

Name: _____ Hour: _____

Overview of the Constitution

Section I: Background Stuff (that impacted how the Constitution was written)

(A) The Enlightenment (the "Age of Reason")

- ★ A philosophical, scientific, and political movement which swept Europe in the _____
- ★ Enlightenment thinkers valued _____ and scientific investigation over supernatural authority or _____.
- ★ They believed it was possible to make things _____ - better government, better society, better science, etc.
- ★ The _____ is heavy on Enlightenment ideals, but so is the Constitution - an elected government, no religious requirements for office, etc.

(B) The Social Contract

- ★ This is the idea that in a civilized society, everyone agrees to give up some of their individual _____ for the collective _____.
- ★ This isn't done to be "_____"; it's done because it helps everybody, and each of us are part of "_____."
- ★ Example: I stop when the light is red, even if I'm in a hurry, because driving safely helps _____, including me.

(C) Relations Between the States

- ★ The first constitution (before the one we have now) was called the "_____"
- ★ It had at least two major flaws - the central government wasn't _____ enough (the states had TOO MUCH freedom) and it didn't require the _____ to play nicely with one another (which hurt everyone economically and was inconvenient in all sorts of other ways).
- ★ The Constitution sets up a much stronger _____ and regulates relations between the states.

Section II: Key Compromises of the Constitutional Convention

(A) "The Great Compromise"

- ★ _____ - Large states should have more representation in Congress (more people)
- ★ _____ - Every state should have the same representation

- ★ The new Constitution created a _____ legislature (meaning “two houses”)...
 - In the _____, every state is represented by two senators, regardless of size.
 - In the _____, representation is based on population

(B) Federalism

- ★ Some powers belong to the _____ (coining money, making immigration law, foreign policy, etc.)
- ★ Some powers belong to _____ (regulating business within the state, public education, certifications, etc.)
- ★ Some powers are _____ (law enforcement, taxes, courts, etc.)

(C) The Electoral College (indirect election of the President)

- ★ Some thought the president should be elected by _____.
- ★ Others feared “_____” and the ignorance of the masses. Let _____ or others more “qualified” choose the president.
- ★ Electoral College:: Voters in each state won’t vote *directly* for president, but for “_____” who then meet and vote for a president every four years.

(D) Three Compromises Related to Slavery

- ★ How many times does the Constitution mention “slaves” or “slavery” directly? _____
- ★ _____ - Southern states wanted their slaves counted as “population” for determining representation in the House. Northern states thought this made no sense at all. The compromise? Count every FIVE slaves as THREE for representation AND taxation.
- ★ _____ - Congress couldn’t regulate or eliminate the importation of new slaves for at least 20 years after the ratification of the new Constitution.
- ★ _____ - “Free” states were required to cooperate with the return of escaped slaves back to wherever they’d escaped from

Section III. Structure of the U.S. Constitution

- ☐ Preamble
- ☐ Articles I - VII (One through Seven)
- ☐ The Bill of Rights (Amendments 1-10)
- ☐ Other Amendments (11-27)

Article I: The Legislative Branch

- ❖ _____ the laws (theoretically). Both houses have to agree on a bill before it's sent to the President to sign.
- ❖ The _____ - 2 year terms - based on population of each state - anything involving taxes or money has to start here.
- ❖ The _____ - 6 year terms - 2 senators per state - ratify presidential appointments, treaties with other nations, etc.

Article II: The Executive Branch

- ❖ _____ the laws (theoretically).
- ❖ The _____ - 4 year terms - may sign or "veto" legislation
- ❖ Chooses a " _____ " of officials to head departments and act as advisors
- ❖ Appoints _____ (including the Supreme Court)
- ❖ Powers have grown dramatically over time - it's not always clear what the limits are (especially now)

Article III: The Judicial Branch

- ❖ _____ the laws.
- ❖ Supreme Court has the power to declare laws _____
- ❖ Federal Courts deal with federal issues and anything involving _____.
- ❖ State Courts deal with _____ and local matters.

Article IV: Relations between the _____

- ❖ This section addresses one of the major weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation - making the states _____ together.

Article V: _____ the Constitution (making changes)

Article IV: Three Important "Leftovers"...

- ❖ The U.S. will take on any _____ left over from the years under the Articles.
- ❖ The " _____ ": If there's a conflict between state law & the Constitution, THE CONSTITUTION WINS.
- ❖ There are _____ for holding political office.

Article VII: _____ - what it would take to approve the new Constitution as the supreme law of the land