



GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE (9-12)

OBJECTIVE: Students will be able to identify the structure of the AZ Government by converting the process into a representation of their choice.

STANDARDS:

- **HS.SP3.7** Construct and present explanations using sound reasoning, correct sequence (linear and nonlinear) examples, and details with significant and pertinent information and data, while acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of the explanation.
- **HS.SP3.8** Present arguments and explanations that feature ideas and perspectives on issues and topics to reach a range of audiences and venues using print, oral, and digital technologies.
- **HS.C3.2** Analyze the origins, functions, and structures of government at the national, state, local, and tribal levels and compare them with other systems of government.
- **HS.C4.1** Evaluate multiple procedures for making governmental decisions in all three branches and at the local, state, tribal, national, and international levels in terms of the civic purpose achieved.

CIVICS EXAM QUESTIONS:

- Who is the current Governor of Arizona?

TIMELINE: SPB students could perform this activity after the vote day as the SPB process starts to slow down for students after that point. This can help students make the connection between the structure of their State Government and the structure of their school/district.

APPROXIMATE LESSON LENGTH: 60 minutes

SUPPORTING MATERIALS:

- *AZ Government Structure*
- *Tree Map*
- Digital platforms for content creation (Google Drive/Canva/Microsoft)
- Poster Paper
- Markers/Crayons/Pencils
- Timer

VOCABULARY:

- **Electorate:** All the people in a country or area who are entitled to vote in an election.
- **Executive Branch:** The branch of the state government that is broadly responsible for implementing, supporting, and enforcing laws.
- **Legislative Branch:** The branch of the state government empowered to make the laws.
- **Judicial Branch:** The court systems of the state government, responsible for interpreting the laws passed by the legislative branch and enforced by the executive branch.
- **Governor:** The executive head of a state in the U.S. a person charged with the direction or control of an institution, society, etc.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Engage

- Have the students answer the following question(s) to ascertain students' prior knowledge: "Now that the ____ project has won, who will help bring it to our campus?"
- Students may have a variety of answers but what we are looking for is a connection to Leadership, whether that is School or District. (Principal, Superintendent, etc.)
 - Once they achieve this conclusion, have a diagram going on the board of the Superintendent at the top and the connection down to the individual school.

2. Explore

- Now that the diagram of the local school district structure is up on the board, ask the students, "What does this structure look similar to in our State?"
- Students may have a variety of answers that are applicable and appropriate, so honor those connections, while leading the students to the main idea of the State Government.
 - Have the students understand that the equivalent of the Superintendent at the government level is the State Governor. Use this opportunity to identify the current Governor.
- Challenge the students to see how well they can identify the many positions in the AZ State Government.
- Give each student a *Tree Map* template with Executive Branch, Legislative Branch, and the Judicial Branch at the top.
 - Give students a maximum of (10) minutes to see how many positions and offices they can chart. Depending on the size of the Steering Committee, this could be done in groups up to (4), or individually.

3. Explain

- Have students/groups present their work and see how accurate their choices were.
- After all students/groups have gone, put up the *AZ Government Structure* document and have the students see how accurate their attempts were.
- While going through the Government Structure document, take some time to identify certain individuals like the State Superintendent, Attorney General, State Supreme Court Justices, and House Representative representing their district.

4. Elaborate

- After reviewing Arizona's State Government structure, divide students back into groups if needed.
- Let the students know that they'll be creating their own poster (physical/digital) that compares this government structure to a system of their own invention. (Some examples could be the government structure of another country's state or prefectural government or a fictional structure, etc.)
 - Each group needs to have at least three branches and three positions under each branch. Give the students around 15 minutes to complete their posters.

5. Evaluate

- Have students/groups take turns presenting their comparative structure.
- The main point of the presentation is to have students have a focus on the comparative position of "Governor" in their examples.
 - This will help to clarify the position of the Governor.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT OR ARTIFACT:

- **Formative Assessment:** Students' responses identifying the people and positions in the current Arizona Government structure.
- **Artifacts:** Poster representing students/groups' comparative government structure.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

Presentations could be pushed into the next class period depending on if the student requires more time.

Students could extend the activity by shifting the focus to the Federal Government and continue the comparison of positions to the national level from the state level.