

Lesson Title: Initiatives, Referendums, and Recalls, Oh My!	Lesson Topic/Theme(s): This lesson describes the role of the initiative, referendum, and recall processes in Colorado.
Inquiry Question(s): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the different ways people can impact public policy at various levels as individuals or through groups? 2. How can people act individually and collectively to hold elected officials accountable? 	
Colorado Academic Standards <i>SS.HS.4.3.EOa.</i> Describe how members of a civil society can impact public policy on local, state, national, or international issues by exercising their civic rights and responsibilities. For example: participation in primaries and general elections, contact with elected officials, petitions, protesting, attending public forums, or through initiatives and referenda.	
Materials Needed: Graphic Organizer Computer with internet access	
Contextual Paragraph for Teachers: Colorado is famous for its use of initiatives world wide, specifically, Amendment 64, legalizing recreational marijuana. However, using referendums and initiatives is a part of Colorado’s legislative history. Famously, in 1972, an initiative prohibited the state from funding the Olympic games. Students should understand the difference between referendums (referred by the legislature for citizen votes), an initiative, using a petition of signatures to change either the State Constitution or state statute by popular vote, or a recall election of an elected official. Each of these allow for citizen participation at the local or state level of government and are Constitutionally allowed in Colorado. Amending the US Constitution cannot be done by popular vote or initiative. It is outlined in Article V of the Constitution. It requires a combination of Federal and State approval using either $\frac{2}{3}$ of Congress or $\frac{2}{3}$ of a National Convention or $\frac{3}{4}$ of State Legislatures or $\frac{3}{4}$ of State Conventions.	
Historical Context/Content: In 1910, Governor John F. Shafroth called a special session of the legislature to consider the issue. The constitutional amendments that were passed provided for initiatives, referendums, and recalls on both state and local level, Referendum 3, passed 77-23. This led to the largest ballot in Colorado history in 1912, with 31 initiatives.	
Instructional Procedures and Strategies: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide each student or pair with the Graphic organizer 2. Review the definition of Initiative, Referendum, and Recall with students along with the process for getting each on the ballot in Colorado. 3. Have students draw a picture that that represents each definition 4. Individually or in pairs have students research a single referendum, initiative, or recall from Colorado’s past. 	

5. Depending on what you have previously taught, you may need to review the ways to Amend the US Constitution, or your students might be able to look it up. (Hip Hughes History: The Amendment Procedure <https://youtu.be/WCzjXaFI79E>)
6. Ask the students to compare the State vs. the Federal process of the US Constitution.

Critical Content

- The role of initiatives in Colorado government
- The significance of referendums
- The purpose of a recall

Key Skills

- Apply knowledge of government to develop workable solutions that address complex local, state problems
- Access and evaluate information through digital platforms and networks

Critical Language (vocabulary)

Definitions:

Initiative-Any Colorado resident may place a constitutional or statutory measure on the ballot. To place a measure on the ballot, proponents must collect the number of signatures equal to 5 percent of the total number of votes cast for the Secretary of State at the previous general election. Additionally, to place a constitutional measure on the ballot, at least 2 percent of registered voters' signatures in each of the state's 35 senate districts are required. The constitutional measure must also receive at least 55 percent of all votes cast, unless a proposed measure repeals rather than changes part of the constitution, in which case a simple majority of votes is required

Referendum-The Colorado General Assembly may refer constitutional measures to the voters with a two-thirds vote of both houses, and may refer statutory measures to the voters with a majority vote of both houses. A constitutional measure requires 55 percent of the votes cast in an election, except when a proposed measure repeals rather than changes part of the constitution, in which case a simple majority of votes is required.

Recall-the process by which citizens can remove elected officials from office before their term is completed.

Formative Assessment Ideas:

1. The student opinions on the Amendment process comparing Federal vs. State Amendments
2. Gallery Walk: have students create a poster on the information they researched and create a gallery walk, where they put the ballot measures in chronological order, or create categories based on what people chose to research. What changed as a result of these ballot measures?

Resources: (Primary Sources, Other Resources)

- History of Colorado initiatives, referendums, and recalls
<https://www.leg.state.co.us/lcs/ballothistory.nsf/>