

Lesson title and recommended grade level(s)

Defend Your Agency! - grades 9-12

Length of lesson(s)

2-3 class periods

Lesson overview

Students are going to take a closer look at the agencies that exist under the Legislative (Congress) and the Executive (President). They will first explore their perspectives and roles of the American Government through a value line. Then students would receive direct instruction about the Chevron Doctrine and Major Questions Doctrine. This will include teacher-led presentation and note taking (PP slides 1-20 Chevron). Teachers may choose to complete an optional reading—an article by Amy Howe “Greenhouse gasses and “major questions”: justices to hear arguments on the EPA’s power to tackle climate change.” Another handout will be provided by the Congressional Research Service “The Major Questions Doctrine” should students want more information.

The culminating activity will be a modified Congressional advisory simulation with students arguing for or against the existence and scope of a federal agency.

Lesson objective(s)

Essential Question - What is the proper role and power of agencies?

- Students will be able to describe the Chevron Doctrine
- Students will be able to give examples the Major Questions Doctrine
- Students will be able to identify specific federal agencies
- Students will be able to argue for or against the purpose, function, and necessity of a federal agency.

Suggested prior student background knowledge

Students should be familiar with the branches of government. Specifically the role of the Leg. and Exec. branches to establish/create agencies, and how those agencies are held accountable.

Establishing set/introduction

At the beginning of class, students will participate in a value line. Students will be asked to stand on a spectrum left to right:

1. What should the scope of the federal government be? Should the government be doing more to solve problems? Is the government too involved in solving our nation’s problems?
2. Should appointed heads of agencies make decisions that affect the country/should Congress make decisions that affect the country.
3. Federal Power? The government can only perform actions permitted by the Constitution. Or, the government can perform actions that are not specifically permitted by the Constitution.

This will generate discussion about students' perspectives on the delegation of government power.

Presenting the lesson and/or learning activity

First - There will be a teacher led PP on chevron and major questions with students taking notes/worksheets at the teacher's direction.

OPTIONAL OR ENRICHMENT READING - Amy Howe "Greenhouse gasses and "major questions": justices to hear arguments on the EPAs power to tackle climate change." * teachers can do this as a group reading, individual assignment, or other*

Second - The teacher will assign students into groups of 3. Each group will be assigned a different agency. Groups will research their agency to discover the purpose, function, and necessity of each agency. Students will present their findings to the class on the agency that they were assigned. The remainder of class will act as Congress and determine if the agency is fulfilling its purpose, whether it should be modified, or eliminated.

Comprehension check – The teacher will evaluate students as they present in the modified Congressional advisory simulation.

Closure - Class will evaluate the validity of agencies discussed in class. Specifically, is the power of the agency adequate or should it continue as is?

Assessment - Students will return and mark on the value line to determine if their views have changed from the beginning of the lesson

Supporting resources

[Defend Your Agency Slides](#)