Title: The Three Branches of Government   Subject: Social Studies

Topic: **Government**   Grade: **4**   School: Clyattville Elementary

Wiregrass History Consortium Unit Plan	
GPS Standard:	SS4CG1 The student will describe the federal system of government in the U.S. SS4CG3 The student will describe the functions of government. and explain how the power of people in authority is limited.
Concept:	Civics: The Three Branches of U. S. Government
Essential questions (2-5 questions) (What you want the students to know.)	How does the Constitution prevent the government from abusing its power? What are the duties and responsibilities of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government? How does the system of checks and balances work to make the three branches of government responsible to each other and to the people?
Elements (What you want the students to understand.)	The students will understand that the U. S. Constitution prevents the government from abusing its power by providing that: ▪ The duties and responsibilities of government are to be divided up between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. ▪ There is to be a system of checks and balances between the three branches, each of which limits the powers of the others.
Launch Activity (Hook)	Have students listen to the *School House Rock* song, which describes the three branches of government. Provide the students with the lyrics to the song and sing along.

Knowledge & Skills (People, Places, times and vocabulary-what the student should be able to do. What skills will they use?	Vocabulary ▪ separation of powers ▪ checks and balances ▪ veto power ▪ Executive ▪ Legislative ▪ Judicial	People ▪ President ▪ Vice President ▪ Congress ▪ House of Representatives ▪ Senate ▪ Supreme Court	Skills ▪ Students will need to be able to use Inspiration software.

Assessment Evidence: What evidence will show that students met the learning goal?

Traditional Assessment (Quizzes, Test, Selected Responses)

pre-test and post-test

Portfolio Assessment

Students will be given a
- Draw, label and color a tree diagram showing the three branches of government.
- Create an acrostic explaining the duties of the three branches of government with the words E-X-E-C-U-T-I-V-E, L-E-G-I-S-L-A-T-I-V-E, and J-U-D-I-C-I-A-L.
- Write a song explaining the three branches of government and their duties.
- Write 2 paragraphs explaining why the writers of the Constitution felt it was necessary to separate the powers of the government and set up a system of checks and balances.

- Write a letter to the editor of a newspaper published around 1787 indicating your concerns that the newly formed federal government might have too much power and why you agree with the writers of the Constitution that separation of powers and a system of checks and balances is needed.
- Create a flyer that could have been used to get support for the writers of the Constitution as they tried to meet and discuss how to keep the new government from being just another monarchy like in England.

Authentic Assessment (Performance Tasks, Rubrics, Projects, Dialogues, etc.,)
- Students will create a foldable graphic organizer showing the three branches of government.
- Students will participate in a debate during which they will take on the role the Constitution writers and discuss the reasons that the government should/should not be separated into three branches.
- Students will create a graphic organizer flow chart using Inspiration identifying the three branches of government, the duty of each branch, and indicate how each branch checks on and balances the other.

Student Self-Assessment
- Provide students with self-assessment rubric for Inspiration activity.
- Students will reflect on their portfolio choices in a journal writing assignment.

Differentiation Associated with this unit
- Students will work small groups while using Inspiration. They will be given task choices according to ability levels.
- Students will be given choices according to ability levels and learning preferences in the portfolio assignment.
- Pre-test results will determine make up of the post-test.

Resources and instructional tools:

- Internet site for *School House Rock* song and lyrics:
  http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Academy 7316/Thre.wav
- Inspiration software
- Computers / Computer Lab