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***Please refer to the Pennsylvania Standards Aligned System website: (***[***http://www.pdesas.org/module/sas/curriculumframework/SocialStudiesCF.aspx***](http://www.pdesas.org/module/sas/curriculumframework/SocialStudiesCF.aspx)***)***

***for information on the Pennsylvania Curriculum Framework for Social Studies. You will find much of the information about PA Academic Standards, essential questions, vocabulary, assessments, etc. by navigating through the various components of the Curriculum Framework.***

**LESSON / UNIT TITLE: (Type here.)**

**Teacher Name(s):** Chris Weldy

**School District:** Athens Area School District

**Building:** Athens Area High School

**Grade Level:** 10

**Subject:** Civics and Government

**Time Required:** 4-5 class periods (40 minutes each)

**Lesson/Unit Summary *(2-3 sentence synopsis)*:**

Students will create an Executive Branch project that combines research, creative expression, and higher level thinking skills. Groups will be assigned (choose) one of the Executive Departments of the Unites States Government. They will complete guided research on their Department and will then create a collage that ties the duties and responsibilities of the Department with aspects of everyday life in the U.S.

**Essential Questions for Lesson/Unit**

What is the structure and purpose of the federal bureaucracy?

What agencies and advisors are part of the Executive Office of the President and what are their functions?

**Pennsylvania Academic Standards / Common Core Standards Addressed in Lesson/Unit**

 ***(Include standards numbers and standards statements.)***

**PA Academic Standards: Civics and Government (2009) - Grade 12**

**Standard Area 5.3.12.** How Government Works

* **Standard 5.3.12.A.** Branches of Government

**5.3.12. A.1** Analyze the changes in power and authority among the three branches of government over time.

* **Standard 5.3.12.B** Structure, Organization, and Operation of Governments

**5.3.12. B.1.** Compare and contrast policy-making in various contemporary world governments.

* **Standard 5.3.12.C** Government Services

**5.3.12. C.1** Evaluate how government agencies create, amend, and enforce regulations

**Lesson/Unit Objectives**

Students will research the basic function/purpose/structure of the various Executive Departments.

Students will be able to make/explain connections between the purposes of the Executive Departments and everyday life in the Unites States.

**Vocabulary/Key Terms for Lesson/Unit**

* Executive Department
* Cabinet
* Secretary
* Attorney General
* Bureaucracy

**Historical Background for Teachers / Research Narrative**

(***Insert a 1-2 page abstract in this section that details your research on the lesson/unit topic. This is where you get to share your scholarship with your peers! You should provide enough information that a teacher could potentially teach the lesson/unit and answer general questions based on studying your narrative.***

**Departments in the Executive Branch of the Federal Government**

 The Executive Branch of the Federal government was established by Article II of the United States Constitution. Under Article II, the duties, roles and responsibilities of the Executive Branch are laid out for the federal government. Although Article II addresses everything from the purpose to the powers of the Executive Branch, very little is said of the actual “structure” of the Executive Branch. Besides specifying the positions of President and Vice President, no other positions are directly named or addressed constitutionally. So where did the “executive departments” develop from?

 The history of executive departments is almost as old as the nation and the Constitution respectively. From the start of his administration, President Washington requested the addition of three executive departments: War, State, and Treasury. Washington felt that these departments were necessary to help him carry out the administrative duties of the government and to “enforce” federal laws. The existence of the Executive Departments was key to solving one of the original weaknesses of Articles of Confederation.

The underlying question remains: Where did the authorization for such departments find their Constitutional basis? Most scholars point to a specific phrase in Article II, Section 2:

 *“he may require the opinion, in writing, of the principal officer in each of the executive departments, upon any subject relating to the duties of their respective offices”.*

Most scholars refer to the mention of said “executive departments and their principal officers” as an acknowledgement that the Framers of the Constitution that some sort of “executive structure” would be needed to assist the President. Support for the constitutionality of executive departments is further defined in Article II, Section 1 when the need for a line of succession is addressed:

 *“Congress may by Law provide for the Case of Removal, Death, Resignation or Inability, both of the President and Vice President, declaring what Officer shall then act as President, and such Officer shall act accordingly, until the Disability be removed, or a President shall be elected.”*

Taking these clauses into consideration, Congress established the first three executive Departments under Congressional statue to help address an area of “need” for the new nation and government. Since then, the creation of additional executive departments has been based upon Congressional statue and the rise of a need for specific areas. The Congressional statues creating these Departments were at the request of the President. Since the original three departments, an additional 14 have been created within the Executive Branch. The most recent of these was the creation of the Department of Homeland Security on November 25, 2002. The request was made by President George W. Bush following the tragic events of September 11, 2001.

 The Executive Branch itself dates its origins back to the development of the U.S. Constitution. It established the powers, roles, duties, and responsibilities of a branch headed by the President and Vice President. From there, the Executive department has grown to be the largest branch of the federal government, encompassing 17 different departments and hundreds of thousands of personnel. The number and scope of these departments will continue to grow and change, as do the issues and needs of the United States.

**Sources:**

<http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution.html>

<http://www.usa.gov/Agencies/Federal/Executive.shtml>

**Instructional Prodedures and Activities**

**Executive Branch Project: Research Collage**

**Description:** Executive Departments were created to help the President deal with overseeing and enforcing laws for specific issues. There are currently 15 executive departments within the Executive Branch of the U.S. Government.

**The assignment:**

1. Students will be divided into groups.
2. Each group will be assigned a department from the Executive Branch.
3. They will conduct some basic fact finding on this branch and create a collage based upon the duties/responsibilities of that department. The research is to find the information listed below and present it on their collage.
	* Name of Department
	* Date Department was founded
	* Current Head of the Department
	* Photo of Current Head
	* Department Seal
	* 3 or 5 Paragraph Research Essay (1-2 pages) explaining the duties/purpose/history of the dept. Students may include such info. as interesting facts about the department or agencies that are part of that department. Students may also include important historical events, laws, etc… associated directly with their Executive Dept.

**Example: The FBI is part of the Department of Justice**

Hints for research: You can search your department on any search engine (I recommend Yahoo or Google). When you enter your search, there are many different ways to enter it: “US State Department” or “US Department of State”. You should include the “U.S.” to guarantee you find info. about our country. You will find that each department has its own website. By exploring these, you may find the information you are looking for, but do not limit yourself. Other sites, such as online encyclopedias, may give you the more general information. that you may need.

1. The artist aspect is for the groups to find 10 images that represent their Department. (Remember: Students will have a whole poster board, so there should be large images.) Eight of these images must come from magazines, while two others can be specific images students have obtained from the Internet. They will number the images. Then, on the back of the collage, they will write a short explanation of how this image is representative of their department.
2. Each group will present their collage and research information to the class. The group is expected to read research information to class.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Executive Dept. Project** | **Checklist** | **Point Value** |
| Name of Dept.  |  | \_\_\_\_/1 |
| Date Founded  |  | \_\_\_\_/1 |
| Current Dept. Head |  | \_\_\_\_/2 |
| Picture of current Department Head |  | \_\_\_\_/2 |
| Department Seal |  | \_\_\_\_/2 |
| Descriptive Paragraph (Using attached rubric x 10)\* |  | \_\_\_\_/40 |
| 10 Images and Explanation (4 each using attached rubric)+ |  | \_\_\_\_/40 |
| Class Presentation |  | \_\_\_\_/12 |
| **TOTAL** |  | **\_\_\_\_/100** |

***\*Refer to included Project Grading Rubric***

**Suggested Strategies for Differentiating Instruction**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  * Pair students by varying ability and backgrounds for research groups
 |

**Assessment of Student Learning (Include both Formative and Summative Assessments)**

 **Formative:**

* Observation and monitoring of student research

**Summative:**

* Project assessed based on criteria listed in the attached rubric

**Materials and Resources**

***(Include text, supplementary resources, primary source documents, websites, handouts, charts, maps, etc.)***

* Research Collage Project Description Sheet
* Assessment Rubric for Research Collage
* Internet Resource links on Executive Branch Departments
* Magazines and Periodicals for collage pictures
* Computers for Internet-based research
* Poster Board
* Scissors
* Glue/Glue sticks

**Author(s) of Unit/Lesson Plan [Include name(s) and school district(s)**

Christopher Weldy, Athens Area School District, Athens, PA

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