Lesson Plan: The Goals of Government

Grades: 4th, 8th, High School
Subject: Social Studies, U.S. Government, English/Language Arts
Time Required: 1 50-minute class periods
Author: Teaching with Primary Sources—MTSU

OVERVIEW
The Preamble to the United States Constitution summarizes the purpose of the document and outlines six goals of government. This lesson plan will examine these six goals and what they mean in practical terms. Students will discuss examples of how government and its citizens work to fulfill these.

UNDERSTANDING GOAL
Students will understand the goals of government as stated in the Preamble to the Constitution and how they have been achieved at different points in our nation’s history.

OBJECTIVES
Students will complete a close reading of the Preamble of the Constitution. They will analyze six additional sources and relate them to the Preamble.

INVESTIGATIVE QUESTIONS
As stated in the Preamble to the Constitution, what are the goals of the federal government? How are these goals accomplished?

CURRICULUM STANDARDS
Social Studies
4.14 Describe the principles embedded in the Constitution, including: Purposes of government (listed in the Preamble)...
8.23 Examine the principles and purposes of government articulated in the Preamble and principles stated in the Constitution, including: the separation of powers, federalism, and checks and balances.
GC.5 Describe the purposes and functions of government as outlined in the Preamble of the Constitution.

English/Language Arts (CCSS)
4.RI.KID.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly; refer to details and examples in the text when drawing inferences from the text.
8.RI.KID.1 Analyze what a text says explicitly and draw logical inferences; support an interpretation of a text by citing relevant textual evidence.
9-10.RI.KID.1 Analyze what a text says explicitly and draw inferences; cite the strongest, most compelling textual evidence to support conclusions.
**MATERIALS**
- Graphic Organizer
- Index cards

**RESOURCES**

Preamble

Union: Inaugural Address, March 4, 1865, in Lincoln's hand. (Transcript) Excerpt on page 5

Establishment of Justice: Supreme Court Building

Domestic Tranquility: George Washington to Daniel Morgan, October 8, 1794 Excerpt on page 5

Common defense: Don’t Wait for the Draft—Volunteer

General welfare: General planning. A simplified diagram to explain the integrated functioning of the Authority's river control projects

The Securing of liberty: Our Bill of Rights is everybody's business

**PROCEDURE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Distribute copies of the graphic organizer and the Preamble to the Constitution to each student. Depending on grade level, you may choose to have students work independently or in small groups.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td>Ask students to read the Preamble to themselves. Then ask for a volunteer to read it aloud to the class. For younger students, you may want to discuss any unfamiliar vocabulary.</td>
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<td>Step 3</td>
<td>Have the students identify the six goals listed in the Preamble and add them to the graphic organizer.</td>
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<td>Step 4</td>
<td>Ask students to write definition for each of the stated goals. As a class discuss examples of how these six goals are met by government and U.S. citizens.</td>
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<td>Step 5</td>
<td>Project the image of the Supreme Court building for the class. Ask your students to identify what this building is and who uses it. Of the six stated goals, which is accomplished by the work done in this building? Have your students explain their answers and record their thoughts on the graphic organizer.</td>
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**PROCEDURE (cont.)**

| Step 6 | Working in small groups, give each group a copy of the remaining five sources listed in the Resources section (p.2) and have them identify which goal of the Preamble aligns with each source. They will need to explain their answers in the provided space on the graphic organizer.

*Note: For those working with younger students or challenged readers, excerpts for two of the text-based sources are included on page 5. |

| Step 7 | For the exit activity, give each student an index card to answer this question. How can average citizens help accomplish these goals? |

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**EXTENSION**

- Have your students draw images that show what the six goals discussed in the lesson mean to them.
- Have your students compare the Preamble to the state constitution with that of the United States Constitution.

**EVALUATION**

- 50% graphic organizer
- 30% exit activity
- 20% class participation

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*Inaugural Address, March 4, 1865, in Lincoln’s hand.*
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<tr>
<th>Goal:</th>
<th>Defined as:</th>
<th>Related Source:</th>
<th>Why?:</th>
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On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it, all sought to avert it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to destroy it without war--seeking to dissolve the Union and divide effects by negotiation. Both parties deprecated war, but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive, and the other would accept war rather than let it perish, and the war came.

Excerpt from George Washington to Daniel Morgan, October 8, 1794 (Written during the Whiskey Rebellion)

I am perfectly in sentiment with you, that the business we are drawn out upon, should be effectually executed; and that the daring and factious spirit which has arisen (to overturn the laws, and to subvert the Constitution,) ought to be subdued. If this is not done, there is, an end of and we may bid adieu to all government in this Country, except Mob and Club Govt, from whence nothing but anarchy and confusion can ensue; for if the minority, and a small one too, are suffered to dictate to the majority, after measures have undergone the most solemn discussions by the Representatives of the people, and their Will through this medium is enacted into a law; there can be no security for life, liberty or property...