

INDIANA BAR

FOUNDATION

We the People

2021 High School Regional Questions

Unit 1: What Are the Philosophical and Historical Foundations of the American Political System?

(Question 2) What are the fundamental characteristics of a constitutional government?

- In what ways does constitutional government mean limited government?
- Describe at least three provisions of the Constitution that provide a means of preventing the abuse or misuse of governmental power. Explain how these provisions work in our system of government today.

(Question 3) What effect did colonial experiences have on the Founders' views about rights and government?

- In what ways were eighteenth-century American and British societies similar or dissimilar in terms of the rights of individual liberty, equality of opportunity, and property?
- How did early state constitutions reflect colonial experiences as well as the ideas of classical republicanism and the natural rights philosophy?

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Unit 2: How Did the Framers Create the Constitution?

(Question 2) What were the major conflicts at the Philadelphia Convention and how were they resolved?

- What arguments can you make for and against giving each state the right to send the same number of members to the Senate?
- What arguments can you make for and against including the three-fifths clause and the fugitive slave clause in the Constitution?

(Question 3) What were the major differences between the Federalists and Anti-Federalists?

- How did the arguments of the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists reflect their points of view regarding natural rights, republicanism, and the powers of the states?
- Why are the Federalist and Anti-Federalist debates still relevant today?

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Unit 3: How Has the Constitution Been Changed to Further the Ideals Contained in the Declaration of Independence?

(Question 2) How and why has suffrage been expanded in the United States?

- Why has the expansion of suffrage been controversial?
- How have advocates of expanded suffrage used their rights under the First Amendment to achieve their goals?

(Question 3) What are the major arguments for and against judicial review?

- Alexander Hamilton claimed in Federalist 78 that “the interpretation of the laws in the proper and peculiar province of the courts.” Do you agree or disagree? Why?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of an appointed, life-tenured branch of government overturning laws passed by a democratically elected body of government?

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Unit 4: How Have the Values and Principles Embodied in the Constitution Shaped American Institutions and Practices?

(Question 1) In the Constitution, why are the powers of and limits on Congress addressed first and in greater detail than those of other branches?

- In addition to the powers granted to Congress in Article I, what other provisions in the Constitution address legislative powers? Why?
- How have the “enforcement” provisions of amendments adopted since the Civil War increased congressional power?

(Question 3) How and why did the Founders create American’s system of federalism?

- How does federalism limit the power of both the national government and the states?
- How does federalism expand opportunities for citizen participation?

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Unit 5: What Rights Does the Bill of Rights Protect?

(Question 1) Why have First Amendment rights been viewed as essential to the functioning of a free society?

- In what ways have these rights been of particular importance to women and minorities?
- Although First Amendment rights are considered essential in a constitutional democracy, it is sometimes argued that these rights must be limited. Under what circumstances, if any, do you think limitations are justified? Explain your answer.

(Question 3) What fundamental American values are embodied in the Fourth Amendment?

- Why have Fourth Amendment issues been a persistent concern from colonial times until today?
- How and why does modern technology raise new concerns about the Fourth Amendment?

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Unit 6: What Challenges Might Face American Constitutional Democracy in the Twenty-First Century?

(Question 1) Why does the United States' commitment to the rule of law appeal to other peoples?

- How would you explain the meaning of the rule of law?
- How do America's founding documents express the nation's commitment to the rule of law?

(Question 2) What do you think are the greatest challenges of American citizenship today?

- Why and how does constitutional democracy in the United States depend on the active participation of its citizens?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages, if any, of being a citizen of both the United States and the state in which you reside?