Government and Election

Fall 2020

## Teacher Information

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## Description

With the excitement of election season upon us, it’s a great time for students to learn more about how the U.S. government works! We will explore such topics as our country’s founding documents, federalism, the three branches of government, and the election process. We will also study the lives of some notable Americans to give us snapshots of our country’s history

## Required Materials

Each week, the class will explore vital writings, speeches, and Supreme Court cases of America. Each of these resources are in the public domain and should be available online and free of charge. The schedule below will lay out what to have read/watch/listen to prior to class. A portion of each class will be dedicated to exploring the contribution and ideas of these leaders and writers.

# Books

* Milton Friedman, “Introduction” in *Capitalism and* Freedom.
* Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*
* CS Lewis, “On the Humanitarian Theory of Punishment,”
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, “Dangers of National Repentance”
* Thomas Jefferson,“Declaration of Independence.”
* Frederick Douglas, “What to the Slave is 4th of July?”
* Supreme Court Case, “Employment Division, Department of Human Resources of Oregon v. Smith.”

# Speeches

* Ronald Reagan, “Rendezvous with Destiny.”
* Martin Luther, “I Have a Dream.”
* Barack Obama, June 3, 2008 Speech upon Winning the Democrat Party’s Nomination for President.
* Robert F. Kennedy, “Remarks at the University of Kansas, March 18, 1968.”
* George W. Bush, “9/11 Prayer and Remembrance Ceremony”
* John F. Kennedy, “American University Commencement Address.”
* Dwight Eisenhower, “Farewell Address.”

## Debate Assignment

At the end of the class, each student will defend a political position of their choice. These topics can include (but are not limited to) climate change, energy policy, education, the minimum wage, tax policy, health care, federal spending, social security, religious liberty, student loans, international trade, immigration, gun control, justice, etc. Please avoid the topics of abortion, LGBT+, and race. Preferably, each student will choose a unique topic of discussion. The class will be encouraged to engage in debate in a charitable, friendly way.

Course Schedule

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| Week | Topic | Reading/Assignments |
| One (August 18) | Political History & Thought  |  |
| Two (August 25) | Economic History & Thought  | Milton Friedman/RFK |
| Three (Sept. 1) | The Constitution | Jefferson |
| Four (Sept. 8) | The Judicial Branch | Thomas Paine, ch. 1 |
| Five (Sept. 15) | The Judicial Branch | Thomas Paine, ch. 2 |
| Six (Sept. 22) | The Legislative Branch | JFK |
| Seven (Sept. 29) | The Legislative Branch | Lewis, “Repentance” |
|  | **FALL BREAK (OCTOBER 6)** |  |
| Eight (Oct. 13) | The Executive Branch | Lewis, “Punishment” |
| Nine (Oct. 20) | The Executive Branch | Bush |
| Ten (Oct. 27) |  | Eisenhower |
| Eleven (Nov. 3) | Election Process | Douglas |
| Twelve (Nov. 10) | Debates | Reagan |
| Thirteen (Nov. 17) | Election Results | Obama |
| Fourteen (Nov 24) | Debates | Supreme Court/MLK |

## A Word on Charity

This class will explore issues of politics, governance, economics, religion, justice, and elections. Nothing is more controversial or emotionally charged than these. Each student is encouraged to voice their thoughts, opinions, and questions in a respectable manner. It is the responsibility of each student (and the teacher) to engage these issues in a friendly manner that does not demean or disgrace.