

THE GREAT DEBATES™

POWERED BY THE MUSEUM OF BROADCAST COMMUNICATIONS

CURRICULUM & TOOLS

9TH-12TH GRADE



- THE TELEVISION PRESIDENCY, LEGISLATURE AND JUDICIARY -



THE TELEVISION PRESIDENCY, LEGISLATURE AND JUDICIARY

This high-school lesson plan has been developed to help students improve media literacy by having them evaluate how television influences the behaviors of the three branches of U.S. Government. By examining how media coverage has changed and influenced the president's job, lawmakers' jobs, and even Supreme Court justices' jobs, students will gain an understanding of the powerful influence the television media has over the top levels of the country's government. Different branches of government have differing rules regarding media coverage, discourse, and procedures, and all of that goes into how our country's leaders speak, act, and govern.

During this lesson, students will split into groups to research and evaluate the different job titles of America's leaders, and use a graphic organizer to understand how different branches of government are all influenced in different ways, and to different degrees, by the television news media. On one end of the spectrum, students will view various presidents and presidential candidates as they see how the President's image and discourse has changed over the years due to the heavy presence of television news cameras. On the other hand, students will evaluate how the absence of cameras in Supreme Court proceedings might influence how it does its job.

The assessments for this learning module are an exit slip in which students will sum up what they have learned, and a differentiated project for students to go more in depth into explaining a branch of US Government. Students will choose one branch (or sub-branch) of government and review materials related to that branch or sub-branch, synthesizing their knowledge in either a paper, a presentation, or a video project, depending on interest, ability, and access to digital equipment and projections.

SUMMARY

This module presents the influence of media on all three branches of United States Government, specifically, how television influences our country's leaders. By getting an overview of how television does or does not affect the day-to-day lives of the president, the legislature, and the Supreme Court, students will gain an understanding and create a more in-depth report on how television impacts democracy in America.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Teacher

- Teacher computer/tablet
- Projector
- Access to website
- Worksheets and answer key
- Handouts

Student

- Computers/tablets for reading/viewing
- Access to website
- Headphones if choosing video research
- Worksheets/handouts

STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2

Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

D2.CIV.6.9-12.

Critique relationships among governments, civil societies, and economic markets.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Given materials to read, watch, and listen to the students will be able to demonstrate understanding of how television affects our government by filling out each square of a graphic organizer.
- Given class discussions and readings on television and our government, students will be able to explain the current state of government and media in at least three sentences.
- Given class discussions and readings on television and our government, students will be able to synthesize what they've learned in a short project on television's effect on government by clearly explaining the effect of TV on a single branch or subbranch of the U.S. government.

Teacher	Student	Minutes
Day 1: Teacher introduces essential question: Does television influence our country's leaders? Give students a minute to think to themselves about that question while teacher passes out graphic organizers. If you have time, you may show the introductory video if you wish (reviewing the three branches of government but the students will be researching that topic as well.)	Students are thinking about essential questions, collecting their graphic organizers.	2-6 Minutes

Teacher	Student	Minutes
<p>Next, explain the group activity to the students: Students will divide up into four groups and each group will be assigned to either president, senator, representative or Supreme Court justice.</p> <p>Groups have 10 minutes to read, watch or listen to as much of the material on that job title as possible and fill out the row of questions for that job title on their graphic organizers.</p> <p>At the end of 10 minutes, groups will rotate to the next box on their organizers, doing the same thing for the next job title. This will continue until all groups have completed the whole organizer, and have researched each branch of government.</p>	<p>Students are getting into groups, listening to directions.</p>	<p>5 Minutes</p>

Teacher	Student	Minutes
<p>Direct students to start the group activity.</p> <p>Use a timer to keep students on track to devote 10 minutes to each job title on the graphic organizer.</p> <p>Monitor students' progress and use answer key to help them if needed. Emphasize they need to practice their skimming and scanning in order to get through the material they need to read.</p> <p>Students may choose to divvy up the readings or videos amongst group members, or they may choose to spend 1-2 minutes on each piece of material in order to fill out the corresponding column of their graphic organizers.</p> <p>Let students know they CAN do their own research on the government as well, but strongly encourage them to look over the provided materials first.</p> <p>Students will use their own brains to fill out the column farthest to the right.</p>	<p>Students are reading, listening and watching their materials as they work on each job title of the graphic organizer. Students may choose to divvy up readings, skim and scan all readings as a group, or they may choose to do their own research using their computers or tablets.</p>	<p>40 Minutes</p>

Teacher	Student	Minutes
<p>When all groups have finished the graphic organizer, bring the class together for a short discussion in which you ask the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does TV change the presidency? • What would a president be expected to do as head of state before TV? After TV? • How would it affect his method of speaking? Would it affect what he talked about? • How does TV change the Senate or the House? • How does the absence of TV affect the Supreme Court? • Does TV still have an impact on the Supreme Court? 	Students are discussing.	5-10 minutes
Teacher hands out assignment sheets and explains, gives students the due date for the assignment.	Students are listening, writing down assignments.	5 minutes
Teacher hands out exit slip 5 minutes before the end of the period and instructs students to answer the question in three sentences or more.	Students are writing.	5 minutes
Day 2: Students hand in homework assignments and graphic organizers if teacher decides to collect those. Presentations of “Ted Talks” and AV assignments as well.	Students hand in or present assignments.	Varies

ASSESSMENTS

Graphic Organizer	Teacher will monitor students' graphic organizers and ensure they are understanding the assignment during and after the group work is done. This can be achieved either by doing a quick check of each student's graphic organizer or having the students hand their graphic organizers in with their assignments.
Exit Slip	The question, "What characterizes where we are right now? Does television hold the greatest influence over government or is it another force?" will be answered in at least three sentences and handed in to the teacher to check for understanding.
Reflection Paper	Students will pick one branch of government and write one page on how that branch of government has or has not been affected by television in some way. They may give further explanations as to why the student believes that is important for everyday citizens and voters.
Media Presentation	Students will pick one branch of government and produce a 3-5 minute video on how that branch of government has or has not been affected by television in some way. Further explanation as to why the student believes that is important for everyday citizens and voters.
Oral Presentation	Students will pick one branch of government and present a 3-5 minute "Ted Talk" on how that branch of government has or has not been affected by television in some way. Further explanation as to why the student believes that is important for everyday citizens and voters.

ADAPTATIONS OR ACCOMMODATIONS NEEDED

Learners	Adaptations/Accommodations
Highly Proficient	Students have the opportunity to explore another aspect of voting rights and restrictions in the US if they go beyond the assignments in class. A supplemental reading and discussion opportunity surrounding gerrymandering is available for highly proficient students to add another layer onto this topic as is an article on the shrinking number of polling places.
ELL	Access to technology available to help students look up difficult wording. Students have the choice of watching or reading part of the in-class assignment. Students have the choice of speaking, producing, or writing their final project.
Struggling Learners	Access to technology available to help students look up difficult wording. Students have the choice of watching or reading part of the in-class assignment. Students have the choice of speaking, producing, or writing their final project.

RESOURCES

Use links below to complete the four phases of the in-class activity: Introductory video on the three governmental branches and powers.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HuFR5XBYLfU&feature=youtu.be>

President

- Then U.S. Senator Barack Obama's TV speech at the Democratic convention, video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eWynt87PaJ0>.
- Article on TV presidency, good historical touchstones. <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/teacher-resources/recasting-presidential-history/presidency-television-era>
- Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney's remarks at a fundraiser caught on video. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MU9V6eOFO38&feature=youtu.be>
- Article on Romney's fundraiser remarks. <https://www.politifact.com/article/2012/sep/18/fact-checking-mitt-romneys-private-fundraiser-remark/>
- Article on media impact of President Donald J. Trump and his Democratic presidential opponent former Vice President Joseph Biden. <https://abc6onyourside.com/news/nation-world/disparity-in-trump-and-bidens-relationship-with-media-could-impact-2020-race>

Supreme Court

- Article on TV's effect on the SC (Can be listened to, or read – differentiation) <https://www.npr.org/2018/07/07/626800512/media-coverage-and-the-supreme-court>
- Arguments for and against cameras in the courtroom. <https://stories.avvo.com/news/politics/cameras-allowed-supreme-court.html>
- Explanation of why no cameras in Supreme Court (Students need only read the summary portion, but can read more if there is time): <https://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2013/03/case-allowing-cameras-supreme-court-proceedings/316876/>

U.S. Senate

- Rules and regulations. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/SMAN-110/html/SMAN-110-pg123-3.htm>
- History of C-Span (reading for both Senate and House groups). <https://www.c-span.org/about/history/>
- Video on the conflict and compromise in the U.S. Senate. <https://www.c-span.org/video/?455793-1/senate-conflict-compromise>
- Congress.gov video on U.S. Senate procedures. <https://www.congress.gov/legislative-process/senate-floor>

U.S. House of Representatives

- Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives. <https://rules.house.gov/sites/democrats.rules.house.gov/files/HouseRulesManual116/rule5.xml>
- History of C-Span (reading for both Senate and House groups): <https://www.c-span.org/about/history/>
- Congress.gov video on house floor: <https://www.congress.gov/legislative-process/house-floor>

THE GREAT DEBATES

THE THREE BRANCHES OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND TV

HOMEWORK

Name: _____ Class Period: _____

THE THREE BRANCHES OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND TV

Directions: Please fill out every box as you research each branch of government. You do not need to write in full sentences, but be prepared to discuss your answers with the class.

TITLE:	Is this person's speech governed by a set of rules? Circle one	Is this person heavily televised?	Is this person on television every time he or she works? (Does C-Span televise this person's job?)	Does television coverage of this person affect his or her discourse? Explain your answer.
President	Yes No	Yes No		
U.S. Senator	Yes No	Yes No		
U.S. Representative	Yes No	Yes No		
U.S. Supreme Court Justice	Yes No	Yes No		

THE GREAT DEBATES - **TEACHER'S KEY**

THE THREE BRANCHES OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND TV HOMEWORK

Name: _____ Class Period: _____

THE THREE BRANCHES OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND TV

Directions: Please fill out every box as you research each branch of government. You do not need to write in full sentences, but be prepared to discuss your answers with the class.

TITLE:	Is this person's speech governed by a set of rules? Circle one	Is this person heavily televised?	Is this person on television every time he or she works? (Does C-Span televise this person's job?)	Does television coverage of this person affect his or her discourse? Explain your answer.
President	Yes No	Yes No	Yes, because the president has to remember to maintain his image as well as his policies.	Yes, social media, radio advertising, and newspaper interviews are still relevant to the conversation.
U.S. Senator	Yes No	Yes No	Yes, because senators are more well-known than representatives, so they have to think of their image on television when doing their work.	Yes, social media, internet news, etc.
U.S. Representative	Yes No	Yes No	Both yes and no answers acceptable with an explanation.	Yes, social media, internet news, etc.
U.S. Supreme Court Justice	Yes No	Yes No	Both yes and no answers acceptable with an explanation.	Yes, social media, internet news, etc.