

AP U.S. Government & Politics

PCS COMMON SUMMER ASSIGNMENT

Welcome to AP U.S. Government & Politics! We look forward to a great year with all of you and hope that this Advanced Placement class will not only be informative, but will serve as one of the most applicable courses you take in your high school career.

As you prepare for this class, we understand that some of you may not have been exposed to any government content for a long time. (I'm sure you all can recall EVERYTHING from your middle school Civics course, right?) Because of that, the AP Gov. teachers throughout the county have put together this summer assignment that is meant to refresh your memory and, hopefully, peak your interest for things to come this school year!

The assignment will consist of 4 parts:

Part I: Crash Course Video & Designated Questions

Part II: Constitutional Dissection & Questions

Part III: Constitutional Authorities Questions

Part IV: Constitutional Amendment Questions

These 4 parts together will give you a practical foundation, setting you up for success in AP Gov. The assignment will be due at the end of Quarter 1, allowing for anyone who joined the class late (or someone that was placed in without their knowledge) to complete it. If you have any questions over it, please seek out one of the county-wide AP Summer Assignment Support Sessions (SASS), or contact your AP teacher directly through their PCSB email (can be found on most schools' websites).

Should you have questions or if you would like support with this assignment, please refer to your PCS student email account for information about the AP Summer Assignment Support Sessions (AP SASS) that will be held July 31-August 1 at various locations. You can access your student email account by going to www.office.com and using your PCS username and password to login.

We look forward to working with all of you this year, and helping to turn you into the most productive citizen you can be!

Part I: Crash Course Video & Questions

Please watch the following video clip from the Crash Course series. Upon viewing, answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper.

Crash Course U.S. History #8 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bO7FQsCcbD8&t=3s>)

- 1) What was the original government created by the Continental Congress?
- 2) How long did the Articles of Confederation last?
- 3) What were key weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation?
- 4) What key groups were developed at the Constitutional Convention? What were their main platforms?
- 5) How was the issue of slavery factored into the new Constitution? What precedent did that set for future actions?

PART II: CONSTITUTION DISECTION

Directions Access a copy of the US Constitution. Answer the questions in your own handwriting as you read the Constitution. (A copy is available at: www.constitutioncenter.org)

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

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

B. Respond to each of the following questions.

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?
8. The powers of the Constitution that are specifically granted to the branches of government or to office holders are called *express* powers. Powers that stem from the Constitution but are not specifically stated are called *inherent* powers.
 - a. Identify two express powers of the president.
 - b. What are the express powers of the vice president?
 - c. Identify two express 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: _____
This can be found in what article/section of the Constitution _____
 - b. A power that the executive branch holds over the judicial branch. _____
This can be found in what article/section of the Constitution _____
 - c. A power that the legislative branch holds over the executive branch. _____
This can be found in what article/section of the Constitution _____
 - d. A power that the legislative branch holds over the judicial branch. _____
This can be found in what article/section of the Constitution _____
 - e. A power that the judicial branch holds over the executive branch _____
This can be found in what article/section of the Constitution _____
 - f. A power that the judicial branch holds over the legislative branch. _____
This can be found in what article/section of the Constitution _____
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?

C. 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?

3. Where is the "Supremacy Clause" and what does it say?

4. How might these clauses above have impacted the power of the federal government?

5. Where is the "habeas corpus" clause and what does it say?

6. Where are bills of attainder discussed and what does it say?

7. Where are ex post facto laws discussed and what does it say?

8. Where is the "full faith and credit clause" and what does it say?

9. There are two "due process" clauses. Where are they? What does "due process" of law imply?

10. Where is the "equal protection clause"? What does this imply?

11. Find the "takings clause" (aka eminent domain) of the 5th Amendment. What does this mean?

PART III. Constitutional Authorities

A. Majority & 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.
 - a. What bodies have the power to override a presidential veto?
 - b. What margin is required to override a presidential veto?
 - c. Where in the Constitution is the veto power described?
2.
 - a. What body has the power to ratify treaties?
 - b. What margin is required to ratify treaties?
 - c. Where in the Constitution is the ratification power described?
3. *To impeach* means “to bring charges against” or “to indict”.
 - a. What body has the power to impeach the president?
 - b. What vote is required to impeach?
 - c. What is the standard for impeachment (in other words, according to the Constitution, what can the President be impeached for)?
4.
 - a. 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?
 - b. What vote is required to convict and remove a president?
 - c. Where in the Constitution is the impeachment power described?
5.
 - a. What body has the power to accept or reject a president’s nominations to the Supreme Court?
 - b. What margin is required to elevate a president’s nominee to a seat on the Court?
 - c. Where in the Constitution are judicial nominations described?
 - d. What language is used to describe the roll of the Senate in Supreme Court nominations?
6.
 - a. 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?
 - b. What margin is required to choose the president?
 - c. Where in the Constitution is the Electoral College described? (Hint: there are two parts)
7. The Constitution specifies a three-fourths majority for just one process. What is it?
8. 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).
9. List all parts of the Constitution that require a supermajority. For each, *explain why* you believe there is a supermajority requirement.

10. What are two ways that amendments to the Constitution can be proposed?
11. What are two ways that amendments to the Constitution can be ratified? (Identify, describe, AND diagram each of the methods to amend the US Constitution)

Part IV. 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 protect 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	
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	

2. Which amendment(s) of the Constitution protect(s) the rights of women? Explain how.
3. Which amendment was written in response to the Vietnam War?
4. Which amendment (s) of the Constitution protects the rights of African Americans? Cite specific language.
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)?
8. Which amendments show the most obvious response to previous abuses by King George?