

Summer Assignment - The US Constitution

*In order to be successful as an AP US Government & Politics student, it is important that you have a solid understanding of the U.S. Constitution. This document is fundamental to our curriculum, and we will reference it throughout the course. **You will be turning this in and tested over this assignment within the first two weeks of the class.***

You do NOT need a textbook to complete this assignment. Use the attached PDF of the Constitution, or visit <https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution>, to complete this assignment. Read every word of the document from the Preamble through the 27th Amendment. **THIS MUST BE COMPLETED BY HAND - TYPED ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** You don't need to write in complete sentences; think of this as your own study guide, so give answers that are helpful for your learning, understanding, and memorizing.

Part I: STRUCTURE OF THE CONSTITUTION

- 1. THE PREAMBLE:** This paragraph, which begins with “We the People...”, outlines the basic tasks we ask our federal government to perform. List each one as it’s written in the document, then in the blank next to it, think of something the federal (national) government actually does to carry out this task.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Applicable Action</u>
a. _____	_____
b. _____	_____
c. _____	_____
d. _____	_____
e. _____	_____

- 2. Read each article of the Constitution. Summarize** the general purpose or subject of each article in one to two sentences in the chart below.

ARTICLE

I	
II	
III	

IV	
V	
VI	
VII	

3. Compare Articles I, II, and III. What are the primary differences?

4.

Constitutional eligibility requirements (also known as formal requirements), found in Articles I and II		
member of the HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES	member of the SENATE	the PRESIDENT

5. The powers of the Constitution that are specifically granted to the branches of government or to an officeholder 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.
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6. 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.
 - a. A power that the executive branch has over the legislative branch.
 - b. A power that the executive branch has over the judicial branch.
 - c. A power that the legislative branch holds over the executive branch.
 - d. A power that the legislative branch holds over the judicial branch.
 - e. A power that the judicial branch holds over the executive branch.
 - f. A power that the judicial branch holds over the legislative branch.
 7. According to Article I of the Constitution, who has the power to declare war?
 8. What power does the Constitution give the President in the area of war?

Part II: IMPORTANT CLAUSES

1. Where is the “**Commerce Clause**” and what does it mean (in your own words)?

2. Where is the “**Necessary and Proper Clause**” and what does it mean (in your own words)??
3. Where is the “**Supremacy Clause**” and what does it mean (in your own words)?
4. There are two “**due process**” clauses. Where are they? What does “due process” of law imply?
5. Where is the “**equal protection clause**”? What does this imply?

Part III: CHECKS AND BALANCES, FUNCTIONS OF BRANCHES

1. Veto
 - 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. Treaties
 - 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?
- d. Where in the Constitution is the impeachment power described?

4. Electoral College

- a. If no candidate for the presidency wins a simple majority of the total number of electoral votes, what body of government 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)

5. Article III: 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.)

6. Article V: What are two ways that amendments can be proposed?

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

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 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. You will be expected to memorize and know all 27 amendments to the Constitution.

Amendment	The general purpose of the Amendment, what rights or liberties does it ensure?
1	
2	
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