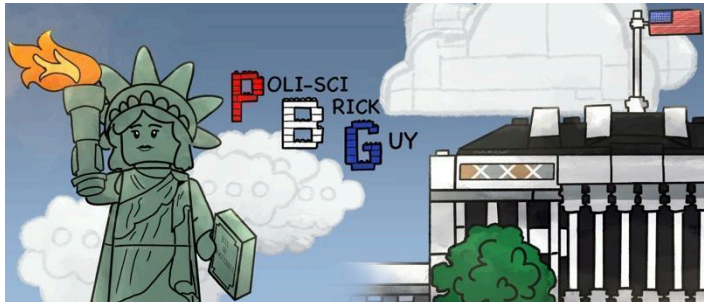




Lesson Plan 2.2 B: Federal Budget

Prepared by	Ms. Kortney Arveseth, MAE K-12 Gifted Instructor Saint Louis Public Schools, St. Louis, MO
Funding	The Frick Initiative at Washington University in St. Louis.
Overview	In this lesson, students learn how Congress creates the federal budget and explore the differences between mandatory and discretionary spending. Students will examine the steps in the budget process, discuss the challenges Congress faces when allocating limited funds, and consider how increasing entitlement costs affect other spending priorities.
Essential Questions	● What role does Congress play in creating the federal budget? ● How do mandatory and discretionary spending differ? ● Why does growth in entitlement spending affect congressional budget choices?
Lesson Objectives	● Define and distinguish between mandatory and discretionary spending. ● Describe the major steps in the federal budget process. ● Explain Congress's constitutional responsibility for approving federal spending. ● Analyze how increases in mandatory spending affect discretionary spending opportunities.
Suggested Unit in A.P. Government	Unit 2.2B

Core Skills Used	Source Analysis Data Analysis
Activity Duration	40-45 minutes
Materials	● Board to display hook prompt and Lego Federal Budget video ● Printed copies of ○ Budget Process Unscramble student activity (per 2-3 students) ○ Federal Budget article by the Peter G. Peterson Foundation (per student)
Procedure	Hook (5-7 min): Share prompt: Congress unexpectedly has an extra \$100 billion. Rank these priorities from most important to least important in today's context: 1. National defense 2. Education 3. Roads and infrastructure 4. Medicare/Social Security 5. Environmental protection Students rank items individually, then share with a partner. Transition Questions (if time.) Explain that Congress must make these decisions annually through the federal budget process. 1. Which items can Congress change every year? 2. Which programs are difficult for Congress to reduce? 3. Why might different members of Congress prioritize different areas?
	Budget Process Unscramble– Student Activity (8-10 min): - Provide student groups with a scrambled set of cards of the federal budget process - In groups of 2-3, students try to arrange the steps in order - Correct any errors as a class
	Lego Federal Budget Video (3 min) & Article (10-12 min): Display & watch video as a class.

	b. Give students a copy of the article from the Peter G. Peterson Foundation. Let them decide if they would like to read 1) Independently 2) In a partnership 3) As a trio. c. Students highlight/underline what they believe to be the most important information in the article. They should circle or underline keywords and phrases and add annotations.
	Backwards Assessment/Exit Ticket (15 min): a. Propose to students, “Put yourselves in the seat of an AP test question designer. What kinds of things would you ask on the AP test that would demonstrate mastery of today’s content?” b. In the same groups as above, students use the article they annotated to create 4 of their own assessment questions. They should create 2 multiple choice, 1 short answer, and 1 longer response question. They should include an answer key. i. The questions that students create for this can be used in a variety of ways. Students can exchange with one another and answer each other’s questions, they can take another group’s home for homework, you can have them take turns sharing out and then go over them as a class, you can collect them and turn them into a Kahoot/Blooket for review in a subsequent class, etc.
	Optional Homework: Students choose one area of discretionary spending (defense, education, transportation, environmental protection, etc.) and write a response (length of your choosing) explaining whether Congress should increase, decrease, or maintain funding for that area. Students should support their argument with evidence and address at least one trade-off involved in budgeting.