

Homeschool Government and Civics

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"A primary object should be the education of our youth in the science of government. In a republic, what species of knowledge can be equally important? And what duty more pressing than communicating it to those who are to be the future guardians of the liberties of the country?" (George Washington)

As home educators, we have a lot of freedom in the curriculum choices we make. We also carry the full responsibility for the education of our children. Understanding government is a vital part of that education, as you may be painfully aware if you try to keep up with current events. Today I'm sharing what I consider to be a well-rounded government and civics course suitable for high school.

This is not just a course to earn a high school credit. This is about equipping future adults to understand their government fully. By the time your students finish studying the resources I share here, they will have earned far more than a single high school credit, and they will be knowledgeable as adults, citizens, taxpayers, and voters.

Resources used:

- *American Government in Christian Perspective* by A Beka Book
- *The U.S. Constitution*
- *The Light and the Glory* by Peter Marshall and David Manuel
- *Why We Need the Electoral College* by Tara Ross
- *Liberty and Tyranny* by Mark Levin
- *Mere Christianity* by C. S. Lewis
- *The Original Argument: The Federalists' Case for the Constitution*, Adapted for the 21st Century by Glenn Beck
- *Original Intent* by David Barton
- *Separation of Church and State: What the Founders Meant* by David Barton
- PragerU 5-minute videos
- Crash Course Videos

I offer this as a freebie on my website as a help to homeschool families. I only ask that, if you would like to share this with friends, please share the link to my original web page instead of this PDF. Thank you!

How to use this course: This is an outline of American Government with a list of great additional resources. I share these because they are helpful in providing a foundation in understanding our history and our government. I also understand that each family's homeschool is unique, with different types of schedules, learners, and goals. Please use my list as a guide, and not a master. Assign what you wish. Choose the resources most important to you or that best fit your schedule or your student's abilities.

My hope is that you will purchase and keep the books I recommend, as they are a vital addition to any home library. I am also aware that parents may not have learn nearly this much about our government, or may have forgotten all they learned. This course is great for parents to do with their students.

Note: depending on the internet for original sources is not as easy as it used to be. Websites talking about the Constitution are often biased in one way or another. The same is said for original speeches, letters, and other founding documents. That's why I recommend owning books (and keeping them). Don't depend on someone's opinion of these original documents; get copies of your own.

Suggested scope and sequence

Government Chapter 1

Focus:

1. What makes America unique - America's Judeo-Christian heritage, limited government, free enterprise, Puritan work ethic
2. American symbols – memorials, flag, national anthem, bald eagle
3. Patriotism

Suggested reading: Begin *The Light and the Glory* by Peter Marshall and David Manuel

Suggested reading: Read Chapter 1 of *Mere Christianity*

Government Chapter 2

Focus:

1. Biblical examples of law and government
2. Ancient examples of law and government
3. Various forms of government (autocracy, democracy, monarchy, dictatorship, socialism, communism) with an emphasis on socialism as it is quite popular in our society today
4. America's government
5. Christians and government

Suggested supplement: My free course on socialism at NickiTruesdell.com

Government Chapter 3

Focus:

1. Our English heritage (Alfred the Great, Magna Carta, English common law, Parliament, and the basic struggle for liberty)
2. The Pilgrims, Mayflower compact, colonial law and government, the Great Awakening
3. Events leading up to the Revolution
4. How these events affected the future constitution
5. The Declaration of Independence

Suggested Video: PragerU *What Made George Washington Great?*

Suggested Supplement: My free course on the history of the Declaration of Independence at NickiTruesdell.com

Suggested Reading: *Able and Mighty Men: Biographies of the Men Who Signed the Declaration of Independence*

Government Chapter 4: Introduction to the Constitution

From this point forward, I advise reading the text of the Constitution that each chapter pertains to. Students should be familiar with its wording and application. It is in the back of the Government textbook, as well as in *Able and Mighty Men* and *Documents of Freedom*

Focus:

1. Articles of confederation
2. The Constitutional Convention of 1787
3. The Federalist Papers
4. Elections and voting
5. Rights vs. responsibilities
6. Federalism
7. Separation of powers

Vital Reading: *The United States Constitution*

Suggested Reading: *The Original Argument* by Glenn Beck

Suggested Video: Schoolhouse Rock *Three Ring Circus*

Suggested Movies: *Johnny Tremain* and/or *The Patriot*

Government Chapter 5: Congress

Focus:

1. Senate and House
2. Congressional leaders
3. 2 party system
4. Committees
5. Congressional procedures
6. How a bill becomes law
7. The purpose of double representation
8. Oversight

9. Powers of Congress (expressed and implied)

Suggested Activity: find out who your Senator and Representative are, the Speaker of the House, the majority party, the minority party

Suggested video: Schoolhouse Rock *I'm Just a Bill*

Government Chapter 6: The Presidency

Focus:

1. The Constitution and the President
2. The electoral college
3. Terms and qualifications
4. Constitutional powers
5. Presidential team

Suggested Reading: *Why We Need the Electoral College* by Tara Ross

Suggested Videos: Prager U [Do You Understand the Electoral College?](#), [The Popular Vote vs. the Electoral College](#)

Government Chapter 7: Bureaucracy

Focus:

1. History of the Bureaucracy
2. Executive Departments
3. Independent Agencies
4. Power of the Bureaucracy

Suggested video: [Crash Course Government – Bureaucracy Basics](#)

Suggested activity: [Research the bureaucracies behind a simple pizza](#)

Suggested video: [What's Killing the American Dream by PragerU](#)

Government Chapter 8: The Federal Courts: The Judicial Branch

Focus:

1. The Supreme Court
2. District Courts

Suggested reading: *Original Intent* by David Barton

Government Chapter 9: The Bill of Rights and Other Amendments

Focus

1. The Bill of Rights
2. Other Amendments

Suggested videos: [What Does Separation of Church and State Mean by PragerU](#), [Why the 3/5 Compromise Was Anti-Slavery by Prager U](#)

Suggested reading: [Thomas Jefferson and the Separation of Church and State](#) by Gary S. Smith (article)

Suggested reading: [Separation of Church and State: What the Founders Meant](#) by David Barton (booklet)

Government Chapter 10: Federalism

Focus:

1. Division of Power
2. Federalism today

Suggested Reading: *Liberty and Tyranny* by Mark Levin is a great follow-up to this course.

The remainder of the Government text by A Beka deals with state and local governments. Many state governments work much like the federal government, but with differences here and there. It will be up to you to find out the intricacies of your state, county, and city. These are just as important, if not more important, than federal government because you have a greater voice!

If you're not sure where to start with your local governments, contact your state or local homeschool group and see if they have resources available.

Thank you for downloading my course! Please share the original link with your friends, and check out the other freebies in my Download Store at Nicki Truesdell.com.

