WEBSITES FOR SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATORS: CIVICS/GOVERNMENT

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Table of Contents

Organizations (Civic Education) 2

General Civics Websites 2

Assessment of Civic Knowledge and Activity 2

Citizenship and Becoming a Citizen 2

Civic Decision Making and Action 2

Civic Values, Character Education, Issue Advocacy, Voting, & Civic Participation 3

Constitution, including the First Amendment and Other Civic Documents 3

Government in Missouri & the U.S. and Branches of Government 4

Government and Civics in Other Nations 5

International
5

Law

5

News and Current Events

5

(See also “Current Events and News” under “Social Studies” Above)

Peace Education

6

Politics and Election 2004

6

Teaching Civics

6

Terrorism

6
Organizations (Civic Education)

Missouri Bar: Website of the Missouri Bar, which includes a section on education resources, conferences, and services for teachers: [http://www.mobar.org/](http://www.mobar.org/)

American Bar Association: Website of the American Bar Association's Division of Public Education: [http://www.abanet.org/publiced/home.html](http://www.abanet.org/publiced/home.html)

Center for Civic Education: Website of the Center for Civic Education: [http://www.civiced.org/](http://www.civiced.org/)

Close Up Foundation: The website of the Close Up Foundation, which hosts trips to Washington, D.C., has many other programs, and produces quality publications for citizenship education: [http://www.closeup.org](http://www.closeup.org)


Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago: The website of the Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago has a number of activities social studies teachers might want to consider: [http://www.crfc.org](http://www.crfc.org)

General Civics Websites

Federal Government: Federal Government Website that has resources of relevance to “Civnet” of the Center for Civic Education: A website of the Center for Civic Education called Civnet, developed for scholars and teachers, which offers many ideas pertaining to civics in this and other nations with links to the great documents of democracy: [http://www.civnet.org/](http://www.civnet.org/)

Assessment of Civic Knowledge and Activity

International Assessment: The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) has released information on the results of a cross-national study that examined the civic knowledge, engagement, and attitudes of 14 year-old students in 28 democratic countries. [http://www.wam.umd.edu/~iea/](http://www.wam.umd.edu/~iea/)

Citizenship and Becoming a Citizen

Symbols of Citizenship: This comprehensive state information Web site provides symbols, flags, maps, constitutions, representatives, songs, birds, flowers, and trees for each state. This is a must for every fourth grade teacher. [http://www.50states.com/](http://www.50states.com/)

Civic Decision Making and Action

Civic Action: A website entitled “The New Fighters” focused on people who have made a difference in civil rights and on how students can make a difference with ideas for a unit on the subject: [http://www.cis.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1996/1/96.01.07.x.html](http://www.cis.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1996/1/96.01.07.x.html)

Civic Action: A website called Teens, Crime, and the Community, developed by the Constitutional Rights Foundation, which provides ideas and avenues for getting students involved in their communities: [http://www.nationaltcc.org/](http://www.nationaltcc.org/)
Conflict Resolution: Website that deals with conflict resolution: http://www.triune.ca/

Conflict Resolution: This website from the Cooperative Learning Center at the University of Minnesota focuses on teaching students to be peacemakers: http://www.clcrc.com/pages/peace.html.


Civic Values, Character Education, Issue Advocacy, Voting and Elections, and Civic Participation

Character Education: Character education lesson plans, elementary through high school, and other information from St. Louis’s PREP program: http://info.csd.org/staffdev/chared/characterplus.html

Character Education: Character Education Partnership’s website: http://www.charactered.net/. Its eleven principles of Character Education may be found at this website: http://www.character.org/principles/.

Election of 2008: This website from the New York Times focuses on the election of 2008: http://capwiz.com/nyt/e4/

Issue Advocacy: The website of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), an organization committed to the defense of the Bill of Rights and other civil rights of Americans: http://www.aclu.org.

Issue Advocacy: The website of the American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ), an organization often opposed to the ACLU, supportive of involving religion more in American public life: http://www.aclj.org/.

Issue Advocacy: This website, called “SpeakOut.com,” presents political issues for students to discuss: http://www.policy.com/.


Specific Values (Peace): The website of the United States Institute of Peace, which sponsors an annual essay contest dealing with some issue exploring a peace-related issue. From a social studies assessment perspective, the peace essay is a nice model for an authentic assessment accompanied by a scoring guide: http://www.usip.org/ed.html

Voting and Elections: Website of Project Vote Smart, which provides information on candidates, on the work of elected officials, and on political issues: http://www.vote-smart.org/

Voting and Elections: Website of Ed Gate focused on elections: http://www.edgate.com/elections/inactive/

Constitution, including the First Amendment, and Other Civic Documents

Bill of Rights Institute: The Bill of Rights Institute has a website focused on the Bill of Rights, taking both an historical and a contemporary perspective: http://www.billofrightsinstitute.org/.
The website also includes many free lessons on such topics as the Federalist Papers, civic virtue, and the founders of this nation. Teachers may subscribe to free newsletters from the Institute.

The Constitution Center: The website of the Constitution Center, a museum under construction in Philadelphia, which offers ideas helpful for teaching about the U.S. Constitution with links to the document itself, to various Freedom Documents, to a “Kids Corner,” to teacher resources, and to many other “goodies”: http://www.constitutioncenter.org/

Education World: A website from Education World called America’s Freedom Documents with lesson plan ideas: http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson190.shtml

FindLaw: This website is an excellent resource for finding information about court cases pertaining to specific sections of the U.S. Constitution: http://www.findlaw.com/casecode/constitution/

First Amendment (American Bar Association): Website on religion, law, and the First Amendment from the American Bar Association Division for Public Education, which has lots of good links: http://www.abanet.org/publiced/webresources.html.

First Amendment (Coalition against Censorship): http://www.ncac.org

First Amendment (Religion in Schools): The Anti-Defamation League, a Jewish organization, has a webpage, which presents its position with regard to religion in the schools, including school prayer and holiday celebrations. Its positions relate to the First Amendment: http://www.adl.org/main_education.asp

Public Agenda: The Public Agenda has conducted a national survey of public attitudes on the Constitution for the National Constitution Center. The survey was funded by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. http://www.publicagenda.org/specials/constitution/constitution.htm

**Government in Missouri & the U.S. and Branches of Government**

Missouri Government: This official website of Missouri Government provides links to Missouri’s branches of government, state agencies, and many more useful sources: http://www.state.mo.us/.

U.S. Government: Ben’s Guide to U.S. Government is an excellent website for elementary students: http://bensguide.gpo.gov/ (good for elementary grades) and

U.S. Government: GovSpot is an excellent website for elementary students and older students, as well as teachers: http://www.govspot.com


U.S. Government Courses: This website with lessons for U.S. government courses was developed by George Cassutto, social studies teacher from Hagerstown High School in Maryland: http://www.cyberlearning-world.com/lessons/usq.htm

Executive Branch: This is the website of the White House: http://www.whitehouse.gov/. The White House also provides a special website for kids: http://www.whitehouse.gov/kids/

Executive Branch: The Library of Congress has a website that provides an entry to the Executive Branch of Government and to the many government agencies within that branch:
Executive Branch: The Truman Library presents this website, which a virtual museum website focused on the "American Presidency" exhibit which may be found at the Smithsonian Museum of American History and at the Truman Library from October 12, 2002 through May 11, 2003:  http://www.trumanlibrary.org/museum/burden/index.html

U.S. State Department: This State Department website focuses on international education programs and publications of the State Department: http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/.


Legislative Branch: The League of Women Voters has a high school simulation for an e-Congress, which is available at its Youth Leadership Initiative website. Here is what the League says about the simulation: "Throughout the game, students play the role of a U.S. Representative and their job is to pass legislation. To be successful, they must research contemporary issues, draft original legislation, debate its merits during committee sessions and work to move their bill to the House Floor. In contrast to traditional mock congresses, students use innovative technology throughout the simulation to interact with their legislators and to connect with their peers around the country." The site may be found at this address: http://www.youthleadership.net/.

Legislative Branch: The Library of Congress has a website devoted to the legislative branch of U.S. government: http://thomas.loc.gov/home/legbranch/legbranch.html.

Legislative Branch: Following is the official House of Representatives website: http://www.house.gov/. The website also has a special page on how laws are made: http://www.house.gov/house/Tying_it_all.html.

Legislative Branch: Following is the official U.S. Senate website: http://www.senate.gov/.

Legislative Branch: Website called CongressLink, which has lesson plans and authentic problem-solving student activities and other activities related to lawmaking, checks and balances, and more: http://www.congresslink.org/.


Judicial Branch: The website of the United States Supreme Court: http://www.supremecourtus.gov/index.html


Government & Civics in Other Nations

Flags: A website on the flags of the world: http://www.flags.net/indexu.htm

Constitutions: Websites that may be used to find the current constitutions of many nations:
International


Law

Famous Trials: This website is maintained by professor of law Doug Linder of the UMKC law school: [http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/ftrials.htm](http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/ftrials.htm)

FindLaw: A website entitled FindLaw, which allows one to navigate to all sorts of law-related topics, including the law in the states (see Missouri), the United States, other nations; proposed legislation; Supreme Court decisions; a variety of topics, such as family law, business law, immigration law; etc., etc.: [http://www.findlaw.com/](http://www.findlaw.com/)

Law Day Ideas from the ABA: This website provides ideas on how to celebrate Law Day, which takes place annually on May 1: [http://www.abanet.org/publiced/lawday/](http://www.abanet.org/publiced/lawday/). The website has lesson plans and many other good features, which may be used at any time of year. For example, there are quizzes on the website ([http://www.abanet.org/publiced/quizzes/home.html](http://www.abanet.org/publiced/quizzes/home.html)).

Supreme Court Collection: A website called the “Supreme Court Collection,” from Cornell Law School’s Legal Information Institute, which gives access to recent Supreme Court Decisions: [http://supct.law.cornell.edu/supct/index.html](http://supct.law.cornell.edu/supct/index.html)

News and Current Events

(See also “Current Events and News” under “Social Studies” Above)


CNN: This website entitled “CNNFyi.com” dealing with the daily news has been developed by CNN/Turner Broadcasting for students with resources for teachers: [http://fyi.cnn.com/fyi/](http://fyi.cnn.com/fyi/)

CNN Student News: This is a website that promises to be useful to both students and teachers: [http://fyi.cnn.com/fyi/](http://fyi.cnn.com/fyi/).

Journalism: The Poynter Institute is a school for journalists, future journalists, and teachers of journalism. For teachers and students, this site offers rich background and research information for reports. [http://www.poynter.org/](http://www.poynter.org/)

USA Today: This website from USA Today provides daily news and ideas for lesson plans for teachers and students: [http://www.usatoday.com/educate/home.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/educate/home.htm).

Peace Education

Education for Social Responsibility: Site includes ideas for peaceful resolution of disputes, confronting prejudice, and resources, including lessons: http://www.esrnational.org/.

United States Institute for Peace: Website has articles on global peace issues and ideas for teachers, including one or more teacher’s guides, which may be downloaded: http://www.usip.org/et.html.

Peace Corps Paul D. Coverdell World Wise Schools: Has lots of good information for global education, including links to other cultures and lesson plans: http://www.peacecorps.gov/wws/educators/ok

Politics and Election 2008:


Teaching Civics:

An excellent NPR series: NPR has a series entitled Citizen Student, which addresses issues of teaching civic concepts, values, and issues to students. The programs deal with teaching about voting, about the First Amendment, civic lessons beyond the classroom, and teaching patriotism in a time of war. To access the series, go to the first program in the series. That program has links to other programs and to excellent, relevant websites. The series may be accessed from this website: http://www.npr.org/programs/morning/features/civics/young_vote.html

Terrorism: