

Ohio's State AIR Test - American Government Quick Review

CIVIC INVOLVEMENT, PARTICIPATION AND SKILLS

Addressing a problem through the political process or public policy

- political processes - acquisition of power and influencing decision making
- public policy processes - institutional actions involved with government carrying out its functions
- civic engagement - apply information literacy, problem-solving and communication skills to address societal problems

Political parties, interest groups and the media

- political parties - organizations whose members hold similar views - seek to determine public policy through winning elections and public office
- interest groups - organizations whose members hold similar views - seek to influence public policy through the political and public policy processes
- media - means of mass communication
- political parties and interest groups use media to influence the political and public policy processes

Analyzing issues through credible sources

- researching a civic issue - determining which sources of information are relevant, identifying the perspective, evaluating credibility of sources
- credibility of sources: qualifications of writer; circumstances in which source material was generated; internal consistency and agreement with other credible sources; use of supporting evidence and logical conclusions; bias or unstated assumptions

Resolution of conflicts

- persuasion- inducing others into accepting a point of view through reasoning and argumentation
- compromise - making concessions
- consensus building - working toward achieving general agreement
- negotiation - settling differences through discussion of issues

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE CONSTITUTION

Principles of a federal republic

- popular sovereignty - authority derived from the people; consent of governed
- limited government - government can only exercise powers granted to it; according to the rule of law
- federalism - power is divided between a central authority and constituent units (national government and states)
- separation of powers - distribution of powers among independent branches
- checks and balances - controlling government power - branches can restrain actions of other branches

Federalists and Anti-Federalists on limited government

- Federalists: for Constitutional ratification; for the supremacy of the national government; for more powers given to the national government to address weakness of Articles (taxation, national executive and judiciary); for necessary and proper and supremacy clauses
- Anti-Federalists: against Constitutional ratification; for supremacy of state governments; for the need of a national bill of rights to protect citizens from the powers of national government; and against the necessary and proper and supremacy clauses
- Constitution ratified; Anti-Federalists achieved success through limitations of government in the Bill of Rights

Civil Liberties Protections in the Bill of Rights

- freedoms guaranteed by 1st Amendment: religion, assembly, press, petition, speech;
- right to bear arms;
- no unreasonable search and seizure, no warrants without probable cause;
- no self-incrimination, protection against double jeopardy;
- right to speedy and public trial by an impartial jury, right to be informed of the charges, the right to confront one's accuser(s), the right to counsel;
- no cruel or unusual punishment; and,
- any power not given to the federal government is given to the states or the people

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Changing Constitutional Government

- Article V - processes for amending Constitution - add to, modified, replaced, and/or voided provisions of the original and amendments
- judicial review - Supreme Court has declared actions of other branches and states unconstitutional
- Congress has build upon the framework of the Constitution - e.g., civil rights acts and voting rights acts
- informal practices - changed how constitutional government has been implemented - e.g., legislative oversight of executive branch grew out of Congress' need for information to help draft new legislation

Reconstruction Amendments extended constitutional protections

- abolishing slavery;
- defining and extending citizenship to all persons born or naturalized in the U.S.;
- prohibiting the states from denying due process and equal protection of the law to all persons;
- preventing the denial of voting rights based on race, color, or previous condition of servitude
- did not achieve immediate equality because of Jim Crow laws

Civil Rights and Suffrage for Disenfranchised groups

- Some amendments prohibited the denial of voting rights based on: race, color, previous condition of servitude; age (18-20 year olds); and gender
- Poll taxes limited voting rights for African Americans and poor people

Constitutional Amendments altered the structure and functions of federal government

- Electoral College: president chosen based on electoral votes from states - determined based upon number of each state's reps and senators
- amendments altered Electoral College: separate balloting for president and vice president to avoid a tie
- Amendments altered functioning of government: presidential term limits, presidential succession and disability

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<p><u>STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT</u></p> <p>Powers and responsibilities of the three branches of government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • laws are rules - recognized as binding, enforced by a government • public policy - institutional actions by government in carrying out functions • Constitution establishes roles for each branch in law and public policy • legislative branch - makes laws • executive branch - enforces laws • judicial branch - interpret laws • legislative public policy - oversight investigations, impeachment, approving treaties, resolutions • executive public policy- executive orders, propose federal budget, recognize foreign nations • judicial public policy- amicus curiae briefs, writs of certiorari, judicial procedures, sentencing offenders <p>Political process and interaction of three branches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interactions range from working in concert to checks and balances • legislative checks on executive - veto override, impeachment, Senate approval of appointments and treaties, raise and govern military • legislative checks on judicial - creation of lower courts, determine Supreme Court appellate jurisdiction impeachment of judges • executive checks on legislative - convene Congress, veto legislation • executive checks on judicial- appoint judges, issue pardons and reprieves • judicial checks on legislative - Chief Justice presides over impeachment trials of president, interpret laws • judicial checks on executive - judges not subject to removal by president, interpret and apply laws • interaction impacted by interest groups, political party control, public interest, media coverage, informal relationship among branch members 	<p><u>PUBLIC POLICY</u></p> <p>Public policy in the branches and levels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • federal executive public policy - State Department - advises president on foreign policy and directs embassies • federal legislative public policy - Congressional Budget Office - provides analyses of economic and budget data • state legislative public policy - Ohio Legislative Service Commission - assists in drafting legislation • state judicial public policy - Ohio Courts of Common Pleas - apply sentencing • local legislative/executive public policy - county commissions - tax abatements • policy may involve multiple levels and branches - collaboration or conflict <p>Methods used by individuals and organizations to engage government on public policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • campaign for candidates • provide information to executive branch • lobby members of a legislature • testimony to legislative committees • prepare briefs to present during judicial proceedings • comments during public meetings • conduct letter-writing campaigns • hold public demonstrations • must know proper level and branch to engage at various stages of making public policy 	<p><u>GOVERNMENT AND THE ECONOMY</u></p> <p>Fiscal policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expansionary - increased government spending and reduced taxes to increase aggregate demand • contractionary - decreased government spending and increased taxes to decrease aggregate demand • difficulties - much govt spending is fixed; expansionary policies could result in inflation and contractionary could result in recession; expansionary policies are popular, contractionary policies tend to be unpopular • government regulations - benefits - prohibiting unfair business practices, consumer protection; costs - reduced corporate profits, slower econ. growth <p>Monetary policy to regulate money supply</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monetary tools by Federal Reserve - open market operations, discount rate, reserve requirement • purchasing govt securities, reducing discount rate, reducing reserve requirement → increase money supply, decrease interest rates, encourage spending, foster expansion • selling govt securities, increasing discount rate, increasing reserve requirement → reduce money supply, increase interest rates, depress spending, foster contraction
<p><u>ROLE OF THE PEOPLE</u></p> <p>Responsibilities of citizenship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • general responsibilities - respecting rule of law, paying taxes, accepting responsibility for one's actions • responsibilities associated with exercise of particular rights - privileges and immunities→respecting rights of others; free speech→civil discourse; bear arms→firearms training; jury trial→ serving on juries; right to vote → becoming informed on public issues • service - military service, community service, serving in public office 	<p><u>ROLE OF THE PEOPLE</u></p> <p>Rights as protection from government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bill of Rights - specific rights and unstated rights • 14th Amendment due process clause-doctrine of incorporation - Bill of Rights applies to state and local governments • many rights protect ability to participate in political process - speech, press, assembly, petition, suffrage, hold office <p>Individual rights are relative, not absolute</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exercise of rights must be balanced by rights of others and the common good <p>Free exercise of rights by all people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historically, certain groups have not been able to fully exercise their rights - government has taken actions to protect their ability to participate • Constitutional amendments - suffrage to women; eliminated poll taxes used to restrict African Americans from voting • Executive branch - used troops to integrate schools and charge violators of open housing legislation • Legislative branch - passed civil rights and voting rights acts • Supreme Court - used due process and equal protection of 14th amendment to apply Bill of Rights to the states 	<p><u>OHIO'S STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS</u></p> <p>Similarities and Differences between Ohio and U.S. Constitution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similarities: separation of powers into 3 branches (executive, judicial, legislative); checks & balances; limited govt; bill of rights; popular sovereignty; elections • Differences: Ohio - citizens can directly vote on laws through initiative and referendum; judges are elected; legislators are term limited • Differences: U.S. - Legislators vote on laws for citizens; judges are appointed; legislators do not have term limits <p>1851 Ohio Constitution changes to improve governing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major executive officials and all judges were to be elected • District courts were added • Debt limitations were instituted <p>Role of Ohio citizens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • state - taxes, National Guard, running for office, voting, signing petitions • local - organizing civic activities, attending meetings of local boards, joining community watch groups, serving in volunteer fire department