

## II. GETTING STARTED

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### **Lesson 1 – Conceptual Framework of Government & *Citizens United***

Students are introduced to *Citizens United* and the fundamental problems it raises for democracy through an exercise that challenges them to reflect on what they know about real democracy. Students critically examine the conceptual framework of the Constitution and Bill of Rights and are introduced to a third entity that existed at the time: corporations as “artificial entities” or “artificial persons.” Students explore the Founders’ dilemma of where to fit this third entity into the conceptual framework of governance by reviewing the Constitution and Bill of Rights.

### **Lesson 2 – Creation and Expansion of Corporate Constitutional Rights**

Students evaluate American history from a values- and rights-based perspective and review key U.S. Supreme Court rulings that created and expanded corporate rights and power from the mid-1800s to the present day. Students discuss the effect of these rulings on the Founders’ intended form of sovereign self-governance – a democratic Republic.

### **Lesson 3 – Understanding Human Values and Rights**

Students explore and articulate what they value, leading to a consideration of how a functioning democracy is critical for protecting their values and weaving them into the fabric of society. By comparing different measures of societal wellbeing and wealth, students critically examine

how human rights and values lie at the core of real democracy and the policies, laws, and institutions that support it.

### **Lesson 4 – Empowering Youth as Change Agents**

Students analyze and discuss the basic elements of successful action plans created and implemented by their peers from around the country. This lesson highlights the role youth can play in creating a more sustainable and democratic society that reflects human values. Time: Approx. 50 minutes for interactive exercise.

### **Lesson 5 – Doing Democracy: Moving Ideas into Action**

Students critically examine and discuss proposed constitutional amendment that have been introduced in Congress and integrate the teachings of Lessons 1–4.

### **Extension Material – NEW**

In Lesson 2 Extension, students conduct an in-depth inquiry of human rights and corporate power through examination of selected case briefs. Materials include seven case briefs and three sample lessons plans. In Lessons 3–4 Extension, students integrate teachings by choosing one or more activities proposed by the class and creating action plans to achieve their desired goals. In Lesson 5 Extension, students create and implement an action plan to get their city council to adopt a resolution supporting a constitutional amendment.