

US History TEST #2 --Review

Geography:

After surprisingly easy negotiations with the British to end hostilities, what were the boundaries of the new U.S.A.? --North, South, East, and West

Our First Constitution

What is the name of our country's first constitution?

What were its main characteristic/ideals? (all power to....where?)

Describe the amount of power that the federal government had under this constitution. Name one or two specific powers or functions.

WHY was the government set up this way, so weak? (Has to do with what the Americans had just dealt with and gone through...)

What does George Washington have to do with **this** government? (Trick question. There is a fallacy that needs to be exposed here.)

Through group simulation, discussion, and notes, we explored many problems with this form of government. List and describe three to five major problems.

One of the problems or weaknesses of this first constitution led to a crafty little conflict called Shay's Rebellion. Generally, what happened and WHY?

How do our studies with Thoreau connect with what Shay did?

The New (and current) U.S. Constitution

Why was power divided between three branches? (Has to do with why the Articles of Confederation was set-up with a weak central government. If a weak government is not the answer, well, then we still did not want a Parliament.)

Regardless, the general characteristic of this new U.S. government was different than the Articles of Confederation. This is shown in money, treaties and other things. Explain.

Some Main Powers of the Three Branches:

Name which branch holds which power:

Negotiates treaties

Approves treaties

Funds the armed forces

Commands the armed forces

Declares war

Nominates people to be federal judges.

Approves the other branch's choice of judiciary nominee

The place where bills are officially entered into our political system for a shot at becoming a law.

Approves or vetoes "bills" passed by another branch

Can impeach an elected official

Initially decides if taxes are to go up or down

Officially represents the U.S. internationally

Throws out laws deemed "unconstitutional"

Reviews decisions by lower courts for constitutional correctness

In a short answer, you will have to explain your choices for the following:

Which branch or branches regularly propose new legislation?

Which branch or branches have duties which involve dismissing bills and/or laws?

(You cannot just give me names of branches for these; you must explain what they do for involvement in these actions.)

Name the two houses of the U.S. Legislature:

How is each house's membership designed?

(by state population? same number for each state? And in this, how many for each state?)

Basically, how does a "bill" become a law?

Political Parties and our Electoral Process

In a sentence, tell what Republicans stand for.

In a sentence, tell what Democrats stand for.

If I name a policy, like laws that force corporations to clean up their waste, or stopping a law that restricts gun use, could you tell which party would be behind these?

When or where do political parties announce their stands (or modifications) on all the various issues (like abortion funding, welfare reform, pollution issues, etc.)?

What good are political parties to the average voter? (hint: time saver...?)

Starting from square one, explain how a person makes it to the Presidency; that is, getting to be his party's nominee, through the national presidential election process. Consider:

The Primary election.

The main public presidential vote: What are we **really** voting for?

“Electoral votes” per state and the electoral process; winner take all, etc.

Bill of Rights, Judicial Branch and the Supreme Court

The Bill of Rights is famous for such freedoms as speech, religion, press, etc. However, to what subject is most of the Bill of Rights devoted?

What is “Tyranny of the Majority?” (give example)

Explain how the Judicial Branch stops a Tyranny of the Majority.

(In your answer, include why the justices of the Supreme Court are not beholding to the public to keep their jobs, and why this is a good thing.)

Supreme Court **precedent** is a powerful thing with several facets. Define this concept:

Explain the idea that the Supreme Court is actually making laws (defacto) that we all must follow.

Precedent, itself, restrains judges and justices. Name two or three **other** limits on the Court's incredible power. (There are three that come to mind. With one of these, you must understand that the Supreme Court is NOT a third stop for a bill to become a law. In order for the Supreme Court to strike down a law, it must wait for.....? Another hint is what it is the justices look at to decide if a law must be struck down.)