

# Summer Work

Welcome to AP U.S. Government & Politics! Before we begin in the fall, it is important that you brush up on your knowledge of the U.S. Constitution. In operation since 1789, the U.S. Constitution is the world's longest surviving written charter of government (Senate.gov). Due to its staying power, you might assume Americans are especially knowledgeable of the document, but you would be sadly mistaken.

In 2016, the Annenberg Public Policy Center found that only 26 percent of Americans can name all three branches of government, a statistically significant decline since 2011, when 38 percent could name all three. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), three-quarters of 12th graders could not even name one power granted to Congress by the Constitution. Survey after survey has shown that Americans' knowledge of their system of government has been on the decline.

As retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor recently put it, **"We have neglected civic education for the past several decades, and the results are predictably dismal... Divisive rhetoric and a culture of sound bites threaten to drown out rational dialogue and debate. We cannot afford to continue to neglect the preparation of future generations for active and informed citizenship."**

With these challenges in mind, all students enrolled in AP U.S. Government and Politics are required to complete summer coursework prior to the first day of class. An assessment will be given based on the material at the end of the first week. There will be an emphasis on the **amendments, first 3 articles, checks & balances, and bolded vocabulary words.**

This assignment is not meant to be treated as busy work to be done last minute, but as an opportunity to take time to meaningfully study the Constitution. Completing this assignment will help you to be successful in AP Government in the fall, but more importantly, help you to become a more knowledgeable and engaged citizen thereafter.

**Step 1:** Read the US Constitution. This is readily available on the internet. I'd recommend you use the Constitution and the guide from <https://www.annenbergclassroom.org/constitution/>. It includes the interpretations of the articles and amendments. This will be helpful for understanding the meaning and application of the policies and laws in the Constitution. There are also many other very helpful tools and resources on the internet. Don't be afraid to use the resources at your disposal.

**Step 2:** Use the Constitution, the Annenberg Guide, and any other resources you may need to answer the questions below about the Constitution. **Please use 1-2 full sentences unless directed otherwise.** You may print out the packet and write your answers by hand or complete the packet digitally.

Questions on the next page

**Name:**

1. Read through the Preamble to the Constitution. In your own words describe how the Preamble is a guide for understanding the principles and values of American government.

2. Read each Article of the United States Constitution. Summarize the general purpose or subject of each article. *You may use bullet points for the chart*

Article I	
Article II	
Article III	
Article IV	
Article V	
Article VI	
Article VIII	

3. Which Article is longer and more detailed? Explain why you believe this is the case (Why did the Framers spend extra time/effort writing this Article?)

4. Identify four powers that the Constitution denies to Congress.
5. Identify three powers the Constitution denies to the states.
6. What eligibility requirements does the Constitution establish for members of the House?
7. What eligibility requirements does the Constitution establish for members of the Senate?
8. What eligibility requirements does the Constitution establish on the President?
9. The powers that are specifically granted to the institutions of government are called expressed powers.
  - a. Identify two expressed powers of the POTUS (President of the United States).
  - b. Identify two expressed powers of Congress.
10. According to the principles 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 (be specific in identifying the location). *You may use bullet points for the chart*

Concept	Constitutional Power(s)	Location (Article and Section #)
Power the Executive Branch has over the Legislative Branch		
Power the Executive Branch has over the Judicial Branch		
Power the Legislative Branch has over the Executive Branch		
Power the Legislative Branch has over the Judicial Branch		

Power the Judicial Branch has over the Legislative Branch		
Power the Judicial Branch has over the Executive Branch		

11. The court of original jurisdiction is the first court that hears a case. Appellate courts hear cases on appeal from lower courts. Although the SCOTUS (Supreme Court of the United States) functions primarily as an appellate court, it is the court of original jurisdiction in certain kinds of cases. What are they?
12. According to the Constitution, who has the power to declare war (NOTE: Reference Article I)?
13. What power does the Constitution give the POTUS in the area of war?
14. Explain the **Commerce Clause**. Where is it located in the Constitution?
15. Explain the **“Necessary and Proper”** Clause. Where is it located in the Constitution?
16. Explain the **Supremacy Clause**. Where is it located in the Constitution?
17. Given your analysis of the Commerce, Necessary and Proper, and Supremacy Clauses of the Constitution, how do they collectively impact the power of the national government?
18. Explain the idea of **habeas corpus**. Where is it located in the Constitution?
19. Explain the idea of **bills of attainder**. Where is it located in the Constitution?
20. Explain **ex post facto laws**. Where is it located in the Constitution?

21. Explain the **Full Faith and Credit Clause**. Where is it located in the Constitution?

22. Explain the idea of **due process**. Where is it found in the Constitution?

23. Explain the **Equal Protection Clause**. Where is it located in the Constitution?

24. Explain the idea of **eminent domain**. Where is it located in the Constitution?

25. Outline the general purposes of all twenty-seven Constitutional amendments (*in your own words, bullet points are acceptable*).

Amendment	Summary
1 <sup>st</sup>	
2 <sup>nd</sup>	
3 <sup>rd</sup>	
4 <sup>th</sup>	
5 <sup>th</sup>	
6 <sup>th</sup>	
7 <sup>th</sup>	
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19 <sup>th</sup>	
20 <sup>th</sup>	

21 <sup>st</sup>	
22 <sup>nd</sup>	
23 <sup>rd</sup>	
24 <sup>th</sup>	
25 <sup>th</sup>	
26 <sup>th</sup>	
27 <sup>th</sup>	

**Article 1: The Legislative Branch** *you do not need to answer the following questions using full sentences*

26. What is the role/duty of the Speaker of the House

27. How many committees are there in the House of Representatives

28. What is the current party breakdown of the House?

29. How many committees are there in the Senate?

30. What is the current party breakdown of the Senate?

31. What is a filibuster?

**Article II: The Executive Branch** *you do not need to answer the following questions using full sentences*

32: What purpose does the President's cabinet serve?

33. What does Chief of Staff do?

34. What does the Press Secretary do?

**Article III: The Judicial Branch** *you do not need to answer the following questions using full sentences*

35. Complete the following chart

Supreme Court	Name	Age	Date Sworn In	President Appointed
Chief Justice				
Associate Justices				


36. How many federal district courts are there?

37. How many circuit courts of appeals are there?

38. In which circuit do we live?