

This assignment is expected to take four-five hours to complete.

Verona High School
Department of History and Social Sciences

AP U.S. Government & Politics
Summer Assignment

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Welcome to AP Government. You will be taking part of a class that is both fun and rigorous. If done thoroughly and properly, the summer assignment will help you become prepared for this college-level course. You should complete this task comprehensively and accurately. Due to its importance, you will be required to redo this assignment (without additional credit) until it is completed correctly.

The United States Constitution

- **FIND:** This website has explanations of every part of the Constitution:
http://www.senate.gov/civics/constitution_item/constitution.htm

This website has a searchable version:
<http://www.usconstitution.net/const.html>
- **READ:** We will be using the Constitution throughout the class. Read every word thoroughly – from the beginning of the Preamble to the end of the 27th Amendment. Look up what you do not understand.
- **WRITE:** Complete the charts and questions attached to this page. Answers must be typed. You will use this all year as your personal guide to the Constitution.

All work must be done independently and in your own words.

Make sure to complete the questions and unfamiliar terms components! Writing “none” is not acceptable.

DUE: TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2018

AP U.S. Government & Politics
THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION

Read the U.S. Constitution. Complete this worksheet using any online or print resources you require. You will keep it in your notebook all year.

A. Create a Table of Contents: The Original Constitution

Read each article of the Constitution. Summarize the general purpose or subject of each article, and then enter the meanings of any unfamiliar terms (look them up) or any larger questions you have for discussion. This can be a place for creative “what if” questions too.

You can type your answers into the template below. Use as much space as is necessary to summarize the main idea of each article. **YOU WILL LIKELY NEED MORE SPACE THAN YOU SEE BELOW!

EXCEPT IN RARE CASES, YOU MUST HAVE UNFAMILIAR TERMS AND QUESTIONS FOR CLASS – this will guide our discussion of what you need clarified! Even if you understand everything, create questions that can help to spark discussion.

ARTICLE I

MAJOR CONCEPTS (rephrase in your own words to demonstrate understanding)

DETAILS: UNFAMILIAR TERMS AND QUESTIONS FOR CLASS

ARTICLE II

MAJOR CONCEPTS (rephrase in your own words to demonstrate understanding)

DETAILS: UNFAMILIAR TERMS AND QUESTIONS FOR CLASS

ARTICLE III

MAJOR CONCEPTS (rephrase in your own words to demonstrate understanding)

DETAILS: UNFAMILIAR TERMS AND QUESTIONS FOR CLASS

ARTICLE IV

MAJOR CONCEPTS (rephrase in your own words to demonstrate understanding)

DETAILS: UNFAMILIAR TERMS AND QUESTIONS FOR CLASS

ARTICLE V

MAJOR CONCEPTS (rephrase in your own words to demonstrate understanding)

DETAILS: UNFAMILIAR TERMS AND QUESTIONS FOR CLASS

ARTICLE VI

MAJOR CONCEPTS (rephrase in your own words to demonstrate understanding)

DETAILS: UNFAMILIAR TERMS AND QUESTIONS FOR CLASS

ARTICLE VII

MAJOR CONCEPTS (rephrase in your own words to demonstrate understanding)

DETAILS: UNFAMILIAR TERMS AND QUESTIONS FOR CLASS

Follow-Up #1:

Which Article is the longest and most detailed? Why do you think that is?

B. Create a Table of Contents: The Amendments

Identify the main point(s) of each Constitutional amendment. Restate in your own words to demonstrate understanding.

AMENDMENT

WHAT DID THIS AMENDMENT ACCOMPLISH?

1.

2.

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27.

Follow-Up #2:

If you could only keep two amendments to the Constitution, which would they be? Why?

C. The Three Branches: Powers

Enumerated powers are those listed specifically in the Constitution. (Things like judicial review are not enumerated powers) Look through the first three Articles for examples. Pay careful attention to checks and balances – how each branch of government controls the others.

Remember to answer in your own words, and to look up what you don't understand.

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Checks & Balances: What are TWO enumerated powers it has **over the** president?

Checks & Balances: What is ONE enumerated power it has **over the** courts?

What other enumerated powers does Congress have?

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

Checks & Balances: What is ONE enumerated power it **has over** Congress?

Checks and Balances: What is ONE enumerated power it **has over** the courts?

What other enumerated powers does the president have?

JUDICIAL BRANCH

Checks & Balances: What is ONE enumerated power it **has over** the president?

Checks & Balances: What is ONE enumerated power it **has over** Congress?

What other enumerated powers do the courts have?

Follow-Up #3:

Identify and explain two powers that the Constitution specifically DENIES to Congress.

D. Rules for Policymakers

What requirements are necessary to hold political office in the United States? Fill in the table below with your findings. Be specific.

| | HOUSE | SENATE | PRESIDENT | SUPREME COURT JUSTICE |
|--|-------|--------|-----------|-----------------------|
| Age requirement | | | | |
| Citizenship requirement | | | | |
| Length of Term | | | | |
| Gaining Office: How does it happen? Who is involved? | | | | |

Follow-Up #4:

Why would the requirements vary for different offices? Come up with some theories on why the founders would make different rules for different branches.

E. The Amendment Process

In your own words, describe TWO ways to propose an amendment, and TWO ways to ratify an amendment.

PROPOSE:

RATIFY:

Follow-Up #5:

Which process of proposal and ratification has been used most often? Which has never been used? Any ideas why?

F. Additional Questions

1. Identify two powers the Constitution prohibits the states from having.
2. The *court of original jurisdiction* is the first court that hears a case. Although the Supreme Court mostly hears cases on *appeal* from a lower court, for what kinds of cases does it have original jurisdiction?
3. Who has the power to declare war? What powers do the other branches have during a war?
4. The Constitution requires only a simple majority for some actions. (That means anything over half). It requires a *supermajority* for other actions (a majority greater than a simple majority). Find two actions that require a supermajority. Why do you think the Constitution requires this?
5. Find two ways to remove a president from office – one in the original Constitution, and one in the amendments. Describe each in your own words, and be sure to say where you found each method.
6. Where in the Constitution is the Electoral College described? (Hint: there are two parts)
7. How many electoral votes does one need to become president today?
8. If no candidate for the presidency wins a simple majority of the total number of electoral votes, what body has the power to choose the president?
9. How were U.S. Senators chosen before the Seventeenth Amendment?
10. Who creates executive branch departments?