3rd Grade Lesson Plan
Understanding Government Officials and Civic Responsibility

Objective:
Students will be able to identify local, state, and national government officials, explain how they are chosen, and describe the characteristics of good citizenship, including the importance of voting.

Standards Addressed:
- TEKS 3.7B: Identify local, state, and national government officials and explain how they are chosen.
- TEKS 3.9A: Identify characteristics of good citizenship, including truthfulness, justice, equality, respect for oneself and others, responsibility in daily life, and participation in government by educating oneself about the issues, respectfully holding public officials to their word, and voting.
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Assessment:
Students will complete a worksheet categorizing government officials into local, state, and national levels.

Materials:
- Reading passage: "Understanding Government: Local, State, and National"
- Role cards for the "Who Am I?" game
- Worksheet with three columns (Local, State, National) and a word bank of government officials

Opening (5 minutes):
- Begin the lesson by asking students: "Who makes the rules in our community, state, and country?"
- Have students share their ideas and create a list on the board.
- Explain that today, we'll learn about the people who make and enforce laws at different levels of government.

Introduction to New Material (20 minutes):

- Distribute the reading passage "Understanding Government: Local, State, and National" to students.
- Choose to either:
  a) Read the passage aloud as a whole group, or
  b) Allow students to read it independently
- After reading, discuss key roles mentioned in the passage to ensure understanding.
    - Use a simple organizational chart to show the three levels of government: local, state, and national.
        - Introduce examples of officials at each level:
            - Local: Mayor, City Council members, Police chief
            - State: Governor, Secretary of State, State Senator, State Representatives, Attorney General
            - National: President, Senators, Representatives, Supreme Court Justice
- Explain that most of these officials are chosen through elections, where citizens vote for their preferred candidates.
- Discuss the characteristics of good citizenship, emphasizing how they relate to participating in government:
    - Truthfulness: Being honest in our interactions with others and government
    - Justice: Supporting fair treatment for all
    - Equality: Believing everyone deserves equal rights and opportunities
    - Respect: Showing consideration for others and their views
    - Responsibility: Fulfilling our duties as citizens
    - Participation: Taking part in community and government activities, including voting
- Address the common misconception that voting is only for adults or that young citizens' actions don't impact government. Emphasize that even young citizens can participate by learning about issues, discussing them respectfully, and encouraging adults they know to vote.

Guided Practice (20 minutes):

"Who Am I?" Game

Preparation:

- Print and cut out role cards with names of different government officials (e.g., Mayor, Governor, President, City Council Member, etc.).

Game Instructions:

1. Introduction to the Game:
    a. Explain to the students that they will be playing a game called "Who Am I?" to review what they just learned about government officials.
    b. Tell them that each student will hold a role card to their forehead so that everyone else can see it, but they won't know what their own card says.
2. Setting Up the Game:
    a. Distribute Role Cards: Hand out one role card to each student. Instruct them to hold the card to their forehead so others can see the title.
    b. Explain the Rules:
        i. Students must walk around the room and ask their classmates yes/no questions to figure out which government official they are (e.g., "Am I in charge of a city?" "Do I work for the whole country?").
        ii. Classmates can only answer with "yes" or "no."
        iii. Once a student thinks they know their role, they can take a guess.
3. Playing the Game:
    a. Give students 5-7 minutes to walk around, ask questions, and figure out their role.
    b. Once a student correctly guesses their role, they can lower their card and continue helping others by answering their questions.
4. Wrap-Up:
    a. After everyone has guessed their role, gather the class together.
    b. Review each role again, asking students to share what they learned about their specific government official.

Independent Practice (15 minutes):

- Distribute the worksheet with three columns (Local, State, National) and a word bank of government officials.
- Instruct students to write each official from the word bank under the correct level of government.
- Circulate the room to offer assistance and ensure students are on task.

Closing (5 minutes):

- Review the worksheet answers as a class.
- Ask students to share one new thing they learned about government officials or civic responsibility.

Extension Activity:

For students who finish early, have them write a short paragraph explaining why it's important to know about different levels of government.

Homework:

Ask students to interview an adult family member or neighbor about their voting experience. Students should prepare three questions in advance, such as:

1. Why do you think voting is important?
2. How do you learn about the candidates before you vote?
3. How does voting make you feel as a citizen?