

Teacher's Name:
Employee Number:
School:

Social Studies Lesson Plan- SS.4.C.3.1

Identify the three branches (Legislative, Judicial, Executive) of government in Florida and the powers of each

1. **Title: Florida's Three Branches of Government- 4th Grade**

2. **Overview - Big Ideas:**

Enduring Understandings

- Be familiar with the three branches of government for the state of Florida
- Understand the system of checks and balances among the three branches of government
- Comprehend the difference between the structure and function of the three branches of Florida's Government
- Understand the powers of the Legislative branch
- Understand the powers of the Judicial branch
- Understand the powers of the Executive branch

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

- What is the structure of Florida's state government?
- What are the functions of each of the branches of government? (Legislative, Executive and Judicial)
- What is the structure of each of the branches of Florida's government?
- Why is it important for there to be three branches of government in the state of Florida?

3. **Lesson Objectives:**

Standards - (Next Generation Sunshine State Standards for Social Studies)

Fourth Grade NGSSS-SS Benchmarks

- SS.4.C.3.1 Identify the three branches (Legislative, Judicial, Executive) of government in Florida and the powers of each.

Tested Seventh Grade NGSSS-SS Benchmarks Relevant to this Lesson

- SS.7.C.3.3 Illustrate the structure and function (three branches of government established in Articles I, II, and III with corresponding powers) of government in the United States as established in the Constitution.
- SS.7.C.3.8 Analyze the structure, functions, and processes of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.

4. **Key Vocabulary:**

legislative, judicial, executive, governor, lieutenant governor, cabinet, attorney general, chief financial officer, commissioner of agriculture, senate, house of representatives, supreme court, appellate court, circuit court, county court

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

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

After students complete this lesson, an understanding of the basic functions of each branch of the state level of Florida's government should be apparent. Students will understand the function and duties of each of the branches. They will also be able to understand the system of check and balances.

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

As a result of acquiring said knowledge and skills, the students will be able to complete the table (attached) associated with this lesson which displays the function and duties of each branch of state government. The students will also be able to write to explain how the branches work and their duties.

In addition, students will be able to correctly answer the questions that are part of the formal assessment included in this lesson.

*Both **formative and summative assessments** are included*

6. **Materials Needed:**

Attachment A: Reading associated with lesson

Attachment B: Florida's Executive Branch Table

Attachment C: Three Column Comparison - Florida's Legislative Branch

Attachment D: Hierarchy of Florida's Courts

Attachment E: 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: Have students brainstorm words associated with Florida's government. Make a web on the board of the different words they associate with the state's government. Explain how Florida's government is set-up (three branches, checks and balances etc). Write the name of the three branches on the board.
- b. Reading: Read attachment A, "An Introduction to Florida's Government" (taken from the Florida's archives) with your students using effective reading strategies appropriate for your class. Discuss and check for understanding as the students read through passage.
- c. Discuss vocabulary associated with lesson
- d. Have students work individually or as a group to complete attachment B on the Executive branch, attachment C on the Legislative branch and attachment D on the judicial branch of Florida's government.
- e. Have students take the post-quiz associated with the lesson (attachment E). Review quiz with students and check for understanding as needed. Reteach concepts not mastered.

8. Specific Activities: (From Guided to Independent)

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

- a. After students have completed attachments B, C and D, have them write summaries that explain the information presented in the graphic organizer.
- b. For students who are struggling readers and/or English Language Learners, pair them with another student for assistance.
- c. Be sure to circulate the room to monitor students' abilities in writing the paragraphs. Model writing with the students demonstrating difficulties.
- d. Have students share their writing with the class.

9. Differentiated Instruction Strategies:

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

- a. While students are completing the graphic organizers, work individually with students who are having difficulty with reading.
- b. While students are completing the paragraph summary, work on an individual basis with students who are having difficulty.

10. Technology Integration:

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

- a. Have students research the state of Florida's website to find the names of people currently holding state government positions.
- b. Have students research the website of Florida cabinet members to further understand the duties of those offices.
- c. Have students research a Florida court case and construct a flow chart showing the different courts through which the case has passed.

11. Lesson Closure:

Methods to draw ideas together, review concepts, etc.

- a. After completing the post-quiz and going over with students, ask students the following questions for wrap up the lesson.
 - What are the major responsibilities of each level of Florida's government?
 - What is the structure of Florida's state government?
 - What are the functions of each of the branches of government? (Legislative, Executive and Judicial)
 - What is the structure of each of the branches of Florida's government?
 - Why is it important to have three branches of government in the state of Florida?
- b. For home learning: Have students develop a pamphlet that would explain to new immigrants the way in which Florida's government works and is set up. The pamphlet should include the different branches, the structure of each of the branches, the duties of the different branches and how the system works in general.

Attachment A: Reading

An Introduction to Florida Government

The Florida State Constitution declares that the powers of state government be divided into three separate and relatively independent branches -

executive,

legislative, and

judicial.

Each branch is sovereign in its own area of responsibility, but it is also influenced by the checks and balances from the other branches. It is basically the same governmental model found at the national level and in all 50 states

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

The EXECUTIVE branch is the law-administering and law-enforcing branch of the government. It is patterned along the lines of a large corporation with the **governor** serving as chairman of the board and the three independently elected **cabinet** members serving as directors. The governor is elected for a four-year term and may serve two terms in succession. The lieutenant governor is elected as running mate of the governor. Members of the Cabinet are elected to four year terms and may succeed themselves for any number of terms. All of the many agencies and departments that are responsible for programs in Florida State government are also part of the Executive Branch.

The Governor is responsible for day-to-day operations of the state and is the chief law enforcement officer. The governor appoints not only the heads of departments under sole oversight of the governor, but also the heads of departments that are under both the governor and Cabinet's oversight, although at least three Cabinet members must agree to the appointments. The governor also appoints members of several regulatory boards and commissions.

By executive order, the governor may suspend from office any state or county elected official who is not subject to impeachment. The governor cannot suspend the lieutenant governor, Cabinet members, Supreme Court justices, appellate judges, or circuit court judges. They can be removed only by legislative impeachment.

The office of **Lieutenant Governor** was authorized in the 1968 revision of the Constitution, but duties of that office were left to the discretion of the governor and the legislature. The only Constitutional chore of this office-holder is to become the governor should that office become vacant due to death, impeachment trial, or incapacity. The Lieutenant Governor is elected on the same ticket as governor and is chosen by the gubernatorial candidate as running mate.

Florida's Constitution states that in addition to a governor and lieutenant governor "there shall be a Cabinet composed of:

an **attorney general**,

a **chief financial officer**,

a **commissioner of agriculture**,

The Constitution declares that each Cabinet member "shall exercise such powers and perform such duties as may be prescribed by law." In effect, that gives the Cabinet officers powers equal to the governor. This system violates a basic rule of government. That is, giving an elected official the authority to perform a duty and then be officially fully responsible, for under this system the governor is held responsible but does not have the authority or means to fulfill that responsibility.

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Legislative branch is the law-making branch and is composed of two houses - the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Legislature meets for a regular 60-day session each year. There may also be special and extended sessions if necessary.

The Senate and House affect every Floridian's life through legislation relating to how cities and counties operate, through appointment of state officials, through investigative and budgetary matters, and through taxes. The legislative branch is considered to be the most powerful of the state's three branches of government.

The **SENATE** has 40 members, each elected to a four year term. Half the senate members are elected every two years, providing for staggered terms. Senate districts are based on population with each senator representing approximately the same number of residents. To do so, some senators may represent only one county or a portion of a county, while another senator may represent multiple counties. The senate like the house is reapportioned every 10 years when the federal census is released.

The **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES** has 120 members. All are elected every two years during the general elections held in even-numbered years. House districts are based on population with each member representing approximately the same number of residents. To do so, some members may represent only one county or a portion of a county, while another may represent multiple counties. The House like the Senate is reapportioned every 10 years when the federal census is released.

JUDICIAL BRANCH

The JUDICIAL branch is the law-interpreting branch. Its powers are exercised primarily through courts established by the State Constitution. Florida's judicial branch consists of a series of **courts** with differing levels of authority and jurisdictions. They are:

Supreme Court

This highest of state courts consists of seven members, each appointed by the governor, and confirmed by a vote of the people at the next general election. Each is appointed for a six-year term. Justices select one of their own to be the chief justice for a two-year term.

The **Supreme Court** hears appeals directly from trial courts in criminal cases when the death penalty has been imposed, and in civil cases when the trial court's decision passes on the validity of a state or federal law, a treaty, or a provision of the state or federal constitution or in cases concerning the validity of revenue or general obligation bonds. All other appeals must be processed through a district court of appeals.

District Court of Appeals

The state has five appellate districts. More than 50 judges sit on the five appeals courts, each elected to six-year staggered terms. They have jurisdiction of all appeals not directly appealable to the Supreme Court or to a circuit court. An **appeals court** also may issue writs of mandamus, certiorari, prohibition, quo warranto, and habeas corpus.

Circuit Court

The **Circuit Court** is the state's highest trial court, and has the most general jurisdiction. The state is divided into 20 judicial circuits and circuit judges are elected to six-year terms. In each circuit the judges choose from among themselves a chief judge of that circuit.

Circuit courts have exclusive original jurisdiction in all actions of law not vested in county courts, including all civil actions involving \$15,000 or more. Circuit courts also cover:

- estate settlement;

- competency and involuntary hospitalization;

- all cases in equity including those relating to juveniles except certain traffic offenses;

- cases involving tax assessments or tolls, ejectment, and titles or boundaries or rights of possession of real property;

- felonies or misdemeanors arising out of same circumstances as a felony; and

- jurisdiction over all appeals from county courts.

County Court

At least one **county court** judge is specified for each county and is elected to a six-year term. County courts handle misdemeanor cases over which the circuit court has no authority, violations of municipal ordinances, and civil actions involving less than \$15,000.

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Attachment B: Table

Florida's Executive Branch

Directions: Using the reading titled "An Introduction to Florida Government," fill in the following table. Conduct research to find the names of people currently holding these offices in the State of Florida.

Title:	Name:	Job Description
Governor		
Lieutenant Governor		
Attorney General		
Chief Financial Officer		
Commissioner of Agriculture		

Use the space below to describe how the Executive Branch of Florida's government works.

Attachment C: Three Column Comparison

Florida's Legislative Branch

Directions: Using the reading titled "An Introduction to Florida Government," fill in the following table, comparing and contrasting the Florida Senate and the House of Representatives.

<u>House of Representatives</u>	<u>Both</u>	<u>Senate</u>

Use the space below to write to explain how the Florida Senate and House of Representatives are similar and how they are different.

Attachment D: Hierarchy of Florida's Courts

Florida's Judicial Branch

Directions: Using the reading titled "An Introduction to Florida Government," fill in the following table, identifying the different courts in the State of Florida, the number of courts or judges, their term limits, and the duties of the courts.

Courts in the State of Florida

Name of Court	How many (judges or courts) and how long (term)?	Duty of the court

Use the space below and write a scenario for a case that would be heard for each one of the courts.

Branches of Florida Government-Post Quiz

Low Complexity Items (3 items):

1. Which branch of Florida's government is responsible administering and enforcing the law?
 - a. Judicial Branch
 - b. Legislative Branch
 - c. Executive Branch
 - d. Attorney General

2. Which is the highest level of the state's courts?
 - a. Appellate court
 - b. County Court
 - c. Circuit Court
 - d. Supreme Court

3. Which of the following is a list of members of the Governor's Cabinet?
 - a. Attorney general, Chief Financial Officer and Lieutenant Governor
 - b. Senators and Representatives
 - c. Judges, Governor and Lieutenant Governor
 - d. Chief Financial Officer, Attorney General and Commissioner of Agriculture

Moderate Complexity Items (3 items):

4. If you compare the House of Representatives and the Senate which of the following would be a difference between the two?
 - a. The House is reapportioned every ten years and the Senate every six.
 - b. The representatives in the House represent people from one county or many while the senators only represent one county.
 - c. The senators have a four year term and the representatives have a 2 year term.
 - d. The representatives are elected by the people they will serve and the senators are directly appointed.

5. Based on information from the following reading :

The Constitution declares that each Cabinet member "shall exercise such powers and perform such duties as may be prescribed by law." In effect, that gives the Cabinet officers powers equal to the governor. This system violates a basic rule of government. That is, giving an elected official the authority to perform a duty and then be officially fully responsible, for under this system the governor is held responsible but does not have the authority or means to fulfill that responsibility.

Which of the following is a correct statement based on the above excerpt?

- a. The governor is always responsible for the decisions and actions of his cabinet members.
 - b. The cabinet members are responsible for their own actions.
 - c. The governor makes all the decisions for the cabinet members.
 - d. The cabinet members and governor make decisions together and carry equal responsibility for the actions..
6. Which court would be responsible for listening to an appeal first?
- a. Supreme Court
 - b. Appellate Court
 - c. Circuit Court
 - d. County Court

High Complexity Items (4 items: 2 of which are Document Based Questions- DBQ):

7. Which of the following could possibly happen if the state of Florida did not have three branches of government?
- a. The governor would serve a four year term.
 - b. The governor would be responsible for the actions of the cabinet members.
 - c. The legislative branch would serve the people that voted for them.
 - d. The governor would take charge of the state and make all decisions pertaining to the state.

8. What would be a logical argument for the fact that Florida has three branches of government in order to have checks and balances?
- a. It is a big state so they need many people to help run it.
 - b. The citizens of the state have different opinions so; they need people with different opinions to make up the three branches.
 - c. They split the balance of power so that one branch does not have all the power and the three can work together to make our government function properly.
 - d. To differentiate between the different jobs that the elected officials of Florida have.

DBQ: Read the following excerpt from the Florida constitution related to the powers of the branches of government to answer question 9.

Article II, SECTION 3.

Branches of government.—The powers of the state government shall be divided into legislative, executive and judicial branches. No person belonging to one branch shall exercise any powers appertaining to either of the other branches unless expressly provided herein.

9. Based on the above reading, which of the following is correct?
- a. The governor can appeal a court's decision.
 - b. The legislature can appoint cabinet members.
 - c. The lieutenant governor can hear an appeal at the Supreme Court.
 - d. The divisions within Florida's government create a system of check and balances.

DBQ: Read the following excerpt from the Florida constitution related to judicial branch of government to answer question 10.

Article V, SECTION 1.

Courts.—The judicial power shall be vested in a supreme court, district courts of appeal, circuit courts and county courts. No other courts may be established by the state, any political subdivision or any municipality. The legislature shall, by general law, divide the state into appellate court districts and judicial circuits following county lines.

10. Which of the following statements is correct according to Florida's constitution?

- a. The governor can choose to divide appellate courts according to population needs.
- b. The governor can establish a new court in order to alleviate a back-up in the judicial system.
- c. Florida's constitution clearly established the state's court system.
- d. A group of people have formed a new political party in the state of Florida, and have decided to form a new court system for their citizens.

Answer Key:

1. c
2. d
3. d
4. c
5. a
6. b
7. d
8. c
9. d
10. c

Civic Integration
Lesson Plan Quiz Blueprint
NGSSS-SS Main Benchmark: SS.4.C.3.1
Title of Lesson: Three Branches of Government
Grade Level: 4th

Pacing Guide Connection: 4th Grade Florida History 4th Nine Weeks Topic 14 Florida's Government

Question #	Benchmark Grade Level	Benchmark 7th Grade Tested	Answer	Complexity Level
1	SS.4.C.3.1 Identify the three branches (Legislative, Judicial, Executive) of government in Florida and the powers of each.	SS.7.C.3.3 Illustrate the structure and function (three branches of government established in Articles I, II, and III with corresponding powers) of government in the United States as established in the Constitution. SS.7.C.3.8 Analyze the structure, functions, and processes of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.	c	Low
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3	SS.4.C.3.1 Identify the three branches (Legislative, Judicial, Executive) of government in Florida and the powers of each.	SS.7.C.3.3 Illustrate the structure and function (three branches of government established in Articles I, II, and III with corresponding powers) of government in the United States as established in the Constitution. SS.7.C.3.8 Analyze the structure, functions, and processes of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.	d	Low

4	SS.4.C.3.1	Identify the three branches (Legislative, Judicial, Executive) of government in Florida and the powers of each.	SS.7.C.3.3 SS.7.C.3.8	Illustrate the structure and function (three branches of government established in Articles I, II, and III with corresponding powers) of government in the United States as established in the Constitution. Analyze the structure, functions, and processes of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.	c	Moderate
5	SS.4.C.3.1	Identify the three branches (Legislative, Judicial, Executive) of government in Florida and the powers of each.	SS.7.C.3.3 SS.7.C.3.8	Illustrate the structure and function (three branches of government established in Articles I, II, and III with corresponding powers) of government in the United States as established in the Constitution. Analyze the structure, functions, and processes of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.	a	Moderate
6	SS.4.C.3.1	Identify the three branches (Legislative, Judicial, Executive) of government in Florida and the powers of each.	SS.7.C.3.3 SS.7.C.3.8	Illustrate the structure and function (three branches of government established in Articles I, II, and III with corresponding powers) of government in the United States as established in the Constitution. Analyze the structure, functions, and processes of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.	b	Moderate
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