

U.S. Government
PISD Curriculum: Year at a Glance

Bundle	Title Big Ideas/Enduring Understandings	Guiding Questions
1	<p><i>Foundations/Constitution</i> Governments are organized based on the beliefs and principles of the people who hold the political power.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How and why have governments in other times and places organized themselves? ▪ How did constitutional government develop in the U.S.? ▪ What are the American beliefs and principles reflected in the U.S. Constitution?
2	<p><i>Constitution and Federalism</i> The U.S. Constitution works to balance power within the federal government as well as between the federal and state governments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How and why does the U.S. Constitution limit the powers of the government? ▪ What is the legacy of the historical conflicts over power within the federal government as well as between the federal and state governments? ▪ Which rights are guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution? Why?
3	<p><i>Political Behavior/ Legislative Branch</i> Individuals, political parties, interest groups and the media play important roles within the U.S. political system. The legislative branch alone has the authority to make laws for the United States.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What are the roles and responsibilities of and relationships among individuals, political parties, interest groups, and the media in the U.S. political system? ▪ What historical trends and results have occurred as a result of those roles and relationships? ▪ What is the structure and role of the legislative branch?
4	<p><i>Legislative Branch/ Executive Branch</i> The structure and function of the executive branch has been interpreted differently throughout the history of the U.S.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How can government policies affect the physical and human characteristics of places and regions? ▪ How effective is the legislative process and its resulting legislation? ▪ What is the structure and function of the executive branch and how has its role and power changed over time?
5	<p><i>Executive Branch/ Judicial Branch</i> The judicial branch serves an important role in determining the constitutionality of laws and in guaranteeing the uniform application of justice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How do geographic, political and economic factors influence the U.S. relationship with other countries and regions? ▪ What are the powers of the President and how have those powers been interpreted differently over time? ▪ How is the work of the judicial branch essential to a working democracy?
6	<p><i>Judicial Branch</i> Decisions made by the judicial branch have significantly impacted life and rights for citizens in the United States.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How does the U.S. Constitution define the structure and function of the judicial branch and how has their role been defined by precedent? ▪ How have decisions made by the judicial branch significantly impacted life and rights in the U.S. over time?