Creating a Government: A Constitutional Design Challenge

First & Last Name: _____ Date: _____

CENTRAL QUESTION

What evidence would show that a designed government is workable, limited, and inclusive?

Learning objective

Analyze four source sets, evaluate evidence and limitations, and defend a civic judgment through interdisciplinary inquiry.

Demonstration of learning

Complete the daily evidence tasks, earn a score on 15 multiple choice items, and write a source based RACE response using the 19 point rubric.

Standards and task alignment

NJSLS Social Studies: 6.3.8.CivicsPI.1; 6.3.8.CivicsPD.2; 6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.b; 6.3.8.CivicsPR.5. Applied in daily analysis and the final civic judgment. NJSLS ELA (2023): RI.CR.6.1 (evidence), RI.CI.6.2 (central ideas), W.AW.6.1 (argument), SL.PE.6.1 (discussion). National CCSS: RH.6-8.1, RH.6-8.2, RH.6-8.7; WHST.6-8.1 and WHST.6-8.9. NJSLS / CCSS Math: 6.RP.A.3 (ratios and percent); Science, technology, arts, history, and civic participation are integrated through the named tasks; no additional science or arts code is claimed.

Five lesson sequence

Days 1 to 4: read, annotate, analyze, collaborate, and write. Day 5: 15 question assessment and extended RACE response. Each lesson is designed for 40 minutes; teacher notes provide timing and supports.

Academic vocabulary

charter: foundational rules for an organization or government; legitimacy: justified authority; safeguard: protection against harm or abuse; fiscal sustainability: ability to support commitments over time; audit: systematic review of records; revision: change based on evidence

Source integrity

Readings are original Ma’at instructional syntheses. Exact historical excerpts are marked. Classroom datasets and scenarios are labeled; they are not historical records or actual government budgets. Source references appear on page 13.

Intellectual Property of Ma’at Cultural Curriculum Consultants © 2026

DAY 1

Source A | Design criteria before decoration

Do Now

What could make a visually impressive charter fail in practice?

[1] A classroom government design should begin with purposes and criteria. A charter needs a clear statement of whom it serves, how decisions are made, how officials are selected, what rights are protected, and how authority can change. A title, flag, or attractive poster cannot substitute for these rules.

[2] The United States Constitution offers mechanisms to study rather than a set of words to copy without explanation. Articles I, II, and III separate branch responsibilities. Article V provides amendment procedures. The Bill of Rights limits government action, and later amendments changed protections and participation. Designers must explain how each borrowed mechanism solves a particular problem.

[3] In this project, teams create a hypothetical community charter rather than claim to establish an actual sovereign government. They should identify eligible participation, accessible voting, term limits or other accountability choices, and procedures for resolving disputes. A design can be original while still being testable. Clear criteria allow peers to judge whether the rules work when people disagree, resources shrink, or officials exceed their authority. Primary excerpt, Article V: 'when ratified by the Legislatures of three fourths of the several States'. This excerpt concerns ratification after proposal; it is not the entire amendment procedure.

Annotation task: underline a central claim; box one civic term; mark one detail as evidence; add a question where evidence or authority needs clarification.

Intellectual Property of Ma’at Cultural Curriculum Consultants © 2026