

Teacher's Name:  
Employee Number:  
School:

**Social Studies Lesson Plan- SS.3.C.3.3**  
**Recognize that every state has a state constitution.**

1. **Title: Every State Has a State Constitution**

2. **Overview - Big Ideas:**

*Enduring Understandings*

- Recognize that every state has a state constitution
- Understand that state constitutions provide guidelines for the three branches of state government: executive, legislative, and judicial
- Understand the structure and function of each branch
- Understand how a bill becomes a law
- Understand that state constitutions dictate law and that residents must obey state laws.

*Essential Questions – (What provocative questions will you use to foster inquiry, understanding and transfer of learning?)*

- Why is it important to understand that each state has its own constitution?
- How does a state's constitution impact the three branches of state government?
- What is the structure and function of each of the branches?
- How does a bill become a law?
- What role does the state's constitution play in the lives of the residents of that state?

3. **Lesson Objectives:**

Standards - Next Generation Sunshine State Standards for Social Studies

Third Grade NCSSSS-SS Benchmarks

- SS.3.C.3.3 Recognize that every state has a state constitution.

Tested Seventh Grade NGSSS-SS Benchmarks Relevant to this Lesson

- SS.7.C.3.5 Explain the Constitutional amendment process.
  - SS.7.C.3.8 Analyze the structure, functions, and processes of the legislative, executive and judicial branches.
4. **Key Vocabulary:** amendment, constitution, legislative, executive, judicial, residents, statute, bill of rights, judges, justices, governor, house of representatives, senate, bill, vetoes, appeals, cabinet, jurisdiction, address

5. **Evidence of Student Understanding (Assessment) in this Lesson:**

***What key knowledge and skills will students acquire as a result of this lesson?***

After completing this lesson, the students will be able to understand that every state has a constitution. They will also understand how state constitutions impact a state's three branches of government. They will have a basic understanding of how a bill becomes a law. Finally, the students will know that state constitutions dictate law and that Floridians must obey state laws.

***What will students be able to do as a result of such knowledge and skills?***

The students will complete the graphic organizers (attached) associated with this lesson. They will know the need for state constitutions and how they impact a state's three branches of government. Students will be able to explain how a bill becomes a law. Students will know that state constitutions dictate law and that Floridians must abide by state law.

*Both formative and summative assessments are included.*

6. **Materials Needed:** *(Resources you will use in this lesson)*

Attachment A: Reading associated with this lesson

Attachment B: Graphic organizer - "The Three Branches of State Government"  
(chart)

Attachment C: Graphic organizer - "How a Bill Becomes Law" (chart)

Attachment D: Post-Quiz

## 7. Steps to Deliver the Lesson:

*A detailed, step by step description of how to deliver the lesson and achieve the lesson plan objectives.*

- a. Lesson Opening: Ask students to imagine they are at an important meeting in the Capitol Building at Florida's state capital in Tallahassee. They are witnessing the Governor sign a bill which is about to become law. What questions would they like to ask? Who proposed the bill? Who are all of these important state leaders? What was the role of Florida's senators and representatives in this passing this bill? How did the bill get to the Governor's desk? Each student will write down a question and place it in the class question box to be discussed during the lesson.
- b. Reading: Use any reading strategy (choral, buddy, jump in, silent, etc.) which is appropriate for your students to read Attachment A: "Every State Has a State Constitution." Check for understanding through class discussion.
- c. Have students work in cooperative groups and help them define appropriate vocabulary associated with the lesson, using meaningful context. Then, reread material for further clarification if necessary.
- d. Have students continue to work in cooperative groups to complete Attachments B: "The Three Branches of State Government" and C: "How a Bill Becomes Law" and check for understanding.
- e. Conclude the lesson by having students take the post-quiz associated with this lesson which is Attachment D. Go over quiz with students and check for understanding.

## 8. Specific Activities: (From Guided to Independent):

*Activities designed to facilitate the gradual release of teacher responsibility, from teacher-led to independent.*

- a. When students finish reading the material in Attachment A and complete Attachment B, they will write a summary paragraph delineating the powers of Florida's three branches of state government as expressed in the state constitution.
- b. After completing Attachment C, the students will be able to explain the steps involved in how a bill becomes a law.

- c. Students will share their work (ideas, solutions, suggestions, etc.) with the entire class.
- d. Provide “buddies” for ELL and ESE students as needed.
- e. Model assignments as needed.

#### **9. Differentiated Instructions Strategies:**

*How to accommodate a variety of student learning needs, remediation strategies as well as enrichment strategies.*

- a. Provide individual assistance for students having difficulty with the reading material while the rest are working independently.
- b. Provide individual assistance in a small group setting for students having difficulty with written work.

#### **10. Technology Integration:**

*Activities incorporating technology; e.g., address lesson content through online resources.*

- a. Have students visit the following website to view the online version of Florida’s Constitution:

<http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?Mode=Constitution&Submenu=3&Tab=statutes>

- b. Have students visit: [www.leg.state.fl.us/kids](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/kids); <http://dhr.dos.state.fl.us/kids>; [www.flsenate.gov/senatekids/index.cfm](http://www.flsenate.gov/senatekids/index.cfm) to learn about the structure and function of the three branches of Florida state government, the division of power as well as the relationship between state and federal governments.

## 11. Lesson Closure:

*Methods to draw ideas together, review concepts, etc.*

- a. After completing the post-quiz and reviewing answers with students, ask the following questions:
- Why is it important to understand that each state has its own constitution?
  - How does a state's constitution impact each of the three branches of state government?
  - What is the structure of each of the branches?
  - What is the function of each of the branches?
  - How does a bill become law?
  - How does the state government serve the people of Florida?
  - What role does the state constitution play in the lives of all Floridians?
- b. For home learning, have students think about an important issue concerning our state. Then, have the students write a letter to any of the Florida officials mentioned in this lesson explaining the problem, asking for their help and including possible suggestions and/or solutions.

## Attachment A

### Reading #1: "Every State Has a State Constitution"

Each of the fifty states has a state constitution. A constitution is a plan of government which guides elected officials as well as the citizens of a state. Our state government serves all Floridians and protects the individual rights of all citizens. State governments are governed by state constitutions. However, individual states cannot create any laws that conflict with national laws because the national or U.S. Constitution is "the supreme law of our country." This means that it is the highest law of the United States. It should be noted that the U.S. Constitution deals with the federal government and federal power while the state constitutions deal with the powers not delegated or given to the federal government. At times, state constitutions address very critical but, specific issues which states believe to be so important that they must be included in the state constitution instead of just being part of an ordinary **statute** or law. For instance, the states have the power to take care of issues dealing with health and safety, conducting elections, issuing licenses, trading within each of the individual states and ratifying amendments.

State constitutions are not all the same. This is true because each state has its own circumstances: its unique geography, its special history, and its specific needs. Therefore, each state constitution reflects these aspects and, as such, content may vary from state to state.

State constitutions are often modeled after the U.S. Constitution. They provide a basis or outline for the structure of state government. In Florida, the seat of state government is in the state capital which is Tallahassee. At the same time, the constitutions usually include a **bill of rights** which is a specific section of the constitution which protects citizens' rights.

State constitutions establish the separation of powers into three branches of government. This balance of power prevents any of the branches from becoming too powerful. They are known as the **executive, legislative and judicial** branches and each has certain duties. The executive branch implements the laws. The head of the executive branch is the **governor**. The **lieutenant governor** is his assistant and alternate. Another part of the executive branch is the **cabinet** which is made up of three individuals who help the governor. They are: the attorney general, the chief financial officer and the commissioner of agriculture. One of the duties of the governor is to deliver a speech or an **address** at the beginning of the legislative session. In this speech, the governor shares state issues and problems with the individuals in the

legislative branch. In most states, the legislative branch, which makes state laws and also changes existing laws, is made up of two houses: the **House of Representatives** and the **Senate**. Senators and representatives are elected by the citizens of each state to represent them. For instance, in the Florida legislature there are 40 senators and 120 representatives. When a representative or a senator wants to make a law, they write a **bill** which is a suggested law. Next, the bill must pass the House and the Senate. If the governor signs the bill, it becomes law. If the governor **veto**es or does not sign the bill, it returns to the legislature. Then, if two-thirds of the representatives and two-thirds of the senators vote for the bill again, it becomes a law. The third branch is the judicial branch which oversees the state courts including the state supreme court. The **judges** and **justices** interpret the law and render decisions in court cases. They make sure that state laws are fair. In Florida, the judicial branch is made up of four kinds of courts. At the lowest level is the county court which deals with small cases. When a person disagrees with the court's decision, they can **appeal** or ask for another trial and this will be heard in Florida's circuit court. In circuit courts, serious criminal cases are heard. The next level is Florida's five district courts of appeal which listen to appeals from other courts. The highest court in the state is the Florida Supreme Court where cases are heard by seven judges called justices. They are appointed or chosen by the governor and serve six years. At the end of their terms, Floridians vote to decide if the justices may stay in office. It is important to know that this kind of court listens to cases dealing with our state's constitution as well as the fairness of Florida's laws.

In conclusion, as Americans we need to understand that we live under the **jurisdiction** or control of three levels of government: federal, state and local. Therefore, it is important to know that we must respect and abide by state laws as well as federal and local laws.

## Attachment B

### The Three Branches of State Government

Complete the chart with facts that you have researched about Florida's state constitution and government.

	Executive	Legislative	Judicial
Officials			
Powers given by state constitution			

## Attachment B – Answer Key

### The Three Branches of State Government

Complete the chart with facts that you have researched about Florida's state constitution and government.

	<b>Executive</b>	<b>Legislative</b>	<b>Judicial</b>
<b>Officials</b>	governor, Lt. governor, and cabinet	senators and representatives	judges and justices
<b>Powers given by state constitution</b>	The executive branch makes sure that state laws are implemented or enforced.	The legislative branch makes the state laws and/or changes existing ones.	The judicial branch interprets state laws and makes sure all state laws are fair.

## Attachment C

### How a Bill Becomes Law

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

## Attachment C-Answer Key

### How a Bill Becomes Law

1. A senator or a representative writes a bill.

2. Both houses approve the bill.

3. If the governor signs the bill, it becomes law.

4. If the governor vetoes the bill, it returns to the legislature.

5. Finally, if two-thirds of each of the houses votes for the bill again, it becomes a law.

## Attachment D

### Post Quiz- State Constitutions

#### Low complexity Items:

1. What are Florida's three levels of government?
  - a. Executive, Judicial, Administrative
  - b. Executive, State, and Judicial
  - c. Executive, Legislative, and Judicial
  - d. Executive, Federal, and Judicial
  
2. How was Florida's state government established?
  - a. by its directors
  - b. by its senators
  - c. by its cabinet
  - d. by its constitution
  
3. What is the name for the specific section of the state constitution which protects citizens?
  - a. preamble
  - b. bill of rights
  - c. statutes
  - d. ordinances

#### Moderate Complexity Items:

4. As Floridians, we live under the jurisdiction of three levels of government. What does jurisdiction mean?
  - a. freedom
  - b. appeal
  - c. respect
  - d. influence

5. Why is a bill defined as “a suggested law”?
- a. because it is a law
  - b. because it may become a law
  - c. because it may never be a law
  - d. because it should be a law
6. What can a person do if he or she disagrees with a court decision?
- a. he or she can appeal the decision and ask for another trial
  - b. he or she can move to another state
  - c. he or she can hire another lawyer
  - d. he or she can write a letter of complaint

High Complexity Items:

7. Which of the following would not be present in Florida if the state constitution did not provide for a judicial branch?
- a. a branch of government which interprets state laws
  - b. a branch of government to create special state laws
  - c. a branch of government that discloses state laws or makes them known
  - d. a branch of rights that protects citizens
8. As a Floridian, if one has a concern about a bill, what can one do?
- a. Talk to other persons who feel the same way.
  - b. Contact their senator or representative.
  - c. Write a letter to their boss.
  - d. Tell their parents about the situation.

9. “The legislature shall make adequate provision to ensure that, by the beginning of the 2010 school year, there are a sufficient number of classrooms so that: (1) The maximum number of students who are assigned to each teacher who is teaching in public school classrooms for prekindergarten through grade 3 does not exceed 18 students...”

What is the implication of this passage for third grade students?

- a. Students will attend newer schools.
  - b. Students will learn about creating new laws.
  - c. Students will do more schoolwork.
  - d. Students will have more time with their teacher.
10. “Freedom of speech and press.—every person may speak, write and publish sentiments on all subjects but shall be responsible for the abuse of that right. No law shall be passed to restrain or abridge the liberty of speech or of the press.”

What right does this passage from the Florida Constitution guarantee to individuals?

- a. the right to write editorials about state issues.
- b. the right to buy any newspaper you choose.
- c. the right to ask for an appointment to meet the governor.
- d. the right to receive a public education.

**Answer Key**

1. C
2. D
3. B
4. D
5. B
6. A
7. A
8. B
9. D
10. A

**Civic Integration**  
**Lesson Plan Quiz Blueprint**  
**NGSSS-SS Main Benchmark: SS.3.C.3.3**  
**Title of Lesson: Every State Has a State Constitution**  
**Grade Level: 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade**  
**Pacing Guide Connection: 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Civics**

<b>Question #</b>	<b>Benchmark</b> <b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Benchmark</b> <b>7<sup>th</sup> Grade Tested</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Complexity</b> <b>Level</b>
1	SS.3.C.3.3 Recognize that every state has a state constitution.	SS.7.C.3.8 Analyze the structure, functions, and processes of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.	C	Low
2	SS.3.C.3.3 Recognize that every state has a state constitution.	SS.7.C.3.8 Analyze the structure, functions, and processes of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.	D	Low
3	SS.3.C.3.3 Recognize that every state has a state constitution..	SS.7.C.3.8 Analyze the structure, functions, and processes of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.	B	Low
4	SS.3.C.3.3 Recognize that every state has a state constitution.	SS.7.C.3.8 Analyze the structure, functions, and processes of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.	D	Moderate
5	SS.3.C.3. Recognize that every state has a state constitution.	SS.7.C.3.5 Explain the Constitutional amendment process.	B	Moderate
6	SS.3.C.3. Recognize that every state has a state constitution.	SS.7.C.3.5 Explain the Constitutional amendment process.	A	Moderate
7	SS.3.C.3. Recognize that every state has a state constitution.	SS.7.C.3.8 Analyze the structure, functions, and processes of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.	A	High

8	SS.3.C.3.3	Recognize that every state has a state constitution.	SS.7.C.3.5 Explain the Constitutional amendment process.	B	High
9	SS.3.C.3.3	Recognize that every state has a state constitution.	SS.7.C.3.8 Analyze the structure, functions, and processes of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.	D	High DBQ
10	SS.3.C.3.3	Recognize that every state has a state constitution.	SS.7.C.3.8 Analyze the structure, functions, and processes of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.	A	High DBQ