

Washington Essential Academic Learning Requirements



The Washington Essential Academic Learning Requirements for Social Studies follow the state's learning goals. All disciplines must link thinking skills to the basics and to the work world. The goals for Civics require students to develop an understanding of the founding documents that underlie core U.S. values and principles.

In SIRS' study of the Washington Essential Academic Learning Requirements, we see a direct correlation between the goals and objectives that are emphasized and the framework upon which SIRS Interactive Citizenship has been developed. SIRS Interactive Citizenship content emphasizes the generalizations and concepts that act as the framework for understanding democratic political institutions and their emergence throughout history, while the Discovery and Inquiry activities and related chapter lessons exemplify our commitment to critical thinking skills.

What Citizens Need to Know About Government, addresses the expectations for **Civics** and presents a framework for understanding America's ongoing struggle to realize the ideals of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution and each citizen's role in this democracy. Through this framework, students are able to connect the past to the present as well as appreciate universal historical themes and dilemmas by accessing primary sources such as, biographies, documents, diaries, letters, legends and speeches and links to related articles and web sites while focusing on the basic concepts of government. Thus, students develop the higher order thinking skills deemed necessary by the Washington Essential Academic Learning Requirements.

<<http://www.k12.wa.us/curriculum/instruct/ealrs.asp>> [2002, January 22]



Washington Essential Academic Learning Requirements

correlation with

What Citizens Need to Know About Government



Social Studies: Civics

1. The student understands and can explain the core values and principles of the U.S. democracy as set forth in foundational documents, including the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

To meet this standard, the student will:

- 1.1 understand and interpret the major ideas of foundational documents
 - explain key concepts of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution and evaluate their impact on the contemporary U.S. political system
 - analyze how specific rights guaranteed by the Constitution can be modified as the Constitution remains open to change and interpretation
- 1.2 examine key ideals of U.S. democracy
 - examine the origins and continuing influence of key ideals of the U.S. democracy such as individual human dignity, liberty, justice, equality, and the rule of law
 - analyze why democratic ideals demand that people work together to reduce the disparity between ideals and realities
- 1.3 examine representative government and citizen participation
 - examine and evaluate how citizens influence and use governmental institutions and processes to solve problems, for example, through community service, voting, collective action, or lobbying
 - analyze the difference between “direct democracy” and a republic in relation to the U.S. form of government

- *Chapter 1 discusses the philosophical ideals that U.S. democracy is based upon. Students can learn about the early European influences that shaped the founding documents.*
- *Chapter 1 provides a link to documents such as the Declaration of Independence, Resolutions of the Stamp Act and The Albany Plan of Union.*
- *Chapter 1 explains the differences between direct democracy and a republic.*
- *From Chapter 3, students may gain an understanding of the U.S. Constitution. They may read this document from an embedded text link.*
- *Chapter 13 discusses the influence of public opinion, lobbies, and special interest groups on government institutions and elected officials.*
- *Chapter 15 discusses the importance of voting and the voting process.*

2. The student analyzes the purposes and organization of governments and laws.

To meet this standard, the student will:

2.1 understand and explain the organization of U.S. government

- examine and explain the constitutional principles that establish and limit federal, state, and local government
- identify problems and solutions related to the distribution of power between the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government

2.2 understand the function and effect of law

- explain how the Constitution is maintained as the supreme law of the land and how it is changed or amended

2.3 compare and contrast democracies with other forms of government

- explain the purposes of government and analyze how its powers are acquired, used, justified, and balanced
- compare U.S. democracy to other forms of government and identify representative political leaders from selected historical and contemporary settings
- analyze and explain how citizens can influence governments, for example, voting, lobbying, protest, or revolution

- Chapter 2 examines the constitutional principles that establish and limit the federal government. The system of checks and balances established to preserve democratic rule is a key topic.

- Chapters 4 and 5 examine the Executive Branch.

- Chapter 6 examines the Legislative Branch.

- Chapter 7 examines the Judicial Branch.

- Chapter 3 discusses the process of amending the Constitution.

- Chapter 1 examines the three political systems: command, custom, and consent. Historical and contemporary examples of governments found within each system are provided. Students may continue this investigation by linking to web sites such as those for the British Parliament and Tribal Governments.

3. The student understands the purposes and organization of international relationships and how U.S. foreign policy is made.

To meet this standard, the student will:

3.1 understand how the world is organized politically and how nations interact

- analyze the relationships and tensions between national sovereignty and international issues, in such matters as territory, economic development, nuclear and other weapons, use of natural resources, and human rights concerns
- evaluate how U.S. interests are maintained through international agreements, treaties, and alliances and describe U.S. foreign policy now and in the past

3.2 recognize factors and roles that affect the development of foreign policy

- explain conditions and motivations that affect the development of foreign policy such as historical tensions, balance of power, and economic development
- evaluate U.S. foreign policy decisions and how U.S. foreign policy affects other nations
- select, apply, and defend criteria for evaluating the conduct of a particular international organization

- *Chapter 28, Foreign Policy, details how U.S. foreign policy is made. Students learn about the United States' involvement in international organizations, foreign trade agreements, and cultural exchanges. Students can access web sites such as, Committee on International Relations Home Page, International Court of Justice Home Page and Organization of American States (OAS) Home Page.*

4. The student understands the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and the principles of democratic civic involvement.

To meet this standard, the student will:

4.1 understand individual rights and their accompanying responsibilities

- analyze how individual rights can be balanced with the common good, for example, freedom of press, or economic / environmental balance
- analyze why democracy requires citizens to deliberate on public problems and participate in collective decision-making

4.2 identify and demonstrate rights of U.S. citizenship

- engage in oral and written civic discourse to analyze pressing controversial issues and evaluate different solutions
- evaluate campaign and voting activities and explain the importance of voting knowledgeably

4.3 explain how citizen participation influences public policy

- evaluate the positive and negative consequences of public opinion and the media on public policy development
- investigate career of interest in the field of public service

- *Chapter 14 examines the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.*
- *Chapter 15 examines why voting is considered the most important feature of a democracy. Students may access the Voting Integrity Home Page.*
- *Chapter 13 examines the role the media plays in government, politics, and people's lives.*