



K-12 Teach EU Studies Bootcamp

Summer 2024

Comparing the Structures of Government of the EU and United States

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Social Studies, Grades 6-8



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Lesson Plan for Grade 6-8

1- 2 Class Periods

Comparing the Structures of Governments of the EU and the United States

Essential Question:

Why do various structures and systems of government exist?

Educational Standards:

SS.7.CG.3.2 Explain the advantages of a federal system of government over other systems in balancing local sovereignty with national unity and protecting against authoritarianism.

Objectives:

- Students will be able to understand the basic structures and functions of the European Union (EU) and the United States (US) government.
- Students will be able to Identify similarities and differences between the two governmental systems.

Higher Order Thinking Questions

1. What are the key similarities and differences between the political systems of the United States and the European Union?
2. How does the division of powers between different levels of government in the United States compare to the relationship between the EU and its member states?
3. What are the roles and powers of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches in both the United States and the European Union?
4. How do the electoral systems and processes for selecting leaders differ between the United States and the European Union?
5. What are the main challenges and advantages of federalism in the United States compared to the supranational governance model of the European Union?

Agenda:

1. Warm Up

- a. "What do you know about the European Union and the United States government?"
- b. Think-Pair-Share with a partner
- c. Brief classroom discussion to gauge prior knowledge.

2. Teacher reviews standards, student learning objectives, and essential question with students

3. Videos

- a. European Union - How does the EU work (and why is it so complex)?
<https://youtu.be/8Rkwllr912A>
- b. United States - The US Government Structure
<https://youtu.be/8Rkwllr912A>

4. Guided Reading of Comparing US and EU Government Systems

- a. As a class we read and annotate the reading
- b. In pairs students complete multiple choice questions, and short/extended response

5. Venn Diagram

- a. Teacher projects a blank venn diagram on board and students have a blank copy at their desks.
- b. As a class the venn diagram is filled out so that it compares and contrasts the structures of the EU and the United States Government. Minimum of 5 differences and 5 similarities.

6. Group Poster

- a. Students are divided into groups of 3-4 and complete a poster project that outlines the structure of either the United States Government or EU Government
- b. Groups present their poster to the class
- c. Students are to take notes while other groups present.

7. Exit Ticket

- a. "Which government structure do you find more interesting and why?"
- b. Self Reflection

Technology:

Youtube, Student Access to Computers

Materials needed:

1. Warm Up / Exit Ticket Sheet
2. Lesson Work Packet
 - a) Guided Reading Comparing US and EU Government Systems
 - b) Multiple Choice Questions, Short Answer, Extended Response
 - c) Annotation Key
 - d) Venn Diagram
3. Poster Project Instructions/Rubric Sheet
4. Poster Paper
5. Markers

Gradual Release Model:

I: I review the essential question, student learning objectives, education standards, facilitate group discussion and give instructions.

We: Review Warm Up, Read/Annotate Guided Reading, Complete Diagram

You: Answer questions in guided reading, complete project, fill out exit ticket and self reflection

Differentiated Instruction:

Pre-Annotated Guided Reading and Teacher copy of Venn Diagram

Educational Strategies:

Think-pair-share, Student Led Classroom, Lesson Objective Transparency, Cold Calling, Rubric, Exit Ticket, Graphic Organizer, Student Reflection/Goal Setting

Assessment

- Informal - Exit Ticket
- Informal - Class Discussion
- Formal - Unit Test
- Formal - Poster Project

Student Lesson Work Packet

Essential Question:

Why do various structures of government exist?

Education Standards:

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Higher Order Thinking Questions

What are the key similarities and differences between the political systems of the United States and the European Union?

How does the division of powers between different levels of government in the United States compare to the relationship between the EU and its member states?

What are the roles and powers of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches in both the United States and the European Union?

How do the electoral systems and processes for selecting leaders differ between the United States and the European Union?

What are the main challenges and advantages of federalism in the United States compared to the supranational governance model of the European Union?

Warm Up:

“What do you know about the European Union and the United States government?”

What I know about the European Union Government?

What I know about the United States Government?

What my partner knew about the European Union Government?

What my partner knew about the United States Government?

Comparing US and EU Government Systems

The United States and the European Union have different ways of running their governments. In the United States, we have a federal republic with a president as our leader. The power is divided between the federal government and state governments. On the other hand, the EU is made up of many countries working together. It has its own system of government called a supranational organization. This means that while each country still has some control, they also work together to make decisions.

When it comes to making laws, the United States has a group called Congress. Congress is made up of two parts: the Senate and the House of Representatives. They work together to create laws for the whole country. In the EU, they also have a group that makes laws called the European Parliament. This group represents the people of the EU. There is also the Council of the European Union, which represents the member countries.

In the United States, the president is in charge of the executive branch. This means they are the leader of the government and the country. They can say no to laws by using something called a veto. They can also give orders to the military. In the EU, the executive branch is led by the European Commission. They are responsible for suggesting new laws, making sure EU policies are followed, and representing the EU to other countries.

Both the United States and the EU have their own systems for the judicial branch, but the details are not mentioned in this passage. In summary, the United States and the European Union have different ways of running their governments. The US has a president and Congress, while the EU has its own institutions and member countries still have some power. Both systems have their own way of making laws and leading the country.

In the United States, there is a group called the Supreme Court that makes sure laws follow the Constitution. They are the highest court in the country. In the European Union, they have a court called the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) that does a similar job. Both courts make sure laws are fair and follow the rules.

In the United States, power is divided between the federal government and state governments. The Constitution tells us what each group can do. In the European Union, countries work together and share some powers while keeping control over other things. The EU has some powers only they can use, some powers they share with member countries, and some powers that only the member countries have.

When it comes to making decisions, the United States has a system where each part of the government can limit the power of the others. For a law to be made, it has to be approved by both houses of Congress and signed by the President. In the European Union, making decisions is more complicated. It involves a lot of talking and working together between different parts of the EU and the member countries.

Overall, the United States and the European Union both have democratic governments, but they have different structures, ways of dividing power, and decision-making processes. This is

because they have different histories, cultures, and ways of doing things.

Reading Summary

- The United States has a federal republic with a president and Congress, while the EU is a supranational organization made up of many countries working together.
- In the US, laws are made by Congress and the president can veto them. In the EU, laws are made by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union.
- Both the US and the EU have courts that ensure laws are fair and follow the rules.

Vocabulary

Term	Definition	Example Sentence
federal (adjective)	relating to a system of government in which power is divided between a central authority and individual states or provinces.	The United States has a federal system of government.
republic (noun)	a form of government in which power rests with the people, who elect representatives to make decisions on their behalf.	The United States is a federal republic.
supranational (adjective)	relating to an organization or institution that exists above national governments and has authority over member countries.	The European Union is a supranational organization.
executive (noun)	the branch of government responsible for implementing and enforcing laws and policies.	The president is in charge of the executive branch in the United States.
judicial (adjective)	relating to the branch of government that interprets laws and administers justice.	The Supreme Court is part of the judicial branch in the United States.

Multiple Choice Questions

Question #1	Question #2	Question #3
<p>What is the name of the group in the United States that makes laws?</p>	<p>Who is in charge of the executive branch in the European Union?</p>	<p>How does the European Union make decisions?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. The Senate B. The European Parliament C. The Council of the European Union D. Congress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. The President B. The European Commission C. The Supreme Court D. The Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. By talking and working together between different parts of the EU and member countries B. By approving laws through both houses of Congress and the President's signature C. By dividing power between the federal government and state governments D. By suggesting new laws and making sure EU policies are followed

Short Answer Questions

Question #1	<p>What is the role of the president in the United States government?</p>
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Question #2	How does the EU make decisions compared to the United States?
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Question #3	What is the highest court in the United States and what is its role?
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Open Ended Questions

Question #1	How is the government structure in the United States similar to or different from the European Union?
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Question #2

What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of having a federal republic like the United States or a supranational organization like the European Union?

Question #3

In what ways do you think the division of powers between the federal government and state governments in the United States or the shared powers in the European Union affect decision-making and governance?

Annotations Guide

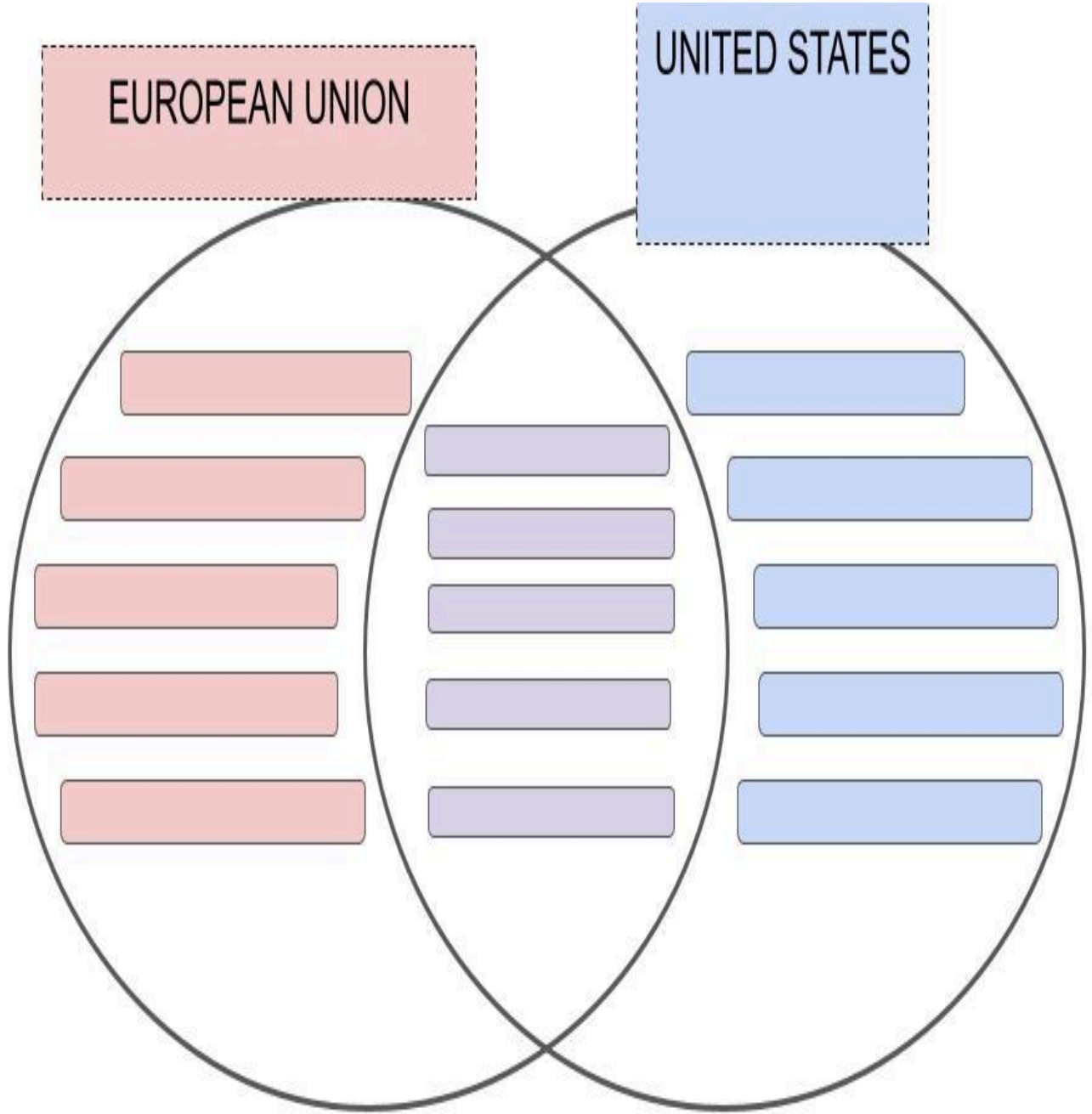
Instructions: Use the following to close read and annotate fiction and nonfiction texts. Read the entire text before making any annotations. Then, read a second and third time to annotate the text for understanding. Finally, use annotations to draw conclusions and accomplish classroom learning goals.

Annotation	Symbol	Represents
Number	#	Each paragraph or stanza
Circle	○	Unknown Vocabulary
Question Mark	?	Question - Write in margin or sticky note.
Exclamation Mark	!	Important or interesting - Write in margin or sticky note.
Underline	_____	Specific area of focus for class or main idea (topic sentence).
Side Notes		Write specific notes in margins or on sticky notes. <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Summarize● Make Predictions● Formulate Opinion● Connections● Patterns of Organization

Avoid:

- Marking everything! Focus only on important details.
- Using annotation symbols without explanation and side notes.

EU/UNITED STATES
VENN DIAGRAM



Group Poster Project

Create an informative and visually engaging poster that explains the structure of either the United States Government or the European Union Government.

Steps to Complete the Project:

- 1. Form Groups:**
 - Divide into groups of 4-5 students.
 - Your group will be assigned either the United States Government or the European Union Government.
- 2. Research:**
 - **United States Government:** Focus on the three branches of government (Executive, Legislative, Judicial).
 - **European Union Government:** Focus on the main institutions (European Commission, European Parliament, European Council, Court of Justice).
- 3. Assign Roles:**
 - **Researcher(s):** Gather detailed information about your chosen government structure.
 - **Writer(s):** Summarize the information in clear, concise text suitable for the poster.
 - **Artist(s):** Create visuals (diagrams, drawings, symbols) to represent different parts of the government.
 - **Designer(s):** Arrange the text and visuals on the poster to make it attractive and easy to understand.
- 4. Gather Materials:**
 - Poster board or large paper
 - Markers, colored pencils, or paints
 - Glue, scissors, rulers
 - Printed pictures or diagrams (optional)
- 5. Design the Poster:**
 - **Title:** Clearly state the topic at the top (e.g., "Structure of the United States Government").
 - **Sections:** Divide the poster into clear sections for each part of the government.
 - **Text:** Provide brief descriptions and key points for each section.
 - **Visuals:** Include diagrams, charts, or images to help illustrate each part.
 - **Balance:** Ensure the poster is well-organized, with a good balance of text and visuals.
- 6. Review and Edit:**
 - Check for accuracy and completeness.
 - Make sure the text is legible and free of errors.
 - Ensure the visuals are clear and correctly labeled.
- 7. Present the Poster:**
 - Each group will present their poster to the class.
 - Explain each section of the poster and answer any questions from class.

PROJECT RUBRIC

CATEGORY	40 Points	30 Points	20 Points	10 Points
Coverage of topic	Details on the poster focus on the most important information about the topic and increase the audience's understanding.	Details on the poster include most of the important information, but the audience may need more information to understand fully.	Details on the poster relate to the topic but are too generalized or off-topic. The audience does not understand the information.	Very few details on the poster are related to the topic.
Graphics - Relevance	Each graphic is relevant to the topic and enhances audience understanding. There is appropriate citation for each graphic.	Each graphic is relevant to the topic. There is appropriate citation for each graphic.	The graphics mostly relate to the topic. Some borrowed graphics have citations.	Graphics do not relate to the topic OR several graphics do not have citations.
Organization	Information is very organized with clear titles, subheadings, text, and graphics.	Information is mostly organized with clear titles, subheadings, text, and graphics.	Information is somewhat organized but may be missing one of the following: clear titles, subheadings, text, and graphics.	The information lacks organization and clarity.
Layout and Design	All the information is clear, easy to read, and legible. The designs enhance the poster and add to the learning.	Most of the information is clear, easy to read, and legible.	Most of the information is clear, though some may be too small, unclear, or illegible.	Much of the information on the poster is unclear, too small, or illegible.
Mechanics	Correct capitalization and punctuation throughout the poster.	1 error in capitalization or punctuation on the poster.	2 errors in capitalization or punctuation on poster.	3 or more errors in capitalization or punctuation on posters.

Exit Ticket:

Which government structure do you find more interesting and why?

Lesson Self Reflection

I can answer the Essential Question? (yes or no)

I feel like I can compare and contrast the government structures of the EU and the US? (yes or no)

One thing I learned during the lesson that I found interesting was:

One thing I still need help with is:
