

New Jersey Department of Education  
2006 Social Studies Standards Implementation Guide (SIG)

**6.2. CIVICS: ALL STUDENTS WILL KNOW, UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE THE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY AND THE RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND ROLES OF A CITIZEN IN THE NATION AND THE WORLD.**

**Grade 8**

**6.2.8.C. Constitution and American Democracy**

5. Discuss major historical and contemporary conflicts over New Jersey constitutional principles (e.g., the impact of the New Jersey School Law of 1881 which required integration in the state's public schools, Hedgepeth and Williams v. Trenton Board of Education, the Mount Laurel Decision, Jackman v. Bodine, Abbott v. Burke).
6. Research contemporary issues involving the constitutional rights of American citizens and other individuals residing in the United States, including voting rights, habeas corpus, rights of the accused, and the Patriot Act.

**Author Information**

**Author:** William Gorman  
**District:** Freehold Regional High School

**Framework97 References**

Examine the Origins and Continuing Application of the U.S. Constitution, pp. 46-48  
Identify the Balance Between Rights and Responsibilities of Citizens, pp. 49-51  
Locate and Apply Information About Public Issues, pp. 52-54  
Analyze the Branches of Government, pp. 55-57  
The Structures of Government, pp. 58-60

**National History Standard**

- I. What Are Civic Life, Politics, and Government?
- II. What Are the Foundations of the American Political System?
- III. How Does the Government Embody the Principles of American Democracy?

**Content Overview**

This section analyzes major Constitutional principles including the separation of powers, church and state conflicts, and also addresses major principles of the New Jersey Constitution and its historical development. Other topics included are examination of local governmental agencies and regulatory bodies, study of the role of political parties in the electoral process, financing of elections, the campaign process, and constitutional rights of voters.

### **Essential Questions**

What is American federalism?

Why are federalism and checks and balances (balanced government) important principles of the U.S. Constitution?

What are essential differences between the three branches of government and independent regulatory agencies?

How are political campaigns financed at the local, state, and national levels?

What is judicial review? Why are some Supreme Court cases called landmarks?

How did the New Jersey State Constitution of 1947 change the structure of state government and why was this done?

How was integration of New Jersey's public schools first mandated by the New Jersey School Law of 1881? Why was that not very effective?

What is the significance of the Abbott vs. Burke decision with relations to New Jersey Public school funding?

### **Teaching Resources**

**Project VoteSmart** is informative and includes lots of student materials on voting and elections.

**Kids Voting USA** is a national project which involves schools in studying real elections and in conducting mock elections.

The site, [www.fedworld.gov](http://www.fedworld.gov), contains the full text of all SCOTUS decisions from 1937 to 1975.

The site, <http://www.landmarkcases.org/>, provides teachers with resources to teach the big cases.

### **Assessment**

Students develop a plan for a mock election for their grade level class officers. Use websites listed in teacher resources as guidelines for developing the election. Hold the election and report the results in a school newspaper. (See [www.kvusa.org](http://www.kvusa.org), League of Women Voters, etc.)