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Summer Reading  
American Government & Politics

American Government & Politics is a challenging course that is meant to be the equivalent of a freshman college course and can earn students college credit. Solid reading and writing skills, along with a willingness to devote time to homework and study, are necessary to succeed. Emphasis is placed on critical and evaluative thinking skills and essay writing.

Required Text: A copy of The Constitution of the United States of America.

You can find it online at [newsela.com](http://newsela.com)

I am asking that you complete the summer assignment to help prepare for the class. This assignment will enhance your knowledge of American Government and will enable us to begin the course as soon as school starts. Remember, you are required to be in this class and your success will depend upon your willingness to prepare for it.

Complete Each question and submit before the first day of school. If the assignment is not completed by the first day of school you will receive a 0 for the assignment. The teacher must be notified of any extenuating circumstances PRIOR to the FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL.

Plagiarism of any amount or type will result in a zero for the entire project.

Assignment

Obtain a copy of the United States Constitution.

- Read it and know it well.
- Read each article and section. Know the content of the sections; powers of Congress, President and the Supreme Court; requirements of membership; how members are elected; content of the amendments...
- Answer the attached questions.

The US Constitution

Available at: <http://www.usconstitution.net/const.html> or  
<http://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/constitution.overview.html>  
[www.Newsela.com](http://www.Newsela.com)

Directions: Read the US Constitution and complete the following questions directly on this handout.

Part I – The Overall Structure of the Constitution

1. Read each article of the Constitution. In your own words, summarize the general purpose or subject of each article in one or two sentences in the chart below.

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

2. What eligibility requirements does the US Constitution establish for the following governmental leaders?

House of Representatives	Senate	Presidency

3. How long does each member of the government serve for each term?

House of Representatives	Senate	Presidency

4. How many terms may someone serve as President?

5. How many Senators does each state have?

6. How many House members does each state have?

7. Who is the leader of the House?

8. Who is the President of the Senate?

9. Who follows the President and Vice President in succession?

10. Define *express powers*

11. Identify three *express powers* of the president.

12. Identify three *express powers* of Congress.

13. According to the principle of checks and balances, each branch of the government must have some control over the other two branches. Look at the first three articles of the US 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 holds 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.

14. According to Article I of the Constitution, who has the power to declare war?

15. What power does the Constitution give the President in the area of war?

16. Who has the power to override a presidential veto?
  
17. What voting margin is required to override a presidential veto?
  
18. Where in the Constitution is the veto power described?
  
19. *To impeach* means “to bring charges against” or “to indict”.
  - a. What body has the power to impeach the president?
  
  - b. Where in the Constitution is the impeachment power described?
  
  - c. 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?
  
  - d. What voting margin is required to convict and remove a president from office?
  
20. What body has the power to accept or reject a president’s nominations to the Supreme Court?
  
21. How long does a Supreme Court justice serve?
  
22. What is the purpose of the Electoral College?
  
23. 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?

The Amendments to the Constitution

The first ten amendments to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, protect citizens from the will of the majority. Read each amendment to the Constitution and answer the questions below.

24. In your own words, identify the general purpose of the first 10 Amendments of the US Constitution.

Amendment 1
Amendment 2
Amendment 3
Amendment 4
Amendment 5
Amendment 6
Amendment 7
Amendment 8
Amendment 9
Amendment 10

25. What are two ways that amendments to the Constitution can be proposed?
26. What are two ways that amendments to the Constitution can be ratified?
27. Which amendment(s) of the Constitution protects the rights of African Americans?
28. Which amendment(s) of the Constitution protects the rights of women?
29. Which amendment(s) of the Constitution relate to Suffrage?
30. The Twenty-Fifth Amendment describes the sequence of events that would install the vice president as acting president against the will of the president. Describe that process.