

# Unit 1, Foundations of American Government Standards

## **12.1 Students explain the fundamental principles and moral values of American democracy as expressed in the U.S. Constitution and other essential documents of American democracy.**

1. Analyze the influence of ancient Greek, Roman, English, and leading European political thinkers such as John Locke, Charles-Louis Montesquieu, Niccolò Machiavelli, and William Blackstone on the development of American government.
2. Discuss the character of American democracy and its promise and perils as articulated by Alexis de Tocqueville.
3. Explain how the U.S. Constitution reflects a balance between the classical republican concern with promotion of the public good and the classical liberal concern with protecting individual rights; and discuss how the basic premises of liberal constitutionalism and democracy are joined in the Declaration of Independence as “self-evident truths.”
4. Explain how the Founding Fathers’ realistic view of human nature led directly to the establishment of a constitutional system that limited the power of the governors and the governed as articulated in the *Federalist Papers*.
5. Describe the systems of separated and shared powers, the role of organized interests (*Federalist Paper Number 10*), checks and balances (*Federalist Paper Number 51*), the importance of an independent judiciary (*Federalist Paper Number 78*), enumerated powers, rule of law, federalism, and civilian control of the military.
6. Understand that the Bill of Rights limits the powers of the federal government and state governments.