**Lesson Plan:** Three Branches of the US Government

**Lead Standard:**

Identify key steps in a text’s description of a process related to history/social studies. (RH.6-8.3)

DOK level 3- strategic thinking

**Supporting Standards:**

Acquire and use accurately level-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression. (L.8.6)

DOK level 2- skill/concept

Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events. (RI.8.3)

DOK level 3- strategic thinking

**Instructional Shifts and Explanations:**

Shift One- Focus: Students will be able to identify the three branches of government through a social studies text.

Shift Two- Coherence: Students will use academically appropriate vocabulary to explain the three branches and how each functions.

Shift Three- Rigor: Students will use analytical skills to make connections between the function of the government and how it applies to our everyday lives.

**Length of Lesson:**

50 minutes

**EFL’s targeted:**

C and D, Grades 4-8

**Materials needed:**

copies of graphic organizer for each student, writing utensils, computer with internet access, projector, white board, white board markers/eraser, copies of homework for each student

**Objectives:**

Students will be able to tell the three branches of government

DOK level 2- skill/concept

Activity: graphic organizer

Assessment: Students will be able to name the three branches of the US government.

Students will be able to explain how each branch of government functions

DOK level 3- strategic thinking

Activity: TED ED “Think” questions

Assessment: Students will be able to give detailed answers on how each of the three branches of government function.

Students will be able to explain the process of ‘checks and balances’

DOK level 3- strategic thinking

Activity: Truman Library worksheet

Assessment: Students will understand the process of ‘checks and balances’ and will be be able to explain how the process works.

**In advance:**

Make sure you are logged into Ted Ed so you will be able to do the “Think” questions in a large group.

**Procedure:**

Introduction:

Pass out graphic organizer and ask students to talk in pairs about what they already know about the three branches of government (don’t have the students fill it out yet). <http://www.brainpop.com/socialstudies/usgovernmentandlaw/branchesofgovernment/activity/?tab=graphicOrganizer>

Direct Instruction:

Briefly explain the 3 branches of government and how they function (teacher reference- see the following for a quick overview: <http://kids.usa.gov/three-branches-of-government/>). Draw a diagram and write key words on the white board, if desired.

Show students “Branches of Government” video from Ted ED. <http://ed.ted.com/lessons/how-is-power-divided-in-the-united-states-government-belinda-stutzman>

Assessment:

Have students fill out the graphic organizer (in pairs, if needed). Discuss their answers in a large group. Make sure students understand the main functions of the three branches.

Go through the “Think” questions in a large group. Use a projector to display questions on the wall for students to see.

<http://ed.ted.com/lessons/how-is-power-divided-in-the-united-states-government-belinda-stutzman#review>

Homework:

Provide students with worksheet for independent practice: <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/teacher_lessons/3branches/pdfs/2.pdf>