

Syllabus

Civics B

Course Overview

A citizen is a person who is legally recognized by a state and entitled to the state's rights and privileges. Civics is the study of the rights and duties of such a person. One of the best ways to understand your rights and duties is to study the government that defines and upholds them. In Civics B, you will learn how Americans are linked to the government and each other through the media and a number of political parties. You will also take a detailed look at civic responsibility and what it means to be a contributing member of society. Finally, you will study how and why the U.S. creates certain goods and services and you'll see how political and economic decisions made at home can affect foreign policy abroad.

Course Goals

By the end of this course, you will be able to do the following:

- Discuss the role and importance of the media in connecting the public with the government.
- Examine the relationship between local, state, and federal governments.
- Explain the difference between personal and civic responsibilities.
- Analyze the factors that influence an individual's political attitudes.
- Understand the importance of community service, civic improvement, and political activities.
- Compare the U.S. free-enterprise system with other economic systems.
- Explain how people organize economic systems for the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services.
- Describe the effects of government policies on the free market.
- Evaluate the use of national interest as a criterion for American foreign policy.
- Describe ways in which Americans can influence foreign policy.

General Skills

To participate in this course, you should be able to perform online research using various search engines and library databases.

For a complete list of general skills that are required for participation in online courses, refer to the Prerequisites section of the Plato Student Orientation document, found at the beginning of this course.

Credit Value

Civics B is a 0.5-credit course.

Course Materials

- Notebook
- Computer with Internet connection and speakers or headphones

Course Pacing Guide

This course description and pacing guide is intended to help you keep on schedule with your work. Note that your course instructor may modify the schedule to meet the specific needs of your class.

Unit 1: Society

Summary

In this unit, you will learn how the general public is connected to politics through the media. You will also study the political parties in U.S. Congress and the formation and maintenance of special interest groups.

| Day | Activity/Objective | Type |
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| 1 day: 1 | Syllabus and Plato Student Orientation <i>Review the Plato Student Orientation and Course Syllabus at the beginning of this course.</i> | Course Orientation |
| --- | Linking America – The Media <i>In this lesson, you will cover the following objectives:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Discuss the role and importance of the media.</i> • <i>Give examples of the processes used by the media to decide what to report.</i> • <i>Discuss public opinion and how it is measured.</i> | |
| 2 days: 2–3 | Linking America – The Media <i>Read the Overview.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 4 | Linking America – The Media <i>Review the Glossary and fill in the Glossary activity sheet.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 5 | Linking America – The Media <i>In Study Questions, complete the Factual section. Use the Overview Library and the Chronology Library as references.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 6 | Linking America – The Media <i>In Study Questions, complete the Conceptual section. Use the Overview Library and the Chronology Library as references.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 7 | Linking America – The Media <i>In Graphs/Charts, complete the Primary Sources of News section.</i> | Courseware |

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| 1 day: 8 | Linking America – The Media <i>In Maps, complete the following writing activities:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Middle East and North Africa</i> • <i>Africa</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 9 | Linking America – The Media <i>Take the Practice Test (not graded).</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 10 | Linking America – The Media <i>Take the Mastery Test (graded).</i> | Courseware |
| --- | Linking America – Political Parties <i>In this lesson, you will cover the following objectives:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Identify the functions of political parties.</i> • <i>Analyze the two-party system in the United States.</i> • <i>Evaluate the role of third parties in the United States.</i> | |
| 2 days: 11–12 | Linking America – Political Parties <i>Read the Overview.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 13 | Linking America – Political Parties <i>Review the Glossary and fill in the Glossary activity sheet.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 14 | Linking America – Political Parties <i>In Study Questions, complete the Factual section. Use the Overview Library and the Chronology Library as references.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 15 | Linking America – Political Parties <i>In Study Questions, complete the Conceptual section. Use the Overview Library and the Chronology Library as references.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 16 | Linking America – Political Parties <i>In Art, complete the Elephant and Donkey section.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 17 | Linking America – Political Parties <i>In Maps, complete the following writing activities:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Latin America</i> • <i>Canada</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 18 | Linking America – Political Parties <i>Take the Practice Test (not graded).</i> | Assessment |
| 1 day: 19 | Linking America – Political Parties <i>Take the Mastery Test (graded).</i> | Assessment |

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| 3 days: 20–22 | Internet Research Project: Presidential Campaigns <i>Explore the roles of various actors in electing the president of the United States.</i> | Online Research |
| 1 day: 23 | Posttest—Unit 1 | Assessment |

Unit 2: Being a Citizen

Summary

In this unit, you will understand the relationships between local, state, and federal governments, and how they evolved over time. You will learn about the structure of government and how officials are elected into office. In addition, you will analyze the personal, political, and economic rights and responsibilities of citizens. Finally, you will identify different political attitudes and recognize the importance of participation in civic improvements.

| Day | Activity/Objective | Type |
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| --- | <p>State and Local Government</p> <p><i>In this lesson, you will cover the following objectives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Analyze the structure of state, local, territorial, and tribal government.</i> • <i>Evaluate the role of the different governmental units.</i> • <i>Evaluate the limits on the state governments in the U.S. federal system of government.</i> • <i>Examine early state constitutions and how state governments and constitutions have evolved over time.</i> • <i>Describe and categorize the functions and revenue sources of state and local governments.</i> • <i>Examine the relationship between state and local governments, including the formation of local governments.</i> • <i>Understand the advantages of the federal system in solving local problems through increased innovation and choice of public service programs.</i> | |
| 2 days: 24–25 | <p>State and Local Government</p> <p><i>Read the Overview.</i></p> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 26 | <p>State and Local Government</p> <p><i>Review the Glossary and fill in the Glossary activity sheet.</i></p> | Courseware |

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| 1 day: 27 | State and Local Government <i>In Study Questions, complete the Factual section. Use the Overview Library and the Chronology Library as references.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 28 | State and Local Government <i>In Study Questions, complete the Conceptual section. Use the Overview Library and the Chronology Library as references.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 29 | State and Local Government <i>In Art, complete the section on the United States.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 30 | State and Local Government <i>In Maps, complete the section on East and South Asia.</i> | Courseware |
| 2 days: 31–32 | State and Local Government <i>In Special Topics, complete Interpreting Financial Documents.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 33 | State and Local Government <i>In Fundamentals, complete the School Board section.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 34 | State and Local Government <i>Take the Practice Test (not graded).</i> | Assessment |
| 1 day: 35 | State and Local Government <i>Take the Mastery Test (graded).</i> | Assessment |
| --- | Citizenship <i>In this lesson, you will cover the following objectives:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Explain the difference between personal and civic responsibilities.</i> • <i>Analyze the factors that influence an individual's political attitudes.</i> • <i>Understand the history of the rights, liberties, and obligations of citizenship in the United States.</i> • <i>Understand that citizenship is legally recognized full membership in a self-governing community that confers equal rights under the law; is not dependent on inherited, involuntary groupings; and confers certain rights and privileges (e.g., the right to vote, to hold public office, and to serve on juries).</i> • <i>Understand ways he or she can contact his or her representatives and why it is important to do so and knows which level of government he or she should contact to express his or her opinions or to get help on a specific problem.</i> • <i>Understand the importance of participation in community service, civic improvement, and political activities.</i> | |
| 2 days: 36–37 | Citizenship <i>Read the Overview.</i> | Courseware |

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| 1 day: 38 | Citizenship <i>Review the Glossary and fill in the Glossary activity sheet.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 39 | Citizenship <i>In Study Questions, complete the Factual section. Use the Overview Library and the Chronology Library as references.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 40 | Citizenship <i>In Study Questions, complete the Conceptual section. Use the Overview Library and the Chronology Library as references.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 41 | Citizenship <i>In Graphs/Charts, complete U.S. Foreign-Born by Region of Birth: 2000.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 42 | Citizenship <i>In Maps, complete the section on Australia and New Zealand.</i> | Courseware |
| 2 days: 43–44 | Citizenship <i>In Documents, complete Universal Declaration of Human Rights.</i> | Courseware |
| 2 days: 45–46 | Citizenship <i>In Art, complete the following writing activities:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Martin Luther King, Jr.</i> • <i>Oath of Citizenship</i> | Courseware |
| 2 days: 47–48 | Citizenship <i>In Special Topics, complete the section on Community Service Projects.</i> | Courseware |
| 3 days: 49–51 | Citizenship <i>In Special Topics, complete the following sections:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Religious Literacy (Monotheisms)</i> • <i>Religious Literacy (Polytheisms)</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 52 | Citizenship <i>In Fundamentals, complete the section on Integrated Civics.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 53 | Citizenship <i>Take the Practice Test (not graded).</i> | Assessment |
| 1 day: 54 | Citizenship <i>Take the Mastery Test (graded).</i> | Assessment |
| 3 days: 55–57 | Internet Research Project: Participating in Local Government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Identify different local governmental entities, their responsibilities, and their organization.</i> • <i>Gain an understanding of public meetings and the role they play in local governance.</i> | Online Research |

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| 1 day: 58 | Posttest—Unit 2 | Assessment |
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Unit 3: Policy and the Citizen

Summary

In this unit, you will study the U.S. economy—how goods and services are created, consumed, and exchanged in the United States. You will investigate the laws of supply and demand, and learn about fluctuating banking regulations and business cycles. You will also explain the idea of national interest and how it relates to the initiation of American foreign policy. Finally, you will see the role that the U.S. plays in the international arena with regard to foreign trade and conflict resolution.

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| --- | <p>The U.S. Economy</p> <p><i>In this lesson, you will cover the following objectives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Explain the characteristics and give examples of command and market economic systems.</i> • <i>Compare the U.S. free-enterprise system with other economic systems.</i> • <i>Evaluate U.S. economic policy considering national interests and American values.</i> • <i>Understand how people organize economic systems for the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services, and how this addresses the basic economic questions: which goods and services will be produced; how they will be produced; and who will consume them.</i> • <i>Use economic concepts to explain developments and issues in global, national, or local contexts.</i> • <i>Understand the characteristics of a market economy and the concepts of scarcity, opportunity cost, trade-off decision making, and supply and demand.</i> • <i>Understand the relationship between the consumer and the marketplace in the U.S. economic system.</i> • <i>Describe the influence of the stock market upon individuals and the economy.</i> • <i>Describe the effects of government policies on the free market.</i> • <i>Identify laws that protect consumers' rights and avenues of recourse when those rights are violated.</i> • <i>Apply principles of money management to the preparation of a personal budget that addresses income flow and expenditures such as food, clothing, transportation, health care, and recreation.</i> | |
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| 2 days: 59–60 | The U.S. Economy <i>Read the Overview.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 61 | The U.S. Economy <i>Review the Glossary and fill in the Glossary activity sheet.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 62 | The U.S. Economy <i>In Study Questions, complete the Factual section. Use the Overview Library and the Chronology Library as references.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 63 | The U.S. Economy <i>In Study Questions, complete the Conceptual section. Use the Overview Library and the Chronology Library as references.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 64 | The U.S. Economy <i>In Graphs/Charts, complete the Stock Market section.</i> | Courseware |
| 2 days: 66–66 | The U.S. Economy <i>In Documents, complete the section on Social Security Act of 1935.</i> | Courseware |
| 2 days: 67–68 | The U.S. Economy <i>In Special Topics, complete the Money Management section.</i> | Courseware |
| 2 days: 69–70 | The U.S. Economy <i>In Special Topics, complete the Consumer Rights section.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 71 | The U.S. Economy <i>Take the Practice Test (not graded).</i> | Assessment |
| 1 day: 72 | The U.S. Economy <i>Take the Mastery Test (graded).</i> | Assessment |
| --- | <p>Involvement in World Affairs</p> <p><i>In this lesson, you will cover the following objectives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Explain the idea of the national interest.</i> • <i>Evaluate the use of the national interest as a criterion for American foreign policy.</i> • <i>Explain the influence of American constitutional values and principles on American foreign policy.</i> • <i>Explain possible tensions among American values, principles, and interests as the nation deals with the practical requirements of international politics.</i> • <i>Analyze the formation of American foreign policy.</i> • <i>Explain how and why domestic politics may impose constraints or obligations on the ways in which the United States acts in the world.</i> • <i>Describe ways in which Americans can influence foreign policy.</i> | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the various means used to attain the ends of United States foreign policy, such as diplomacy; economic, military, and humanitarian aid; treaties; sanctions; military intervention; and covert action. • Evaluate the role the United States plays in the international arena, such as resolving international conflicts. • Describe the process by which United States foreign policy is made, including the roles of federal agencies, domestic interest groups, the public, and the media. • Evaluate the current role of the United States in peacemaking and peacekeeping. • Evaluate the U.S. foreign policy in light of national interests and American values, such as embargos. • Evaluate the U.S. economic policy in light of national interests and American values, such as NAFTA. • Evaluate, take, and defend positions on foreign policy issues in light of American national interests, values, and principles. | |
| 2 days: 73–74 | Involvement in World Affairs <i>Read the Overview.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 75 | Involvement in World Affairs <i>Review the Glossary and fill in the Glossary activity sheet.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 76 | Involvement in World Affairs <i>In Study Questions, complete the Factual section. Use the Overview Library and the Chronology Library as references.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 77 | Involvement in World Affairs <i>In Study Questions, complete the Conceptual section. Use the Overview Library and the Chronology Library as references.</i> | Courseware |
| 2 days: 78–79 | Involvement in World Affairs <i>In Documents, complete section on the Monroe Doctrine.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 80 | Involvement in World Affairs <i>In Graphs/Charts, complete the section on The Intelligence Community.</i> | Courseware |
| 2 days: 81–82 | Involvement in World Affairs <i>In Special Topics, complete the section on Judging Foreign Policy.</i> | Courseware |
| 1 day: 83 | Involvement in World Affairs <i>Take the Practice Test (not graded).</i> | Assessment |
| 1 day: 84 | Involvement in World Affairs <i>Take the Mastery Test (graded).</i> | Assessment |
| 3 days: 85–87 | Internet Research Project: Types of Democracy <i>Explore the various types of democracy.</i> | Online Research |

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| 1 day: 88 | Posttest—Unit 3 | Assessment |
| 1 day: 89 | Semester Review | |
| 1 day: 90 | End-of-Semester Test | Assessment |