AP® U.S. Government and Politics

USING POLITICS TO ADDRESS TOPICS IN FEDERALISM

Student Workbook
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Getting to Know the Topic

Local and National Control: Globally

Out of necessity, it is usually the geographically larger countries that split governmental control between the national and local level. This can give communities more autonomy in deciding local matters, but that is not always the case.

Many issues are best dealt with at the local level. Getting the support of people in a community can be vital in the success or failure of these initiatives. For example, the World Health Organization (WHO) has worked to gain the support of local authorities to increase vaccination and decrease the spread of the Ebola virus in West Africa.

Fast facts

- Canada gives its provinces control over many local matters through its constitution.
- Despite its large size, the Chinese national government maintains firm control over local matters as part of their communist structure.
- India’s constitution ensures that a certain percentage of seats in local government be held by women and people from different social and economic backgrounds.

Connections such as ethnicity, religion, and geography often unite people in ways that conflict with a national governmental authority.

Taking Action Globally

In the United States, the local, state, and federal governments all have a say in education spending, for example. Choose another country and find out how education is funded there – and whether the tasks are split among local, state/larger municipality, and the national government. The United Nations website might be a good place to start your research: www.un.org.
Getting to Know the Topic

Local and National Control: Locally and Nationally

There are many different types of local political structures in the United States, from state governments to town councils and local school boards. The United States Government is based on federalism, where power is distributed between national and state governments. Issues with the most immediacy are often left to local governments to address; after all, the national government doesn’t know which streets need repairs or whether a sidewalk should be added to your street.

Fast facts

- The size of the city or town often affects the structure of local government.
- Counties, townships, and other municipal structures can also have governmental entities.
- State governments are often structured like the federal government, with a legislature, an executive, and a judicial branch.

Taking Action Locally

Within their local or national community, students can

- Get to know their local government structure and educate their fellow students.
- Attend a meeting of a local government authority, such as the school board or town council, and learn about the issues these groups are working on.
- Propose new local legislation or support the repeal of a piece of legislation based on an issue or policy they support.
- Contact a local department or agency to advocate for a new program, improve upon an existing one, or reduce or eliminate programming.
Exploring Federalism

Federalism is a governmental structure in which some powers are reserved for state and local governments and some for the federal government.

What are some examples of federal powers? What are some examples of state powers?

This seems like an easy breakdown, but often powers overlap: for example, states set the minimum age for alcohol consumption. But every state’s age seems to be 21.

Minimum Age for Alcohol Consumption

In this case, Congress passed the National Minimum Drinking Age Act and told states that unless they raised their minimum drinking age to 21, they would not receive their share of federal highway funds. This is an example of “carrot-and-stick” federalism.

Brainstorm some other laws, policies, or issues where both states and the federal government seem to have a role. Choose one and complete the diagram below showing the relationship.
Case Notes Worksheet

---

Facts of Case:
---

Court Decision:
---

Constitutional Issue:
---

Reasoning behind majority opinion:
---
Issues in the News

In your groups, review several newspapers and determine what laws, policies, or issues related to federalism are making the news in your state. Because these are related to federalism, it is likely that they'll be covered in national newspapers as well, especially in covering federal government responses to these.

As you review, take notes using the format below. Leave the “Group Opinion” section blank for now.

- Law/policy/issue:

- In local news:

- In national news:

- Group opinion:

Do they seem like issues you would like to address with a service project? How do individual members of the group feel about these issues? Make sure to use best practices in political discourse, and allow each person to express their opinions.

Exit Slip: From the laws/policies/issues that your group identified in the newspapers you’ve reviewed, which do you feel you might address your AP® with WE Service Project?
**Issue Selection**

Complete this table and checklist once issue is selected.

### Checklist Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selected Issue</th>
<th>Description/Controversy (how this issue is a result of federalism)</th>
<th>Why we selected this issue</th>
<th>Teacher Approval</th>
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### Issue Selection Checklist

- [ ] Issue is associated with federalism
- [ ] Issue is relevant at state and/or local level of government
- [ ] Issue, if addressed, would improve or address an issue within federalism
- [ ] Issue is actionable, can be addressed with direct/indirect action and/or through advocacy
Problem Tree

In your Problem Tree graphic organizer, start by writing the problem at the center of the tree, and then look at the causes and effects of an issue. Keep digging to go deeper on the issue to find its supporting and root causes. Use this as one tool to explore the causes and effects of your chosen issue in federalism.

**LEAVES/BRANCHES: EFFECTS**
These are the results created by the problem. At first, this part of the issue appears easy to tackle, but when leaves and branches are trimmed, they grow back quickly. Consider the multi-layered effects, or “effects of effects,” that can arise when a problem goes unaddressed. Always ask: “Then what happens?”

**TRUNK: PROBLEM**
This is the key issue that is being studied.

**ROOTS: CAUSES**
These are the situations or factors that have led to the problem. When exploring the root causes of a problem, ask yourself “Why does this problem exist?” Dig deeper to consider the “causes of causes” — the multiple layers of factors that contribute to a problem.
Needs Assessment

The following series of questions helps you to analyze and identify ongoing areas of need within organizations addressing your issue.

1. Identify three organizations working on issues related to the issue your team is working on.
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2. What does each organization do well in response to the issue and/or related issues locally?
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3. What does each organization do in response to the issue and/or related issues globally?
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4. Compare each organization’s approach to tackling the issue and assess the effectiveness of each approach.
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5. Identify a criticism of or what’s lacking in each organization’s approach. Site the source and share their argument.
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__________________________________________________________________________________________________
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__________________________________________________________________________________________________

6. What could all three organizations do better?
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__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
Exploring Solutions

Complete the organizer below to gather a robust list of potential solutions to your chosen issue.

Be on the lookout for solutions like:

- a state law or city ordinance that mandates something related to the issue or a law or ordinance that could be repealed
- a government program or department that oversees something related to the issue
- perhaps there isn’t one and there should be!
- or, perhaps there is one but it’s running inefficiently and needs to be eliminated or needs more funding.
- a budget measure to allocate funding for something related to the issue

Try searching online for the issue plus solutions and/or plus your state or local area like

- school funding solutions
- school funding in your state

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Solution</th>
<th>Existing (already in effect) or Proposed</th>
<th>Where — local, state, or other state?</th>
<th>Which root cause might it address?</th>
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Solution Tree

In your Solution Tree graphic organizer, start by rewriting the problem from your Problem Tree, and reframing it as a goal at the center of the tree. Then consider the different solutions (the roots) and possible outcomes of the solutions (the branches).

LEAVES/BRANCHES: OUTCOMES
These are the results created by the solution. Results may appear as straightforward as having achieved goals, but when you consider the ripple effects and outcomes of sustainable results, the impact is far-reaching and long-lasting. Always ask: “Then what happens?”

TRUNK: PROBLEM

ROOTS: SOLUTIONS
These are the actions needed to solve the problem and achieve the goal stated at the center of the solution tree. When exploring solutions, ask yourself “How will this solve the problem?” Dig deeper to think holistically, so that you are looking beyond the short-term and addressing not only the symptoms of the problem but the root causes as well.
Setting a Goal

Revisit your Exploring Solutions research table and consider the following questions.

1. Which existing (already in effect) solutions from other states did you like and why?

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2. Which proposed solutions from your local area and/or state or another state did you like and why?

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3. Which solutions best address root causes of your issue?

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4. What do you hope will be the immediate and eventual outcomes of your project when you’re finished?

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5. Based on what you’ve learned and your hopes for outcomes, which solution would you like to take on for your project goal? Which one will help you most bring about substantive change?

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6. Once you’ve agreed upon a goal, create a goal statement.

Here is an optional sentence stem for crafting your project goal statement...

In order to create substantive change to address ___________________________ (focus issue) in ___________________________ (location) we will advocate for ___________________________ (solution) to accomplish ___________________________ (desired outcome).
Identifying Targets: Decision-Makers & Influencers

Now that you have an in-depth understanding of your issue and have chosen a goal, it is time to identify who can help influence and/or make substantive change in order to improve participation in elections for our city/state. You’re going to need to research different targets — both decision-makers and influencers. These could be elected officials, community members, and/or fellow advocates.

**Decision-Maker(s):** Someone who holds decision-making power over the issue — for example, a city council/member, mayor, senator, head of a department/agency, etc.

**Influencer(s):** Individuals that can influence the decision-maker — it can literally be almost anyone, depending on the focus issue — community members, business owners, elected officials, bureaucrats, nonprofit staff, etc.

Complete the chart below with your possible targets:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target (name)</th>
<th>Decision-Maker or Influencer</th>
<th>Contact info (phone &amp; emails)</th>
<th>Role &amp; responsibility (Why would they be concerned/interested with your goal?)</th>
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Summarizing Your Investigation

Summarize what you have learned from your investigation. Your work may be supported by multimedia or print materials that synthesize and analyze the topic and issue on state, local, and national levels.

When summarizing your investigation, keep the following in mind:

- What are the key takeaways from your investigation of the federalism-related issue you chose?
- How are the problems you investigated similar at state, local, and national levels? How are they different?
- How are the solutions you investigated similar at state, local, and national levels? How are they different?
- Why may your investigation be important to other AP® Government & Politics students?
Free Response Question #4. The United States Constitution establishes a federal system of government. Under federalism, policy making is shared between national and state governments. Over time, the powers of the national government have increased relative to those of the state governments.

Develop an argument about whether the expanded powers of the national government benefits or hinders policy making.

Use at least one piece of evidence from one of the following foundational documents:

- The Articles of Confederation
- Brutus 1
- The Federalist 10

In your essay, you must:

- Articulate a defensible claim or thesis that responds to the prompt and establishes a line of reasoning.
- Support your claim or thesis with at least TWO pieces of accurate and relevant evidence.
  - One piece of evidence must come from one of the foundational documents listed above.
  - A second piece of evidence can come from any other foundational document not used as your first piece of evidence, or it may be from your knowledge of course concepts.
- Use reasoning to explain why your evidence supports your claim or thesis.
- Respond to an opposing or alternative perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal.
## Approaches to Taking Action Information Sheet

### DIRECT SERVICE

**WHAT IS IT?** Personally engaging with and providing hands-on service to those in need (usually in conjunction with an organization).

**EXAMPLE GOAL** By the end of the year, we will work to clean up our local waterways by participating in community cleanup projects and advocating for the passage of legislation that would regulate water pollution in our state.

**ACTIONS**
- Conduct research to identify local organizations and initiatives to cleanup local waterways.
- Organize community clean up events and partner with local organizations to collaborate on lobbying for the passage of legislation.
- Launch a social media campaign to encourage people to participate in the cleanup events.
- Work with local organizations to organize a lobby day advocating for the passage of the legislation.
- Contact local press and news agencies about your efforts and request that they help bring media attention.
- Contact elected officials and request an opportunity to meet with them to speak on behalf of the legislation.
- Create a presentation reviewing your research and advocating for the passage of the legislation and share with elected officials.
- If unable to meet with elected officials, create video presentation and email to their office.

### INDIRECT SERVICE

**WHAT IS IT?** Channeling resources to the needs of a community — locally, nationally, or internationally.

**EXAMPLE GOAL** By the end of the year, we will advocate for an existing city budget proposal that would increase funding and resources to schools with low standardized testing scores.

**ACTIONS**
- Conduct research on which resources under-resourced schools are most in need of.
- Conduct surveys and interviews with schools as part of research.
- Partner with local organizations and nonprofits to raise money to purchase and collect resources to provide to these schools.
- Write speeches and deliver them at local school board meeting requesting that members support the budgetary measure.
- Contact local press and news agencies about your efforts and request that they help bring media attention.
- Contact elected officials and request an opportunity to meet with them to speak on behalf of the budget proposal.
- Create a presentation reviewing your research and advocating for the passage of the budget proposal and share your presentation with elected officials.
- If unable to meet with elected officials, create video presentation and email to their office.

### ADVOCACY

**WHAT IS IT?** Educating others about an issue to increase visibility and following up with an action that focuses on enacting change. Raising awareness about a problem is often part of an advocacy project, but the strongest advocacy projects also have a specific call to action of what they’d like others to do to support bringing about change on their issue.

**EXAMPLE GOAL** By the end of the year, we will educate residents of our state about the dangers of poorly maintained interstate highways and build demand for the passage of budgetary funding for repairs and improvements to interstate highways in our state.

**ACTIONS**
- Conduct research on the dangers of poorly maintained interstate highways.
- Contact and interview experts in state and local departments of transportation as well as organizations working on safer roads.
- Launch a phone banking and social media campaign to educate residents about the dangers of poorly maintained interstate highways and to encourage them to contact their state elected officials to vote for increased funding for state level repairs.
- Work with local organizations to organize a lobby day educating community members and advocating for increased funding for highways.
- Contact local press and news agencies about your efforts and request that they help bring media attention.
- Contact elected officials and request an opportunity to meet with them to speak on behalf of the budget proposal.
- Create a presentation reviewing your research and advocating for the passage of the budget proposal and present your findings. If unable to meet with elected officials, create a video presentation and email it to their office.
Creating the Action Plan

This outline serves as a basic template for your action plan. Use additional space and resources to help you build out each part with the right amount of detail and flow to ensure you have the strongest action plan that you and your team can implement with ease. Remember, this is your road map for your service project!

**Team Goal:**

**Measures of Success:**

**Required Network and Resources**

In order to complete this goal, our team will need to develop the following network and access the following resources:

**Network:**

**Resources:**

**Roles and Responsibilities**

Each team member will take on the following roles and associated responsibilities:

**Timeline**

Our team will use the following timeline to complete tasks and successfully carry out the action to meet our goal(s):
Once your team has completed the major components of your action plan (creating your teams and setting goals, timeline, and network), review the five action planning pitfalls provided below to ensure these have been avoided. Review your plans — individually first, then together as a team. After the review, rework your action plans, if necessary.

1. **Setting an unclear goal**
   The first and most important part of any action plan is defining the goal, or what you want to achieve. It should be clear and easy to understand, for example, “we want to collect 500 cans of food,” or “we want 200 people to learn about WE Villages.” If the goal is not clearly defined, proper planning will be difficult if not impossible. As a best practice, have a peer from another team review your goal to ensure it is as clear as you hope.

2. **Planning unrealistic actions**
   After the goal is set, begin planning the actions necessary to achieve it. It is important that the steps make sense and are achievable. Do not plan unrealistic actions such as working at times that will interfere with schoolwork, overestimating how many people can help out, or planning to go to places that would be difficult for you to reach. Consider each team member’s school and community schedule, such as work and extracurricular activities. Before planning an action, ask yourself, "Is this action realistic?"

3. **Rushing the process**
   Do not be too hasty in planning actions. While you may be excited to start, proper planning takes time. The better the planning and organization, the more success you will achieve. Even if it means slowing down to figure out details, do not rush and leave out important steps.

4. **Not asking for help**
   Do not be afraid to ask for help. When a network is created, bigger goals can be achieved faster. Reach out to friends, parents and mentors. People generally enjoy helping, especially if it is for a worthy cause.

5. **Not learning from mistakes and giving up too quickly**
   We all make mistakes — it is normal and healthy. Mistakes allow us an opportunity to learn and grow. So, learn from the mistakes. Ask, “Why did this happen?” and “How can I avoid this problem next time?” Actively think about the mistakes and how it will be better the second time around. If something does not go as planned, do not stop!
Reflect: Action Plan

Your team now has a plan for taking action globally and locally. Think back over what you have learned: What problems associated with access to clean water does your team’s action plan address? How does your individual role in the plan support your team’s action?

As you write, think about the following questions to help shape your reflection. Begin at the “Start Here” bubble and go clockwise to record your thoughts on the lines below. Use additional paper to write a lengthier response.

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Student Log Sheet

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<tr>
<th>DATE / TIME SPENT</th>
<th>ACTIVITY, DESCRIPTION, AND REFLECTION</th>
<th>VERIFIED BY (NAME, ORGANIZATION)</th>
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