

# Government Acronyms

**Lesson Plan** by Daryl R. Hall

**Objective:** The students will research and recall information about the many government agencies that fulfill the duties of the federal government. The students will learn how to use a valuable research tool.

**Materials:** Blank Government Acronyms worksheet, key to Government Acronyms worksheet, matching test to Government Acronyms test, computer with Internet hookup, projector for the computer, two flyswatters, wipe board and markers.

**Procedure:**

- The teacher asks the students what an acronym is. Class discussion of popular acronyms (Ex: TMI, lol, BFF, etc.). Teacher cues students that the federal government uses acronyms for its many agencies.
- The teacher lectures the students on the importance of knowing these acronyms, what they stand for, and their functions, so that they can stay informed about government action. Ex: FBI and CIA are well known to the students. NASA and IRS less so. EPA, FEMA, the CDC and WHO become well-known as serious situations arise.
- Hand out two-page Government Acronyms worksheet. Cue the students that they will have to fill in the words the acronyms stand for, and the duties that agency is responsible for. Cue the students that their test will be on the ***functions*** that these agencies perform.
- The teacher leads a class discussion of the agencies listed. Cue the students that a few of these are non-governmental organizations (NGO's) or international agencies.
- The students volunteer to state the full agency name and/or its function. The teacher corrects and expands as needed. Cue the students to write down the reviewed information.
- The teacher googles NASA and NOAA separately and displays their websites, showing and discussing the agencies' functions. Cue the students to write this information down.
- Teacher shows and discusses current and future NASA space missions and the National Hurricane Center satellite images from the NOAA site to demonstrate the usefulness of these agency sites.

- Cue the students that they will have to each present two of these websites to their classmates in a 2-minute presentation for each site. The students will explore each site for homework and determine the most important functions and the most interesting information found on their site.
- Students sign up for specific acronyms to research.
- Students pull up their sites on the computer and projector and present to the class. (Note: The teacher may wish to have only one or two students present each day to keep the students alert.)
- Students and teacher question the speakers as they present. Cue the students to write down the most essential information during presentations.
- Review Game: “Swat the Fly”. Write 10-15 acronyms on the board in a scattered pattern, like they are flies, in roughly a 3 feet by 3 feet area. Two students come up and take a flyswatter. The teacher reads the duties of one of those particular agencies. The students race to swat the correct acronym. (They only get one swat each.) The winner stays and faces a new opponent. Repeat for more students, as needed. Create a second set of “flies”, as needed.
- Give the matching test on Government Acronyms.

**Assessment:**

Give class participation points for discussion of the acronyms. Assess the presentations on completeness and accuracy of the information. Give students participation points for the review game. Grade the matching test.