

## AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

### United States Elections: History of Voting Rights & Public Policy

#### Adjustable Length: 3-4 classes

**ESSENTIAL QUESTION:** How might election outcomes be impacted by legislators, citizens, or non-governmental organizations?

**OBJECTIVE:** Students will investigate and be able to explain how the United States Constitution can be changed from time to time through both formal and informal processes (e.g. amendments, court cases, executive actions) to meet the needs of its citizens or political groups.

#### **S.S. Content Statement:**

(OHIO) Some documents in American history have considerable importance for the development of the nation. Students will use historical thinking to examine key documents which form the basis for the United States of America.

- Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide opposing perspectives on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.

#### **STANDARDS**

- RI.11-12.8 Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy.
- SL.9-10.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
  - a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.
  - b. Work with peers to set rules for collegial discussions and decision-making (e.g., informal consensus, taking votes on key issues, presentation of alternate views), clear goals and deadlines, and individual roles as needed.
  - c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.

- d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.

## RESOURCES:

<https://constitutioncenter.org>

**\*\*<http://www.acluohio.org/archives/cases/ohio-a-philip-randolph-institute-v-husted>**

**\*\*<http://www.campaignlegalcenter.org/case/husted-v-randolph-institute>**

**\*\*<https://electioninnovation.org/2018/01/12/arguments-husted-v-a-philip-randolph-institute-whats-a-state-to-do/>**

## MATERIALS:

- Worksheet (following lesson plan)
- Historical documents: listed and available online for Husted v. A. Philip Randolph Institute
- Laptops or other available technology for historical documents

## PROCEDURES:

### 1) **Warm Up Exercise:** *DATA DUMP*

Directions: Students are given 5 minutes to recall previously introduced content by completing the attached worksheet.

### 2) Using their technology or document hard copies, student pairs add information to Column one explaining in their own words each Article and Amendment related to voting rights.

Exit slip for this lesson:

Students will turn in the worksheet completed during class as a formative assessment.

Teacher facilitated:

### 3) Introduce a discussion about what societal events/conditions lead to each amendment. Students will add additional details on the worksheet and in their notes during this discussion.

### 4) Introduce the following multiple day assignment that will conclude with a class debate.

As a class, read the opposing questions presented before the Supreme Court of the United States in *Husted vs. A. Philip Randolph Institute*. Students will research and defend a position about this issue regarding voting rights.

### 5) *Student Assignment:*

*"Using the principles set forth in the Constitution and current reliable sources, I can defend my position in the Supreme Court case of Husted v. A. Philip Randolph Institute that challenged existing voting registration rights in the United States."*

\* Teacher creates the timeframe, assignment criteria, and summative assessment for this unit, explaining the learning targets and outcomes to students, providing any individualized materials necessary.

## **EXTENSION EXERCISES:**

- A. Students research registration policies in their own state.
  - ✓ Students research and recommend solutions to the issue introduced in this unit.
  - ✓ Students design ways to encourage registered voters to check their registration status with the local Board of Elections.  
Example: Students create a public service announcement video for their own school news show and ask a local television station to run the psa.
  - ✓ Students offer to drive elderly or disabled neighbors to their voting site.
- ✓ Students brainstorm and create ways to support their local board of elections by encouraging those who qualify to register and vote in all elections.