



Spider Web Review of the Powers of Government

Learning Objectives: Students will

Review the powers delegated to the national government, powers reserved to the states, and powers held by both.

TEKS: 8.15D; US 19; Govt.7D; Govt.9A

Materials Needed: A ball of yarn

Teaching Strategy:

1. After a lesson on the powers of the state and national government, explain that the class is going to review the delegated, reserved, and concurrent powers of the national and state governments by participating in a spider-web activity. If necessary, allow the students time to review these. NOTE: a good activity to teach these is Federalism Geography using the LRE Community Map.
2. Arrange the students in a circle and give one student a ball of yarn. The teacher should then tell the student with the yarn to give an example of a delegated power. That student cites an example, wraps the yarn around their finger, and then gently tosses the ball of yarn to another student. As the ball is tossed, the student throwing the yarn should say delegated, reserved, or concurrent. The student to whom the yarn is tossed should catch the ball, cite an example of that type of power, and wrap the yarn around his/her finger. Repeat the process until all students have had a time to give an example and has yarn around his/her finger creating a spider web in the center of the circle. During the activity, the teacher should circulate around the circle assisting any student with hints, correct any incorrect example, and advise the student of the type of power needed to be sure all are reviewed. If the class is too large, create two circles to conduct the review.
3. Once all students have cited a power and with the yarn still around their fingers, the teacher should then repeat the following directions:
 - a. If you had a concurrent power, decide now if you will represent the delegated powers or reserved powers.
 - b. If you had a delegated power, gently tug on your yarn. Ask the students with reserved powers, what happened to them and how it felt.
 - c. If you had a reserved power, gently tug on your yarn. Repeat the same question above to the students with delegated powers.
4. Students should lay the yarn down in front of them in the center of the circle to facilitate the ball of yarn being rewound.
5. When the students return to their desk, discuss with students the following: conclusions that can be drawn from this activity; benefits of the federal system; potential problems with the federal system; and possible reasons the Founding Fathers chose the federal system.