

American Government

A: Principles of American Democracy

1. What is the supreme law of the land?

Correct answer: The Constitution

Explanation: The Constitution is the highest law in the United States. It is the oldest written Constitution in the world.

2. What does the Constitution do?

Correct answers (choose one):

- sets up the government
- defines the government
- protects basic rights of Americans

3. The idea of self-government is in the first three words of the Constitution. What are these words?

Correct answer: We the People

Explanation: The first three words encompass all American citizens and serve to emphasize that the U.S. government is ruled by the people.

4. What is an amendment?

Correct answers (choose one):

- a change (to the Constitution) or
- an addition (to the Constitution)

Explanation: The U.S. Constitution is a living document, meaning it can be added to or altered. The Constitution has been amended 27 times.

5. What do we call the first ten amendments to the Constitution?

Correct answer: The Bill of Rights

Explanation: The first 10 amendments to the Constitution were adopted on December 15, 1791. Known as the Bill of Rights, it details the rights of the people in relation to the U.S. government.

6. What is one right or freedom from the First Amendment?*

Correct answers (choose one):

- speech
- religion
- assembly
- press
- petition the government

Explanation: The First Amendment protects the right to freedom of expression as well as the right to peaceful protest and to petition the government.

7. How many amendments does the Constitution have?

Correct answer: 27

Explanation: Since 1789, there have been 27 amendments to the U.S. Constitution.

8. What did the Declaration of Independence do?

Correct answers (choose one):

- announced our independence from Great Britain
- declared our independence from Great Britain
- said that the U.S. is free from Great Britain

Explanation: Adopted on July 4, 1776, the Declaration of Independence announced the separation of the United States from Great Britain.

9. What are two rights in the Declaration of Independence?

Correct answers (choose two):

- life
- liberty
- pursuit of happiness

Explanation: The Declaration of Independence proclaims that all people are created equal and that everyone has three fundamental rights, namely to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

10. What is freedom of religion?

Correct answer: You can practice any religion, or not practice a religion.

Explanation: The First Amendment states that everyone in the U.S. has the right to choose what religion to follow, including the right to change your religion at any time.

11. What is the economic system in the United States?*

Correct answers (choose one):

- capitalist economy
- market economy

Explanation: Capitalism is a type of economic system wherein private individuals, and not the government, own the majority of businesses and can generate profit.

12. What is the “rule of law”?

Correct answers (choose one):

- Everyone must follow the law.
- Leaders must obey the law.
- Government must obey the law.
- No one is above the law.

Explanation: The notion of the rule of law is a fundamental principle of the U.S. Constitution.

B: System of Government

13. Name one branch or part of the government*

Correct answers (choose one):

- Congress
- legislative
- President
- Executive
- the courts
- judicial

Explanation: The United States government is divided into three parts to ensure a separation of powers. The three branches work together to govern the country.

14. What stops one branch of government from becoming too powerful?

Correct answers (choose one):

- checks and balances
- separation of powers

Explanation: Checks and balances ensure that no one branch in the U.S. government becomes too powerful.

15. Who is in charge of the executive branch?

Correct answer: The President

Explanation: The President of the United States oversees the executive branch, which ensures that the laws of the country are obeyed.

16. Who makes federal laws?

Correct answers (choose one):

- Congress
- Senate and House of Representatives
- U.S. or national legislature

Explanation: Congress is the only branch of government that can create new laws or change existing laws.

17. What are the two parts of the U.S. Congress?*

Correct answer: The Senate and House of Representatives

Explanation: The legislative branch of the U.S. government is responsible for making laws, and is comprised of the Senate and House of Representatives.

18. How many U.S. senators are there?

Correct Answer: 100

Explanation: Each of the 50 U.S. states elects two senators to represent them in the Senate. This excludes territories such as Puerto Rico and American Samoa, as well as the federal capital city of D.C., formally the District of Columbia. Fifty states with two senators each = 100 U.S. senators.

19. We elect a U.S. Senator for how many years?

Correct answer: 6

Explanation: The term of office for a U.S. senator is six years, and every two years, one third of the Senate runs for reelection.

20. Who is one of your state's U.S. Senators now?*

Correct answer: The answer will vary based on where the applicant lives. Note: District of Columbia residents and those living in U.S. territories should answer that D.C. (or the territory where they live) has no senators.

21. The House of Representatives has how many voting members?

Correct answer: 435

Explanation: The House of Representatives has 435 members, who proportionally represent the population of all 50 states.

22. We elect a U.S. Representative for how many years?

Correct answer: 2

Explanation: All U.S. House members serve a two-year term, and may run for reelection every even year.

23. Name your U.S. Representative

Correct answer: The answer will vary based on where the applicant lives. Note: District of Columbia residents and those living in U.S. territories should answer that D.C. (or the territory where they live) has no House representatives.

24. Who does a U.S. Senator represent?

Correct answer: All people of the state

Explanation: Each state has two senators who represent all the residents of that state.

25. Why do some states have more Representatives than other states?

Correct answers (choose one):

- because of the state's population
- because they have more people
- because some states have more people

Explanation: The number of representatives for a state depends on the state's population — some states have more people, so those states will have more representatives.

26. We elect a President for how many years?

Correct answer: 4

Explanation: The presidential elections take place every four years, and a president can serve for a total of two terms.

27. In what month do we vote for President?*

Correct answer: November

Explanation: The presidential elections occur every four years on the first Tuesday in November.

28. What is the name of the President of the United States now?*

Correct answer: Go to [uscis.gov/citizenship/testupdates](https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/testupdates) (<https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/find-study-materials-and-resources/check-for-test-updates>) to learn the name of the current U.S. president.

29. What is the name of the Vice President of the United States now?

Correct answer: Go to [uscis.gov/citizenship/testupdates](https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/testupdates) (<https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/find-study-materials-and-resources/check-for-test-updates>) to learn the name of the current U.S. vice president.

30. If the President can no longer serve, who becomes President?

Correct answer: The vice president

Explanation: The U.S. vice president is the head of the Senate, and will take over as president if the president dies or resigns.

31. If both the President and the Vice President can no longer serve, who becomes President?

Correct answer: The Speaker of the House

Explanation: Next in line is the Speaker of the House if both the president and the vice president cannot serve.

32. Who is the Commander in Chief of the military?

Correct answer: The president

Explanation: In addition to being Chief Executive, the president is also Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy.

33. Who signs bills to become laws?

Correct answer: The president

Explanation: After Congress passes a bill, the President signs the bill into law.

34. Who vetoes bills?

Correct answer: The president

Explanation: Only the president has the power to veto a bill, meaning he or she can prevent a bill from going into effect.

35. What does the President's Cabinet do?

Correct answer: Advises the president

Explanation: The president's cabinet consists of the vice president and the heads of the 15 executive departments.

36. Name two Cabinet-level positions

Correct answers (choose two):

- Secretary of Agriculture
- Secretary of Commerce
- Secretary of Defense

- Secretary of Education
- Secretary of Energy
- Secretary of Health and Human Services
- Secretary of Homeland Security
- Secretary of Housing and Urban Development
- Secretary of the Interior
- Secretary of Labor
- Secretary of State
- Secretary of Transportation
- Secretary of the Treasury
- Secretary of Veterans Affairs
- Attorney General
- Vice President

37. What does the judicial branch do?

Correct answers (choose one):

- reviews laws
- explains laws
- resolves disputes (disagreements)
- decides if a law goes against the Constitution

Explanation: The judicial branch is a court system and is made up of different courts, namely the Supreme, Circuit, magistrate, and municipal courts.

38. What is the highest court in the United States?

Correct answer: The Supreme Court

Explanation: The Supreme Court decides whether or not laws align with the U.S. Constitution.

39. How many justices are on the Supreme Court?

Correct answer: Go to [uscis.gov/citizenship/testupdates](https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/testupdates) (<https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/find-study-materials-and-resources/check-for-test-updates>) to learn the number of justices on the Supreme Court.

40. Who is the Chief Justice of the United States now?

Correct answer: Go to uscis.gov/citizenship/testupdates (<https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/find-study-materials-and-resources/check-for-test-updates>) to learn the name of the Chief Justice of the United States.

41. Name one power of the federal government?

Correct answers (choose one):

- to print money
- to declare war
- to create an army
- to make treaties

42. Name one power of the states

Correct answers (choose one):

- provide schooling and education
- provide protection (police)
- provide safety (fire departments)
- give a driver's license
- approve zoning and land use

43. Who is the Governor of your state now?

Correct answer: The answer will vary based on where the applicant lives (D.C. residents should answer that D.C. doesn't have a governor).

44. What is the capital of your state?*

Correct answer: The answer will vary based on where the applicant lives (D.C. residents should answer that D.C. isn't a state and therefore doesn't have a capital. Residents of U.S. territories must name the capital of their territory).

45. Name two major political parties in the United States?

*

Correct answer: Democratic and Republican

Explanation: Two major political parties dominate American politics. The Democratic party traditionally represents a more liberal ideology while the Republican party represents a more conservative ideology.

46. What is the political party of the President now?

Correct answer: Go to uscis.gov/citizenship/testupdates (<https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/find-study-materials-and-resources/check-for-test-updates>) to learn the political party of the current president.

47. What is the name of the Speaker of the House of Representatives now?

Correct answer: Go to uscis.gov/citizenship/testupdates (<https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/find-study-materials-and-resources/check-for-test-updates>) to learn the name of the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

C: Rights and Responsibilities

48. Describe one of the four amendments to the Constitution about who can vote

Correct answers (choose one):

- Citizens 18 and older can vote.
- You don't have to pay a poll tax to vote.
- Any citizen can vote.
- A male citizen of any race can vote.

Explanation: The 15th, 19th, 24th, and 26th amendments relate to the ability to vote.

49. Name one responsibility that is only for US citizens*

Correct answers (choose one):

- serve on a jury
- vote in a federal election

Explanation: Check out the Boundless guide on the [rights and responsibilities of U.S. citizens](https://www.boundless.com/immigration-resources/benefits-of-us-citizenship/) (<https://www.boundless.com/immigration-resources/benefits-of-us-citizenship/>).

50. Name one right only for United States citizens

Correct answers (choose one):

- vote in a federal election
- run for federal office

Explanation: Check out the Boundless guide on the [rights and responsibilities of U.S. citizens \(https://www.boundless.com/immigration-resources/benefits-of-us-citizenship/\)](https://www.boundless.com/immigration-resources/benefits-of-us-citizenship/).

51. Name two rights of everyone living in the U.S.

Correct answers (choose one):

- freedom of expression
- freedom of speech
- freedom of assembly
- freedom to petition the government
- freedom of religion
- the right to bear arms

52. What do we show loyalty to when we say the Pledge of Allegiance?

Correct answers:

- the United States
- the flag

Explanation: The Pledge of Allegiance promises loyalty to the United States. New citizens recite the Pledge of Allegiance at the end of the [Oath of Allegiance ceremony \(https://www.boundless.com/immigration-resources/us-citizenship-oath-of-allegiance-ceremony/\)](https://www.boundless.com/immigration-resources/us-citizenship-oath-of-allegiance-ceremony/).

53. Name one promise you make when you become a U.s.citizen

- give up loyalty to other countries

- defend the Constitution and laws of the United States
- obey the laws of the United States
- serve in the U.S. military (if needed)
- serve (do important work for) the nation (if needed)
- be loyal to the United States

Explanation: Check out the Boundless guide on the [rights and responsibilities of U.S. citizens](https://www.boundless.com/immigration-resources/benefits-of-us-citizenship/) (<https://www.boundless.com/immigration-resources/benefits-of-us-citizenship/>).

54. What age do citizens have to be to vote for president?*

Correct answer: 18 and older

55. Name two ways that u.s. citizens can participate in their democracy

Correct answers (choose two):

- vote
- join a political party
- help with a campaign
- join a civic group
- join a community group
- give an elected official your opinion on an issue
- call Senators and Representatives
- publicly support or oppose an issue or policy
- run for office
- write to a newspaper

56. What date is the last day you can submit federal income tax forms?*

Correct answer: The date is typically on or around April 15

Explanation: Learn more about the [basics of filing taxes](https://www.boundless.com/blog/immigrants-filing-taxes/) (<https://www.boundless.com/blog/immigrants-filing-taxes/>), as an immigrant.

57. When must all men register for the Selective Service?

Correct answers (choose one):

- At 18
- Between 18 and 26

Explanation: Nearly all men who are U.S. citizens or permanently living in the U.S. must register for the Selective Service within 30 days of their 18th birthday. The Selective Service accepts late registrations up until a male turns 26.

American History

A: Colonial Period and Independence

58. Name one reason colonists came to America?

Correct answers (choose one):

- freedom
- political liberty
- religious freedom
- economic opportunity
- practice their religion
- escape persecution

Explanation: The English settlers came to America for different reasons, and they came from various backgrounds and religions.

59. Who lived in America before the Europeans arrived?

Correct answers (choose one):

- American Indians
- Native Americans

Explanation: Before the British settlers arrived, Native Americans lived in tribes across the continent.

60. Which group of people was taken to the u.s. and sold as slaves?

Correct answers (choose one):

- Africans
- people from Africa

Explanation: It is believed the first African slaves arrived by boat in Virginia in 1619, although some accounts say slaves arrived sooner from Africa.

61. Why did the colonists fight the British?

Correct answers (choose one):

- because of high taxes (taxation without representation)
- because the British army stayed in their houses
- because they didn't have self-government

Explanation: The American Revolutionary War lasted from 1775 to 1783, which led to the United States' independence from Britain.

62. Who wrote the Declaration of Independence?

Correct answer: Thomas Jefferson

Explanation: Thomas Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence, which was the formal statement declaring the U.S. its own country independent from Britain.

63. When was the Declaration of Independence adopted?

Correct answer: July 4, 1776

Explanation: On July 4, 1776, the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence. The U.S. now celebrates Independence Day every July 4th.

64. Name three of the 13 original states

Correct answers (choose three):

- New Hampshire
- Massachusetts

- Rhode Island
- Connecticut
- New York
- New Jersey
- Pennsylvania
- Delaware
- Maryland
- Virginia
- North Carolina
- South Carolina
- Georgia

65. What happened at the Constitutional Convention?

Correct answers (choose one):

- The Constitution was written.
- The Founding Fathers wrote the Constitution.

Explanation: The Constitutional Convention took place in Philadelphia from May 14-September 17, 1787 with the goal of redesigning the system of government.

66. When was the Constitution written?

Correct answer: 1787

Explanation: The Constitution was written during the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia.

67. Name one of the writers of the Federalist Papers

Correct answers (name one):

- (James) Madison
- (Alexander) Hamilton
- (John) Jay
- Publius

Explanation: The Federalist Papers consisted of 85 essays arguing for the ratification of the U.S. Constitution.

68. Name one thing Benjamin Franklin is famous for?

Correct answers (name one):

- U.S. diplomat
- oldest member of the Constitutional Convention
- first Postmaster General of the United States
- writer of "Poor Richard's Almanac"
- started the first free libraries

69. Who is considered the "Father of Our Country"?

Correct answer: (George) Washington

Explanation: George Washington was the commander of the army during the American Revolution, he presided over the Constitutional Convention, and he was the first president of the United States.

70. Who was the first president?*

Correct answer: (George) Washington

Explanation: George Washington was president of the United States from 1789-1797.

B: 1800s

71. What territory did the United States buy from France in 1803?

Correct answers (choose one):

- the Louisiana Territory
- Louisiana

Explanation: Known as the Louisiana Purchase, the United States paid France \$15 million for the 828,000 square miles of land.

72. Name one war fought by the U.s. in the 1800s

Correct answers (choose one):

- War of 1812
- Mexican-American War
- Civil War
- Spanish-American War

73. Name the U.S. war between the North and the South

Correct answers (choose one):

- the Civil War
- the War between the States

Explanation: The American Civil War was fought from 1861-1865 between the Union Army and the Confederate States of America.

74. Name one problem that led to the Civil War

Correct answers (choose one):

- slavery
- economic reasons
- states' rights

75. Name one important thing that Abraham Lincoln did?

*

Correct answers (choose one):

- freed the slaves (Emancipation Proclamation)
- saved (or preserved) the Union
- led the U.S. during the Civil War

Explanation: Abraham Lincoln served as U.S. president from 1861 until he was assassinated in 1865.

76. What did the Emancipation Proclamation do?

Correct answers (choose one):

- freed the slaves
- freed slaves in the Confederacy
- freed slaves in the Confederate states
- freed slaves in most Southern states

Explanation: President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which went into effect on January 1, 1863.

77. What did Susan B. Anthony do?

Correct answers (choose one):

- fought for women's rights
- fought for civil rights

Explanation: Susan B. Anthony was a legendary women's rights activist and a pioneer of the women's suffrage movement.

C: Recent American History and Other Important Historical Information

78. Name one war fought by the United States in the 1900s.*

Correct answers (choose one):

- World War I
- World War II
- Korean War
- Vietnam War
- (Persian) Gulf War

79. Who was President during World War I?

Correct answer: (Woodrow) Wilson

Explanation: Woodrow Wilson was the 28th U.S. president from 1913-1921.

80. Who was President during the Great Depression and World War II?

Correct answer: (Franklin) Roosevelt

Explanation: Franklin Roosevelt, known as FDR, served as president from 1933-1945.

81. Who did the United States fight in World War II?

Correct answer: Japan, Germany, and Italy

82. Before he was President, Eisenhower was a general. What war was he in?

Correct answer: World War II

Explanation: Dwight Eisenhower served as the 34th president of the United States from 1953-1961.

83. During the Cold War, what was the main concern of the United States?

Correct answer: Communism

Explanation: The Cold War was an ideological battle fought between the United States and the Soviet Union.

84. What movement tried to end racial discrimination?

Correct answer: Civil rights (movement)

Explanation: The American civil rights movement, which took place during the 1950s and 1960s, demanded an end to racial segregation and discrimination.

85. What did Martin Luther King, Jr. do?*

Correct answers (choose one):

- fought for civil rights
- worked for equality for all Americans

Explanation: Martin Luther King Jr. was a leading civil rights activist and a recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize.

86. What major event happened on September 11, 2001, in the U.s.?

Correct answer: Terrorists attacked the United States.

Explanation: September 11, also known as 9/11, was a series of four coordinated terrorist attacks carried out by Al Qaeda, a Muslim extremist group.

87. Name one Native American tribe in the United States

Correct answers (choose one):

- Cherokee
- Navajo
- Sioux
- Chippewa
- Choctaw
- Pueblo
- Apache
- Iroquois
- Creek
- Blackfeet
- Seminole
- Cheyenne
- Arawak
- Shawnee
- Mohegan
- Huron
- Oneida
- Lakota
- Crow
- Teton
- Hopi
- Inuit

Explanation: There are currently 574 federally recognized tribes in the United States.

Integrated Civics

A: Geography

88. Name one of the two longest rivers in the United States

Correct answers (choose one):

- Missouri (River)
- Mississippi (River)

89. What ocean is on the West Coast of the U.s.?

Correct answer: Pacific Ocean

90. What ocean is on the East Coast of the United States?

Correct answer: Atlantic Ocean

91. Name one U.S. territory

Correct answers (choose one):

- Puerto Rico
- U.S. Virgin Islands
- American Samoa
- Northern Mariana Islands
- Guam

Explanation: The U.S. has five major territories, meaning pieces of land owned and controlled by the United States.

92. Name one state that borders Canada

Correct answers (choose one):

- Maine
- New Hampshire
- Vermont
- New York
- Pennsylvania
- Ohio
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- North Dakota
- Montana
- Idaho
- Washington
- Alaska

93. Name one state that borders Mexico

Correct answers (choose one):

- California
- Arizona
- New Mexico
- Texas

94. What is the capital of the United States?*

Correct answer: Washington, D.C.

Explanation: Washington D.C., officially called the District of Columbia, is where the White House and the Capitol are located.

95. Where is the Statue of Liberty?*

Correct answers (choose one):

- New York Harbor
- Liberty Island
- New Jersey,
- Near New York City

- On the Hudson River

Explanation: The Statue of Liberty, located on Liberty Island in New York City, was a gift from France to celebrate the friendship between the two countries. It has become a symbol for freedom and justice.

B: Symbols

96. Why does the flag have 13 stripes?

Correct answers (choose one):

- because there were 13 original colonies
- because the stripes represent the original colonies

97. Why does the flag have 50 stars?*

Correct answers (choose one):

- because there is one star for each state
- because each star represents a state
- because there are 50 states

98. What is the name of the national anthem?

Correct answer: The Star-Spangled Banner

Explanation: During the War of 1812, an amateur poet named Francis Scott Key was inspired to write what became the Star-Spangled Banner after witnessing an American Flag flying over Fort McHenry in Baltimore.

C: Holidays

99. When do we celebrate Independence Day?*

Correct answer: July 4

Explanation: On July 4, 1776, the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence, declaring the United States as a separate country to Britain. The U.S. now celebrates Independence Day every July 4th.

100. Name two national U.S. holidays

Correct answers (choose two):

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Presidents' Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas