



GRADE 6+

The States | Lesson Plan

How are powers divided between federal and state governments?

Students learn about the differences between federal and state governments, how their powers are divided, and how the U.S. Constitution protects the powers of the states.

Learning Objectives:

- Distinguish the differences between federal and state governments.
- Differentiate how the powers of federal and state governments are divided.
- Explore American founding documents and how they protect the powers of the states.

Key Vocabulary:

- **Articles of Confederation:** an American founding document written before the Constitution in which the states entered into a “league of friendship” and maintained the ability to govern themselves.
- **constitution:** a nation's or state's guiding document that lays out the rules for how the government works and reflects the unique beliefs and culture of its people.
- **governor:** the leader of the executive branch within a state's government.

Educational Standards: History, Civics, Government, Western Civilization, American Values

What You'll Need

- Video: *Street Smarts: The States*.



Scan to watch video.

- Worksheet: *Street Smarts: The States*. ([Download PDF](#))

Lesson Plan (45 mins.)

Warm-Up: Let's Talk About States! (10 mins.)

1. Ask: *Which state do we live in? Have you ever traveled to another state on vacation? How many states have you visited? Are all states the same?* Allow the class to share answers.
2. Say: *How much do you know about how our states function? Are they all the same? Different? Let's see how much we know about how the government of states functions independently as well as as a body within the federal government of the United States.*
3. Display a copy of Street Smarts: The States Worksheet on a screen in the classroom.
4. Have a student read each statement aloud and attempt to answer them as a class. Invite students to share out loud (or do this part independently).

Watch and Complete: (25 mins.)

1. State: *Let's play a fun game and see how many answers we got right.*
2. Watch the video.
3. Pause after each question and allow students to try to answer.
4. Play the video to reveal if they were correct or incorrect.

Wrap-Up: (10 mins.)

1. Allow students 10 minutes to complete the worksheet independently.
2. Collect as a formative assessment or discuss in class.

Don't have time for the full lesson? Quick Activity (15 mins.)

Distribute the worksheet and allow students to complete it while they follow along with the video.