

AP Government Summer Assignment

AP U.S. Government and Politics provides a college-level, nonpartisan introduction to key political concepts, ideas, institutions, policies, interactions, roles, and behaviors that characterize the constitutional system and political culture of the United States. Students will study U.S. foundational documents, Supreme Court decisions, and other texts and visuals to gain an understanding of the relationships and interactions among political institutions, processes, and behaviors. They will also engage in disciplinary practices that require them to read and interpret data, make comparisons and applications, and develop evidence-based arguments. In addition, they will complete a political science research or applied civics project. Welcome to AP Government and Politics. Your AP Government summer assignment will be the following:

1. **Watch all four episodes of “Constitution USA with Peter Sagal” and complete the accompanying worksheet.**
2. **Complete Constitution Scavenger Hunt. (Your answer must include: Article number, Section Number and sentence number)**
3. **Complete Need To Know Political Jargon.**
4. **Keep up with the news (reading/watching/listening) to introduce yourself to the subject matter.**

All these activities will need to be HAND WRITTEN in a composition book. Make a section for each assignment. (Devide the book in four parts and the use sticky note to annotate each section.

Due Date: First Day of Class (no late work will be taken or no partial work taken)

Constitution USA with Peter Sagal

Episode One: A More Perfect Union (Federalism)

1. What did the Founding Fathers have in mind when they created a shared power system?
2. After fighting a war to leave a strong government (Britain), why did the Founding Fathers want to create a strong government?
3. For what reasons was our new system of government created?
4. What were some of the negative outcomes of the new system?
5. In what ways does the federal government step on the rights of the states? Why?
6. What is the advantage of the state government making laws for the people?
7. What is the role of the federal government in dealing with state law?
8. What actions did the federal government take to ensure the general welfare of the United States?
9. What were seen as the negatives of the New Deal?
10. Why did the students have to put themselves at risk for our country?
11. Why did the federal government need to step in?
12. What was the reason the soldiers walked the students straight up the front steps rather than bring them in another entrance?
13. Why might it be better for laws to be made by local government?

Episode Two: It's a Free Country (Rights)

1. What does the Constitution establish?
2. What does the Bill of Rights establish?
3. Is all speech protected?
4. Should offensive speech be protected?
5. Why would someone want speech to be limited?
6. Why would someone want speech to always be free?
7. What tools or steps does the constitution put into place for citizens to stand up and fight for what they believe in?
8. What is the remedy for free speech?
9. Who insures our rights are protected?
10. What did Gideon do to make sure the 6th amendment was protecting him?
11. Why would someone need a lawyer?
12. What is the responsibility of a court appointed attorney?
13. Which part of the Constitution guarantees your right to a fair trial?
14. What exactly does the First Amendment say about religion? Hint: there are TWO parts.
15. What does Eminent Domain mean?
16. For what reason can the government take away the property of citizens and what part of the Constitution gives the government the right to do this?
17. How has our understanding of our rights changed over time?
18. Why does it seem like the definitions to our rights change over time?
19. When and where can you be searched without a warrant?
20. Is technology putting cracks in the Bill of Rights? Where?

Episode Three: Created Equal (Equality)

1. The 14th Amendment tries to incorporate the words of the Declaration into the Constitution. Compare and contrast the Declaration of Independence and Constitution. Do we have more to incorporate?
2. 13th Amendment
 - What it says:
 - What it means:
 - Rights it guarantees:
3. 14th Amendment
 - What it says:
 - What it means:
 - Rights it guarantees:
4. 15th Amendment
 - What it says:
 - What it means:
 - Rights it guarantees:
5. What types of inequality will the 14th amendment allow? Do you agree with this? Where should those limits be?
6. What three amendments expanded voting rights in the United States?
7. Why would the 14th Amendment take away someone's rights, when it was meant to protect them? Do you think that this is fair?
8. What is the reason for Affirmative Action?
9. Why was it established and how does it protect the rights of the minority?
10. What have been the unintended consequences of Affirmative Action?
11. What are the limits on the 14th Amendment? Should there be any? Does the 14th Amendment apply outside the country?
12. Where does the right to privacy begin and end?
13. Where in the 14th amendment is economic liberty spelled out?

Episode Four: Built to Last (We the People)

1. What are the pros and cons of how Iceland is writing their new constitution?
2. How did the Founders give the Constitution the ability to change? What are these changes called and what do they do?
3. What part of the Constitution spells out how to change the Constitution? Is change easy?
4. Why would you want to change the Constitution?
5. Amendments are not the only way to change rights. What are other ways rights can change?
6. How did the President change the law to support women's rights?
7. How did Congress change the law to protect women's rights?
8. How did the courts change the law to protect women's rights?
9. What ensures that one branch does not gain too much power?
10. Congress set up an investigation on the president, but who ordered Richard Nixon to turn over the full transcripts of his secret taping system?
11. What are the steps of understanding the law, as described by Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor? She spells out three basic steps.
 - To Be _____
 - To Read _____
 - To Follow _____
12. What does "original intent" mean?
13. Describe the two ways in which current justices interpret the Constitution.
14. What can you do if you feel the courts have made an unfair ruling?
15. In times of war, the executive branch has sometimes been accused of going too far and upsetting the balance between civil liberties and national security. Do you think that this is okay in wartime?

Constitution Scavenger Hunt Using the Constitution

Article I

1. How often are Representatives to be elected?
2. How old must a Representative be to be elected?
3. How long is the term for a senator?
4. How were senators originally chosen? Which amendment changed that? How are they chosen now?
5. How old does someone have to be to be a senator?
6. Who is the president of the Senate and when may that person vote?
7. Which legislative body has the power of impeachment and which body has the power to try an impeached official?
8. Who shall officiate when a president is tried for impeachment?
9. What is the required vote that is necessary to convict someone who has been impeached?
10. What is the only penalty that can be imposed on someone who has been impeached?
11. Who decides the times, places, and manner for holding elections for Congress?
12. In what federal body do all bills concerning taxes originate?
13. What fraction of both houses must vote to override a veto?
14. What happens when a president doesn't return a bill in 10 days and what is the exception to that rule?
15. In Section 8, the Constitution lists or enumerates the powers of Congress. List six of them.

16. In Section 8, which clause gives Congress the most general, non-specific powers?
17. In Section 9, there are three limitations on the power of Congress to deny people rights. What are those three limitations? (If you don't understand what these phrases mean, don't worry – I'll explain.)
18. What is a writ of habeas corpus, and when can it be suspended?
19. Name three limits on the powers of the states.

Article II

20. How old does someone have to be to be elected president?
21. How is it determined how many electors each state has?
22. Name three powers of the President.
23. Name the body of Congress that must approve a treaty that the president has negotiated and the fraction of the vote they must approve it by.
24. Which body of Congress approves nominations?
25. When can the president appoint people without approval by anyone else?
26. What can a president or other officers be impeached for?

Article III

27. What is the term of office for Supreme Court justices? When may they be removed?
28. Who gets to decide how many federal courts we have?
29. In which cases does the Supreme Court have original jurisdiction?
30. What must be necessary to convict someone of treason?

Article IV

31. What is the topic of Article IV?
32. What does the Constitution say about how one state must regard the laws of another state?
33. What limitation is put on admitting new states to the Union?

Article V

34. What fraction of the houses of Congress is necessary to approve a proposed amendment?
35. What fraction of the states must approve a proposed amendment for it to be ratified?
36. What fraction of the states can ask for a convention to propose new amendments?
37. What is the only limitation in the Constitution as to what can be the basis of an amendment?

Article VI

38. What does the Constitution say about which law shall predominate if there is any conflict between laws?
39. What qualification for holding any public office is forbidden?

Article VII

40. How many states had to ratify the Constitution?

Amendments

41. Name the five basic civil liberties guaranteed in the First Amendment.
42. Which amendment extended the vote to 18 year olds?
43. Which amendment outlaws "cruel and unusual punishments?"
44. Which amendment ended slavery?
45. Put the Ninth Amendment in your own words.
46. Put the Tenth Amendment in your own words.
47. Which amendment prevents a citizen of North Carolina suing the state of Georgia?
48. Which amendment said that states couldn't prevent people from voting based on their race?
49. Which amendment said that a person couldn't be tried twice for the same crime?
50. When can the government take private property and what must the government give the owners? Which amendment establishes this?
51. What phrase is repeated in both the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments?
52. Which amendment defined citizenship?
53. List the rights that the accused has when suspected of a crime.
54. Which amendment prohibited alcohol? Which Amendment repealed the prohibition on alcohol?
55. Which amendment gave women the right to vote and in what year was it passed?
56. Which amendment decided that a person could be president for only two terms?
57. On what day does the Constitution state that a new president shall be inaugurated? Which amendment establishes this? When must the new Congress meet?
58. Which amendment prevents the president and vice president from being inhabitants of the same state? In that same amendment, who should choose the president if no one gets a majority in the Electoral College? And the vice president?
59. Which amendment requires a warrant to search someone's property?
60. Which amendment gave government the power to impose an income tax?
61. Which amendment establishes what to do if the president is incapacitated and can't perform his duties?

Need to Know Political Jargon

Assignment Information: These are common words used in the media and “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.

Political Jargon Assignment Directions:

1. Define each of the following items in context to politics.
2. Write an **ORIGINAL** sentence using each word that shows you understand the meaning of the word.
3. Your final copy must be **HANDWRITTEN**.

Hint to finding the definitions of most of these words

1. Use www.google.com to search for these words, though if you follow these steps you will save time looking up these words.
2. When searching put in the following phrase → Define: “word”
 - An Example: Define: “Inside the Beltway”
 - Using the quotes limits your search results providing you with a better quality of results

1. “On the fence”
2. “The Hill”
3. Bailout
4. Bipartisan
5. Blue State
6. Bully Pulpit
7. Coattails Effect
8. Constituent
9. Earmark
10. Entitlements
11. Flip-flopper
12. Game Changer
13. Gender Gap
14. Gerrymander
15. Gerrymandering
16. GOP
17. Grassroots
18. Gridlock
19. Independent Expenditure
20. Inside the Beltway
21. K Street
22. Lameduck
23. Lobbyist
24. Logrolling
25. Mandate
26. Obamacare
27. Partisan
28. Party Platform
29. Polarization
30. Political Action Committee (PAC)
31. Political Suicide
32. Pork Barrel Spending
33. POTUS
34. Rank and File
35. Red State
36. Red Tape
37. SCOTUS
38. Sound Bite
39. Stump Speech
40. Super PAC
41. Superdelegate
42. Swing State
43. Talking Points
44. Tea Party
45. Whistle Blower

Current Events Journal

AP Government is more directly related to current events than any course you will take in high school. Everything that we will study relates to how politics and government works in modern America. Accordingly, knowledge of current political and governmental affairs will significantly help you to understand the things we study, and will, in fact, be necessary to succeed in the course. If you know what is going on in the country with respect to politics and government, you will do better in the course.

You should follow major current events by doing one or more of the following on as close to a daily basis as possible:

- Read either the print or online version of a major newspaper.
- Watch a national/international news broadcast (CNN, MSNBC, FOX News, PBS, ABC, CBS, NBC) – not a local news broadcast.
- Read major newsmagazines or political journals (Time, Newsweek, US News and World Report, The Economist, The Atlantic, The New Yorker)
- Read articles from an online political journalism website such as Politico (politico.com) or Five-Thirty-Eight (fivethirtyeight.com)
- Watch daily or weekly news/current affairs programming (Hardball, Meet the Press, Face the Nation, This Week, etc.)

During the course of the summer (beginning the first full week of summer Monday May 30th and ending the last week of August), keep a current events journal. At the end of each week, write a minimum two paragraphs (complete sentences; ~500 words) about the major event or events in American government and/or politics from the past week. In the first paragraph, you should describe the event or events, and, in the second paragraph, you should analyze the significance of it/them and state any opinions, thoughts, or analysis that you might have about it/them. You must intelligently discuss one particularly important issue each week.

Your journal should deal with issues that are of significant importance to American politics and government. Such things include what the president is up to, what Congress is debating or legislation that they are passing, constitutional issues or major federal court decisions concerning them, debates over political issues in America, international crises or foreign policy issues that somehow affect the US or that our government must deal with, etc.

With each week's entry, you must cite in MLA format any news media sources you used during that week.