

AP United States Government and Politics
2018 Summer Reading Assignment
R.B. Stall High School

Instructor: Brian Solski

Email: brian_solski@charleston.k12.sc.us

Google Classroom Code: dofdze

Welcome to AP Government! This class will be an intensive study of U.S. Government and Politics. In preparation for this class you will have to read the U.S. Constitution over the summer, as well as read articles and look up political jargon to be ready for the class. The first part of the assignment will require you to dissect the United States Constitution and answer questions about the rights provided in the document, as well as the power structure. The second part of the assignment will require you to read an article a week that I will put on Google Classroom every Monday and be ready for a Socratic Seminar on the state of American politics based on the articles. The seminar will take place during the first week of school. Each part of the assignment will be worth 100 points a piece. The U.S. Constitution study guide will be due the first day of school on August 20, 2018.

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PART I: THE CONSTITUTION

Directions: Read the US Constitution and complete the following questions directly on this handout or on a separate sheet of paper or electronically. The websites below are an excellent source, as well as the book *The U.S. Constitution: A Graphic Adaptation* by Jonathan Hennessey. Book can be bought on Amazon. DUE AUGUST 20, 2018!

- <http://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution>
- http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution_transcript.html

SECTION 1: THE OVERALL STRUCTURE OF THE CONSTITUTION

1. Read each article of the Constitution. Summarize the general purpose or subject of each article in one sentence in the chart below.

Article I	
Article II	
Article III	
Article IV	
Article V	
Article VI	
Article VII	

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1. Compare Article I with Article II. Which article is longer and more detailed?
2. Identify two powers denied from Congress in the Constitution.
3. How does the House of Representatives determine the rules of proceedings (the ability to have debates, riders, etc)?
4. Identify two powers the Constitution prohibits from the States.
5. What eligibility requirements does the Constitution establish for members of the House?
6. What eligibility requirements does the Constitution establish for members of the Senate?
7. What eligibility requirements does the Constitution establish for the President?

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8. The powers of the Constitution that are specifically granted to the branches of government or to office holders are called expressed powers.

- a) Identify two expressed powers of the president.
- b) What are the expressed powers of the vice president?
- c) Identify two expressed powers of Congress.

9. According to the principle of checks and balances, each branch of the government must have control over the other branches. Look at the first three articles of the Constitution and identify one of each type of checks and balances. Indicate where each power is listed in the Constitution.

- a) A power that the executive branch has over the legislative branch: _____
- b) This can be found in what article/section of the Constitution _____
- c) A power that the executive branch holds over the judicial branch. _____
- d) This can be found in what article/section of the Constitution _____
- e) A power that the legislative branch holds over the executive branch. _____
- f) This can be found in what article/section of the Constitution _____
- g) A power that the legislative branch holds over the judicial branch. _____
- h) This can be found in what article/section of the Constitution _____
- i) A power that the judicial branch holds over the executive branch. _____
- j) This can be found in what article/section of the Constitution _____
- k) A power that the judicial branch holds over the legislative branch. _____
- l) This can be found in what article/section of the Constitution _____

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10. The court of original jurisdiction is the first court that hears a case. Appellate courts hear cases on appeal from lower courts. Although the Supreme Court functions primarily as an appellate court, it is the court of original jurisdiction in certain kinds of cases. What are those?

11. According to Article I of the Constitution, who has the power to declare war?

12. What power does the Constitution give the President in the area of war?

Section 2: IMPORTANT CLAUSES

1. Where is the "Commerce Clause" and what does it say?

2. Where is the "Necessary and Proper Clause" and what does it say?

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Section 3: MAJORITY AND SUPERMAJORITY

The Constitution requires a simple majority for some actions and a supermajority for others. A simple majority means more than half, while supermajority requirements can involve a 2/3 majority or a 3/4 majority. Most elections in the United States require a plurality, or the most votes, but not necessarily a majority.

1. What bodies have the power to override a presidential veto?

2. What margin is required to override a presidential veto?

3. Where in the Constitution is the veto power described?

4. What body has the power to ratify treaties?

5. What margin is required to ratify treaties?

6. Where in the Constitution is the ratification power described?

7. To impeach means "to bring charges against" or "to indict". What body has the power to impeach the president?

8. What vote is required to impeach?

9. What is the standard for impeachment?

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10. What body has the power to convict the president of charges brought against him in the impeachment process and thereby remove him from the presidency?

11. What vote is required to convict and remove a president?

12. Where in the Constitution is the impeachment power described?

13. What body has the power to accept or reject a president's nominations to the Supreme Court?

14. What margins is required to elevate a president's nominee to a seat on the Court?

15. Where in the Constitution are judicial nominations described?

16. What language is used to describe the roll of the Senate in Supreme Court nominations?

17. 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?

18. What margin is required to choose the president?

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19. Where in the Constitution is the Electoral College described? (Hint: there are two parts)

20. The Constitution specifies a three-fourths majority for just one process. What?

21. The Constitution has comparatively little to say about the structure and composition of the Supreme Court. Identify two aspects of the Court's structure and composition that the Constitution does not specify. (The Constitution does specify these two basic aspects of structure and composition for the other two branches).

22. List all parts of the Constitution that require a supermajority. For each, explain why you believe there is a supermajority requirement.

23. What are two ways that amendments to the Constitution can be proposed?

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24. What are two ways that amendments to the Constitution can be ratified?

Section 4: THE AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Some parts of the Constitution require a simple majority, others a supermajority, while still others protect citizens from the will of the majority. The first ten amendments to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, protects citizens from the will of the majority. In other words, no majority could vote to take these rights away. Read each amendment to the Constitution and answer the questions below.

1. Outline the general purpose of all 27 Amendments.

Amendment 1	
Amendment 2	
Amendment 3	
Amendment 4	
Amendment 5	
Amendment 6	
Amendment 7	
Amendment 8	
Amendment 9	
Amendment 10	

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Amendment 11	
Amendment 12	
Amendment 13	
Amendment 14	
Amendment 15	
Amendment 16	
Amendment 17	
Amendment 18	
Amendment 19	
Amendment 20	
Amendment 21	
Amendment 22	
Amendment 23	
Amendment 24	
Amendment 25	
Amendment 26	
Amendment 27	

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2. Which amendment(s) of the Constitution protect the rights of women?

3. Summarize what this amendment(s) of the Constitution says

4. Which amendment (s) of the Constitution protect the rights of African Americans?

5. How were US Senators chosen before the Seventeenth Amendment?

- 6.. The Twenty-Fifth Amendment describes the sequence of events that would install the vice president as acting president against the will of the president. Outline that sequence of events.

7. How many times is the word privacy mentioned in the Constitution (articles and amendments)

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Part II: Current Political Events

Over the course of the summer I would like for you to get caught up on the political happenings going on in the country. This means that you will be required to read one article a week that I will post on Google Classroom every Monday during the summer. Your job is to read it and take some notes that you will use during the first Socratic Seminar of the year. The seminar will be based on the assigned articles, will be worth 100 points, and take place during the first week of school. Below, I have provided several political sites, magazines, newspapers, etc. that you might find interesting. The articles I select will come from multiple sites and include multiple ideological perspectives.

Recommended Periodicals, Websites & TV Stations

TV Stations: MSNBC, Fox News, CNN, VICE News Videos (you tube), Young Turks (you tube), Rush Limbaugh (radio), Frontline (PBS)

American Newspapers: NY Times, Washington Post, Huffington Post, The Hill & Wall Street Journal

Foreign Periodicals & Sites: The Economist, Al-Jazeera, Al-Monitor, BBC, & Reuters

Watchdog & Research Sites: Vote Smart, Fact Check, Citizen Works, Public Citizen, Pew Research Center, Judicial Watch, Gallup

Liberal Periodicals & Sites: Dissent, Salon, Vice News, Truthout, Truthdig, The Progressive, The Crisis, The New Republic, The Nation, The Atlantic, Harper's Weekly, The New Yorker, Robert Reich, Reader Supported News, Mother Jones, Monthly Review, The Guardian, Foreign Affairs, Common Dreams, Council on Foreign Relations, Public Opinion Quarterly, MSNBC, Counter Punch, Brookings, Center for American Progress, Propublica, Black Agenda Report, Jacobin

Conservative Periodicals & Sites: The Weekly Standard, The New American, The National Interest, The Christian Science Monitor, The American Conservative, The American Spectator, Real Clear Politics, National Review, Human Events, Policy Review, Foreign Policy, Fox News, Heritage Foundation, Cato Institute, AEI

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Part III: Defining “Need to Know Political Jargon”

These are common words used in the media and by “political insiders”. Your knowledge of these words will help you digest and understand many of the current event articles you will come across this summer and throughout the school year. Some of these words have different meanings in different contexts, so please write down definitions that relate to government and politics. There is NO assignment with these words, but you NEED to know what they mean!

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|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Inside the Beltway | 16. Red tape | 30. Independent Expenditure |
| 2. Superdelegate | 17. Gerrymander | 31. Super PAC |
| 3. Sound bite | 18. Polarization | 32. Gamechanger |
| 4. Rank and file | 19. Lame Duck | 33. Red herring |
| 5. Pundit | 20. Pork Barrel Spending | 34. Political suicide |
| 6. Maverick | 21. Coattails Effect | 35. Talking points |
| 7. Partisan | 22. Grassroots | 36. Triangulation |
| 8. Bipartisan | 23. “On the fence” | 37. Gaffe |
| 9. Swing state | 24. Party Platform | 38. Sacred cow |
| 10. Germane | 25. “The Hill” | 39. Obamacare |
| 11. Stump speech | 26. Bully Pulpit | 40. Whistle blower |
| 12. Lobbyist | 27. Logrolling | 41. Gender Gap |
| 13. Bandwagon | 28. Earmark | 42. K Street |
| 14. Bailout | 29. Political Action Committee (PAC) | 43. Flip-flopper |
| 15. Boondoggle | | |

