

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Constitution Summer Assignment

This is your summer assignment to prepare for AP US Government and Politics in the fall of 2019. The expectation is that you have completed this summer assignment prior to the first day of class. It should take 2-5 hours to finish.

The Constitution and amendments form the basis of our study of US Government. It is also a required document on the AP exam. This guide will be useful to you throughout the semester, and prior to the AP exam.

**Directions:** find the U.S. Constitution online at <https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution> and use it to take C-Notes. The Interactive Constitution is amazing because it has both the text of the Constitution and amendments as well as great analyses. You can even install the Interactive Constitution's free app on your phone!

## What to expect the first week of class

There will be a **basic reading quiz about the original Constitution on Wednesday, August 21, 2019**, during which you may have this packet in front of you, and receive **up to 30 points extra credit on your quiz grade for great work**. That extra credit opportunity (extra credit for great notes) will also apply to every other reading quiz in the course, although on other quizzes you will take your own C-notes. **If you don't have reading notes for quizzes, I will subtract up to 10 points from your quiz grade.** The reading quiz is about the original Constitution; not the amendments, just the articles. **On Friday, August 23, 2019, we will take a difficult test over the Articles and the amendments.** On tests, you may *not* use reading notes. Although this test will include the amendments, it will do so at a basic level of detail (which amendment is about this subject, or which subject is this amendment about). Questions about the articles will be at a much greater level of difficulty. I will also pick up this packet at that time, and give you points for completing it.

## Cornell Notes format

This reading guide is set up as Cornell Notes. The purpose of Cornell Notes is to create a dialogue between you and your notes, which helps you to remember what you write. If it did not serve this purpose, writing all your notes would not be worth the time and effort. Usually, you will be writing your own notes down based on the structure of the text in front of you, then annotating and asking questions. To help scaffold your C-notes experience, questions have already been added along the side to guide what you write in the main notes area. Every so often, there is also a break for a summary in your own words. We will discuss C-notes more extensively once the year begins, but they are the required format for all readings in the course – and we will have reading quizzes frequently.

## How to study your C-notes

First, wait at least a day after you write things down for the first time. Then, go back and highlight your notes. Circle key vocabulary. Annotate them again with connections between concepts. Try folding the page so that you only see the questions, and respond out loud to see which questions you remember answers to. Come up with an image to represent an important concept, then picture that image in a real location that you can "attach" it to in your mind.

## How to study the Articles and amendments so that you remember them

- Remember the amendments using the alphabet, at  
<http://www.mrsmithsclass.info/Home/AtoZAmendmentsReview>
- YouTube videos:
  - o <https://youtu.be/epuwfzEJ4PU>
  - o <https://youtu.be/KLeRsku1j18>
  - o <https://youtu.be/iWkdtEd-6wM>

Questions	Notes
What is the purpose of the first three words of the Preamble?	
Why does the Preamble exist as part of the document? Is it legally binding? If so, how? If not, why not?	
If the Constitution is a legal document, what's the point of a preamble that doesn't create any laws?	
What does Article I deal with? How often does the House of Representatives have elections? Does the House have any special powers? Describe them.	
How often are senators up for election? How might this make the Senate and the House different?	
Does the Senate have any special powers? Describe them.	

Questions	Notes
What is in Article 1 section 6 and 7?  List the powers specifically given to Congress in section 8 (abbreviate!). By the end of the course, you should get to know these very well.	
Explain the importance of the “ <b>Necessary and Proper</b> ” clause. Use the Interactive Constitution’s analyses.  What powers does the Constitution specifically deny Congress? In particular look up: “habeas corpus,” “bill of attainder,” “ex post facto.” Why was it important to the framers to limit the power of the Congress? What role does the Vice President play in the Senate?	
Article I Summary	

Questions	Notes
What is Article II about?	
What are the President's powers and duties as explained by the Constitution?	
What is impeachment? Be careful – many students get this wrong and it is often a gotcha question on the AP exam.	
Considering the length of Article I compared with that of II, what do you think the founders wanted to communicate about the branches?	
Where is the federal bureaucracy (cabinet departments, agencies, and the like) in the Constitution? How is the President connected to the federal bureaucracy? Here again you may have to do a bit of research.	
Article II Summary	

Questions	Notes
What is Article III about?  Who is responsible for creating the structure of the federal courts?  How long do judges and justices serve? What does that mean?  What do the federal courts have jurisdiction over? (You may need to look up the word "jurisdiction.")	
Article III Summary	
Questions	Notes
What is Article IV about?  Explain what "full faith and credit" means and how you think it is interpreted. Note that "privileges and immunities" has a similar importance.  What is Article V about? Look into this; which of the mechanisms have been used since 1789?  What is the point of the second paragraph of Article VI?	
Articles IV-VI Summary	

Questions	Notes
What is Article VII about? Why do you think we probably won't talk about it much in class?	

Below are six principles of American government, which we will refer to often in this course (so, they are important). Define each one, then give an example of a place in the Constitution that illustrates each principle.

Term	Define	Examples in Constitution/amendments
Limited government		
Popular sovereignty		
Federalism		
Separation of powers		
Checks and balances		
Judicial independence		