to divorce. For couples with children, the court awards custody based on the best interest of the children if a couple is unable to agree on a custody decision. The divorce decree also determines the distribution of money and possessions. Stepparents are not considered parents unless they legally adopt the child.

State laws require parents to care for and support their children to the best of their ability. Parents also have a responsibility to ensure their children receive an education and medical care.

The government may intervene in family life if children have serious problems living with their biological parents. If family members cannot live together safely, a child may be placed in the foster care system.

Adults can become legal parents of a child through the adoption process.

### Instructional Strategies

Create a set of fictional civil case summaries. Have students read the descriptions of each and identify the plaintiff and the defendant, and determine whether the defendant should pay for the plaintiff's damages. Have students share their responses with a partner and explain their reasoning.

Use current news sources to analyze a tort case in which damages were awarded. What were the facts of the case? How much money was awarded in damages? Does this amount seem reasonable? Why or why not?

Read and analyze a sample contract. Decide whether or not the contract favors one party. Would you sign the contract?

Have students brainstorm a list of deceptive sales practices. Have students collect evidence of deceptive practices they encounter in their daily life.

Interview a social worker about family law and ask them how they make decisions about when to intervene in family situations.

### Sample Assessments and Performance Tasks

Which statement is a characteristic of civil tort trials?

Read the scenario below. What type of tort liability is alleged in this case?

What is one important goal of tort reform?

Explain two ways governments have provided protection for consumers.

### Instructional Resources

Textbook: *Street Law*, 10th Edition, Unit 4: Consumer Law - Chapters 22-27; Unit 5: Family Law - Chapters 28-33; Unit 6: Contemporary Issues in Law - Chapters 43, 45

Torts Liability: Mock Trial (Washington Courts) - [http://www.courts.wa.gov/education/lessons/?fa=education\\_lessons.dspPlan&plan=TortLiabilityMockTrial](http://www.courts.wa.gov/education/lessons/?fa=education_lessons.dspPlan&plan=TortLiabilityMockTrial)

Minors and Contracts (Washington Courts) - [http://www.courts.wa.gov/education/lessons/?fa=education\\_lessons.dspPlan&plan=MinorsAndContracts](http://www.courts.wa.gov/education/lessons/?fa=education_lessons.dspPlan&plan=MinorsAndContracts)

Federal Trade Commission Lesson Plans - <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/Admongo/teachers.html>

High School Financial Literacy Lesson Plans (Ohio Attorney General) - <https://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Individuals-and-Families/Consumers/High-School-Financial-Literacy-Lesson-Plans>