

## American Government Resource List for Grades K through 4

The Resources in this document can be used with the American Government Curriculum Packet for K grades through 4.

### Books

#### Non-fiction and Biography

- The Bill of Rights: Protecting Our Freedom Then and Now, 2008 by Syl Sobel J.D. (Author). By 1787, the leaders of America's 13 newly-created states that had just won their independence from Britain convened to draw up the Constitution of the United States. However, citizens of many of the states feared that a new American government could take away certain of their rights, just as the British had done when they were colonies. It was soon agreed to add a series of ten amendments to the Constitution in order to guarantee specific rights to all citizens and states. These first ten amendments are known as the Bill of Rights.
- How the U.S. Government Works, 2012 by Syl Sobel J.D. (Author). Described are the Legislative body, composed of Senate and House of Representatives, the Executive branch, headed by the President with the Cabinet members, and the Judicial branch, headed by the Supreme Court of the United States, and extending to federal courts throughout the nation.
- I Grew Up to Be President, 2011 by Laurie Calkhoven (Author), Rebecca Zomchek (Illustrator) From George Washington to Barack Obama, this is a child's perfect introduction to all the U.S. Presidents. On every spread, readers will learn about the Presidents' childhoods, families, careers, accomplishments in office, and life after the White House. Famous quotes, major events, and fun facts are all included.
- Looking at Lincoln, 2017 by Maira Kalman (Author, Illustrator) Who was Lincoln really? This little girl wants to find out. She discovers, among other things, that our sixteenth president was a man who believed in freedom for all, had a dog named Fido, loved Mozart, apples, and his wife's vanilla cake, and kept his notes in his hat. From his boyhood in a log cabin to his famous presidency and untimely death, this is Lincoln's remarkable life shared with readers in a fresh and exciting way.
- A More Perfect Union: The Story of Our Constitution, 2008 by Betsy Maestro (Author), Giulio Maestro (Illustrator). With accurate historical information, this easy-to-understand book tells why and how the Constitution of the United States was created. This book includes a map and back matter with a table of dates and a summary of the Articles of the Constitution.
- Shh! We're Writing the Constitution, 1997 by Jean Fritz (Author), Tomie dePaola (Illustrator). This great title that's written with the author's humorous touch chronicles the hot

summer of 1787 where fifty-five delegates from thirteen states huddled together in the strictest secrecy in Philadelphia to draw up the constitution of the United States!

- We the Kids: The Preamble to the Constitution of the United States, 2005 by David Catrow (Author, Illustrator).  
Perfect for inspiring discussion in classrooms and around kitchen tables, this fun-filled and cheerfully illustrated look at the Preamble provides an accessible introduction to America's founding ideals for citizens of all ages.
- What Are the Three Branches of the Government? And Other Questions About the U.S. Constitution (Good Question!), 2015 by Ben Richmond (Author).  
Who wrote the U.S. Constitution? How long did it take to write? What is the Bill of Rights? The Constitution forms the basis for our government's organization—and our liberties. Children will also learn how the three branches of government operate, how amendments are enacted, and how the Constitution has changed.

### Fiction

- Bad Kitty for President, 2012 by Nick Bruel Author, Illustrator). It's time to elect a new president of the Neighborhood Cat Coalition! Who will win the election? The candidate chosen by the kitties on the right side of the street or the candidate chosen by the kitties on the left side of the street?
- Madam President, 2008 by Lane Smith (Author, Illustrator).  
A little girl imagines what her day would be like if she were Madam President. There would be executive orders to give, babies to kiss, tuna casseroles to veto (or VETO!) and so much more! Not to mention that recess would require more security.
- Monster Needs Your Vote, 2015 by Paul Czajak (Author), Wendy Grieb (Illustrator).  
Election season is here, and Monster is ready to vote! But why cast your ballot when you can run for president instead? With speeches, debates, and a soapbox or two, Monster's newest tale is a campaign encouraging kids to take a stand and fight for what they believe in.
- My Senator and Me: A Dog's-Eye View of Washington, D. C., 2006 by Edward M. Kennedy (Author), David Small (Illustrator).  
Senator Edward M. Kennedy's dog, Champion Amigo's Seventh Wave, or Splash introduces readers to Washington, D.C., as he follows the senator around for a day.
- Pete for President, 2004 by Daisy Alberto (Author), Blanche Sims (Illustrator).  
Pete and Joey are best friends, until they run for class president--and discover that it takes more than speeches and posters and promises to win an election.
- The President's Stuck in the Bathtub: Poems About the Presidents, 2012 by Susan Katz (Author), Robert Neubecker (Illustrator).  
Sure, William Taft got stuck in his tub, but did you know that John Quincy Adams used to skinny-dip in the Potomac? Herbert Hoover spoke Chinese with his wife, and Gerald Ford had his name changed from Leslie Lynch King. The lives of the presidents are served up as fact-filled and fanciful poems that will make you laugh, with amazement at the colorful cast of men and women who have lived in the White House.

### Magazines, Journals, Miscellaneous

- American Government by Kids Discover  
For students studying American government, Kids Discover American Government offers a

compelling narrative about how our government functions. There is an overview of the executive, the legislative, and the judicial branches, and the balance of power at the federal level. Then an introduction to state and local governments, including their structure and responsibilities.

<https://www.kidsdiscover.com/shop/issues/american-government-for-kids-2/>

- Constitution by Kids Discover

Imagine if the U.S. had no national laws and no president, and every state had a different kind of money, this is what life was like for Americans after the Revolution. Even though there was a Declaration of Independence and the Articles of Confederation, there were no real guidelines for running the new country. This is where the Constitution came in; for students learning about the birth of the nation, this issue is critical in showing how this essential document came to be, and how it has shaped American life ever since then.

<https://www.kidsdiscover.com/shop/issues/constitution-for-kids/>

- How America Works by Kids Discover

We know that our government collects taxes and creates laws, but how much do we know about all the other things it does, like cleaning the streets, promoting the arts, and overseeing public transportation? The structure and many functions of the American government is the focus here, and the process of electing officials to represent and answer to the concerns of the public is also examined.

<https://www.kidsdiscover.com/shop/issues/american-government-for-kids/>

### Online Links

- Abraham Lincoln's Crossroads: In this online game, learn about Lincoln's leadership by exploring the political choices he made.  
<http://constitutioncenter.org/lincoln/>
- Congress for Kids: Learn American Government  
<https://www.congressforkids.net/>
- Engaging Congress is a fun, interactive game that uses primary source documents to explore the basic tenets of representative government and the challenges they face in contemporary society.  
<https://engagingcongress.org/>
- George Washington's Mount Vernon: tons of things to explore and learn.  
<https://www.mountvernon.org/>
- Seize the Vote: Learn all about voting rights throughout history in this online game  
<http://constitutioncenter.org/seize-the-vote/>

### Background information for the Educator

- Annenberg Classroom: Civics sites for Educators.  
<http://www.annenbergclassroom.org/page/best-civics-sites-for-teachers>
- Icivics: iCivics works to ensure every student in America receives a quality and engaging civic education and graduates from high school well prepared and enthusiastic for citizenship. Contains lessons, ideas, and much more.  
<https://www.icivics.org/teachers>