

AP US Government & Politics Summer Assignment 2022-2023

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75 Points

The U.S. Constitution is the fundament of American democracy. It has been described as “architectonic,” in that it provides a durable frame upon which we have constructed our government. It preserves our most basic liberties, providing the boundaries within which exists a “democratic space” for Americans to pursue life, liberty and happiness. It does so in three ways:

1. by establishing a set of institutions within which political conflict can play-out – in place of political violence – toward some sort of political progress or resolution;
2. as a bulwark against government abuse of power by diffusing that power among governmental roles; and
3. as a safeguard against “democratic tyranny” – unfettered and oppressive majority rule – by assuring minority factions have ample ability to exercise their rights to speak and act effectively in opposition.

We rightly venerate the Constitution as our society's compact, and as a timeless document. Even as some interpretations of its prose have evolved from generation to generation, its most basic principles have endured since its ratification.

The Constitution and the Founding will remain central to our studies all year long. Thus, your summer assignments are based upon the Constitution – what it says, and what those words are interpreted to mean. Consider this “step-one” to becoming a Constitutional Scholar.

Textbook: Harrison, Harris, and Deardorff, *American Democracy Now*, McGraw Hill, 7th Edition.

(You will not need the textbook to complete the summer assignment. The primary documents are linked below).

Use the following Primary Documents to complete the assignment.

- [The Declaration of Independence](#) (Use this document to answer page 2)
- [The Constitution of the United States](#) (use the hyperlink here for the National Constitution Center’s Interactive Constitution—a masterful resource)
- [John Locke, Second Treatise of Civil Government](#) (Use this document to answer page 2)

The Declaration of Independence

Directions: *Answer the following questions based upon your reading of the Declaration of Independence, as well as John Locke's Second Treatise on Government. Outside research may be utilized – just make sure it is a credible source.*

1. In general, why was the Declaration of Independence written? What were the historical conditions that led to its production?

2. What basic rights does the document claim all individuals possess? How does this relate to John Locke?

3. According to the document, why do the colonists have the right to declare independence?

4. According to the colonists, how had the King and Parliament responded to their grievances?

5. Why, in your estimation, is this document still significant today?

Outlining the Constitution: A System of Government Devised to Diffuse Power

Directions: Find text of the US Constitution [here](#), read it and complete the following worksheet. Credible outside sources are acceptable to use if needed.

The Preamble: The Constitution's Purposes (*Break Them Down Here*)

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____
- e) _____
- f) _____

Article I: The _____ Branch

Section 1

What is the primary purpose of this branch – what do these people do?

Section 2: The House of Representatives

How long is each term? _____

What are the three basic qualifications? _____

What is the minimum number of Representatives each state shall have? _____

What is the number of representatives given to each state based on? _____

How often does a census occur to change the number of representatives in the House? _____

In the original Constitution, what was the maximum number of people in each district per Representative?

What is the title of the leader of the House? _____

What is the sole power of the House of Representatives? _____

Section 3: The Senate

Which amendment created the direct election of Senators? _____

How long is each term? Every two years, how many Senators are reelected? _____

What are the qualifications for senators? _____

Who is the President of the Senate? _____

If this person is absent, what is the name of the officer in charge? _____

What is the sole power of the Senate? _____

Section 4: Elections and Meetings

When did a regular session (“opening day”) of Congress begin? _____ And what is that date today? _____

Section 5: Organization and Rules of Procedure

What is a “quorum”? _____

Each house makes its own rules. Which house has more formal rules of procedure (when a bill becomes a law)? Explain the difference:

Section 6: Privileges and Restrictions

Who pays Congress? _____

Explain the speech and debate clause and its purpose (“congressional immunity”):

Section 7: Passing Laws

What is a “revenue” bill? _____

Where/With whom must a revenue bill originate? _____

What must happen in order for a bill to become a law? Briefly summarize the process:

What is a “veto”? Who has the power to veto a bill? How can a veto be overridden?

Section 8: Powers Granted to Congress

Eighteen powers are expressly granted to Congress to create legislation. List some of the more important (or actively utilized) powers below. For each clause, briefly describe the power. (Be aware that some clauses are omitted here. Clause 1 is the very first paragraph of Art. I, Sec. 8....):

(1): _____

(2): _____

(3): _____

(4): _____

(5): _____

(9): _____

(11): _____

(12-14): _____

The 18th clause is called the “necessary and proper” clause or the “elastic” clause. Explain its significance:

Section 9: Powers denied to Congress.

What are the following terms, and how are they restrictive of governmental power?

Writ of Habeas Corpus: _____

Bills of Attainder: _____

Ex Post Facto Laws: _____

Titles of Nobility: _____

Section 10: Powers Denied to the States:

Name three powers that are forbidden to the states:

Article II: The _____ Branch

Section 1: The Executive Qualifications

Does Article II define “executive power”? _____

Who are the two key individuals that make up this branch? The _____ and the _____

How long is each term for this office? _____

Generally speaking, how is this branch elected? Briefly, what is the Electoral College?

Generally speaking, when is Election Day for presidential elections? _____

Which amendment changed this procedure for electing the President and Vice President? _____

What qualifications are necessary to run for and be elected to the presidency?

Which amendment provides that the Vice President *succeeds to* the presidency? _____

As a customary matter, who administers the oath to the President? _____

Section 2: Powers of the President

Briefly explain the powers of the Executive as described here:

1: _____

2: _____

In preserving the balance of power in the federal government, who has the power of “advice and consent”?

Section 3: Duties of the President

From “time to time,” the President must deliver an “annual message” to Congress. What do we today call this speech?

Section 4: Impeachment

Define impeachment: _____

On what grounds can a President and/or Vice- President be impeached? Be specific with the phrase:

Article III: The _____ Branch

Section 1

What is the purpose of this branch of government? _____

How long may a judge of these courts serve? _____

In your opinion, what makes this branch so independent; can you divine the Framers’ intent?

Section 2: General Authority

List the type of cases heard by the Supreme Court that are stated in the Constitution:

When the Constitution was signed on September 17, 1787, the term “judicial review” was absent from the document. Name the landmark Supreme Court case that established judicial review (even though that case does not mention the term either):

What is the difference between “original jurisdiction” and “appellate jurisdiction”?

Article IV: “Relations Among the States” – Federalism – will be discussed in Chapter 3....

Article V: Amending the Constitution

Explain the two common methods of proposing and ratifying an amendment:

Proposing an Amendment	Ratifying an Amendment

Which method has been the most popular? _____

Is it easy to amend the federal Constitution? Why or why not?

Article VI: Supremacy of the National Government

Section 2 discusses national supremacy. What does the “Supremacy Clause” entail and mean?

Article VII: The Ratification of the Constitution

How many states were “officially” needed, in 1787, to ratify the Constitution of the United States? _____

Identify the main point of each Constitutional Amendment (as best you can in this limited space).

Amendment	Big Idea: What did this Amendment accomplish?
1	
2	
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Question: If you had the power to create the 28th amendment what would it be and why? (Post your answer below and feel free to be creative!)

Be prepared for discussion and to explain or expand upon your answers.... Also, please be prepared to dive right into discussion of Chapter 1 and how John Locke's *Second Treatise of Civil Government* relate to all of this.