**Color Code Key**

Blue- Directly relates to state standards

Red- Broad Generalizations or Big Ideas I want students to get

Green- Conceptual Level of Thinking via Bloom’s Taxonomy

Orange- Compelling Rationale

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**Lesson Title:** Understanding the 3 branches of government and the System of Checks and Balances

**Suggested Grade Level**: 7th or 8th grade

**Estimated Time**: 60 minutes

**Student Prior Knowledge:** Students will have already covered the American Revolution and understand the founders struggles in writing a constitution. They will have a grasping of the disadvantages of the Articles of Confederation and understand the concerns of the American people during the constitutional convention.

**Standards:** SS.7.C.1 [Demonstrate an understanding of the origins and purposes of government, law, and the American political system.](http://www.floridastandards.org/Standards/PublicPreviewIdea806.aspx)

**Learning Goal:** Students will be able to distinguish the specific roles of each branch of government and analyze the different forms of checks and balances of the three branches. By the end of the lesson, students will gain a deeper understanding of why our government is shaped the way it is and recognize the importance of the structure of our government.

**Learning Objectives:**

1. Student will create a chart listing the specific roles and powers of each branch of government. Each Chart must list the proper branch with its specific roles.

**Resources/Materials:**

1. PowerPoint with lecture on the different branches of government and their roles.
2. Posters (one for each group of 3)
3. Computers with game pulled up- <http://www.sheppardsoftware.com/usa_game/government/branches_government.htm>
4. Arts and Crafts Supplies
5. Exit Card Prompt Worksheets

**Learning Activity:** Students will play Roles of Government Game <http://www.sheppardsoftware.com/usa_game/government/branches_government.htm> . Students will create a concept map depicting the different roles of government by listing the three branches and their roles.

**Procedures:**

1. Lecture will be given on the powers of the 3 branches of government
2. Students will work with partner to play computer game <http://www.sheppardsoftware.com/usa_game/government/branches_government.htm>
3. Students will break into pre-assigned groups and gather poster materials (3 minutes)
4. Students will create branches of government poster board
5. Students will complete their exit card prompt which will ask students to use their knowledge of the 3 separate branches of government to discuss which branches are responsible for handling a certain political scenario that they will be given. Their response will begin to get students thinking about the importance of separating powers and will prepare them for their next lesson on the system of checks and balances. (5 minutes)

**Assessment:** Students’ posters will be analyzed for an understanding of the branches of government. Exit Cards responses will require students to begin brainstorming why there is a separation of powers in the first place and how it is used in real life situations.

NOT SURE HOW TO PROPERLY DO THE COLORING ☹