

Grade 7 History & Geography

Unit 3: Civics in U.S. History

6 lessons and a unit quiz. Use this pack with the **Civics in U.S. History Student Reader** (print it, or download it once from the course) to teach the whole unit without the internet.

What is in this pack

- A lesson plan for each chapter: the Big Question, words to know, which pages to read, questions to talk over and the activity pages.
- The unit quiz, ready to print.
- Answers for the teacher at the back: every discussion question and the quiz key.

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Lesson schedule

Two or three lessons a week, about 30 minutes each. Tick each one off as you go.

	Lesson	Reader pages	Activity pages
☐	Chapter 1: What Is Government?	PDF pages 8-15	—
☐	Chapter 2: Origins of American Government	PDF pages 16-23	—
☐	Chapter 3: The U.S. Constitution	PDF pages 24-31	AP 3.1
☐	Chapter 4: Rights and Responsibilities	PDF pages 32-39	—
☐	Chapter 5: The Structure of the U.S. Government	PDF pages 40-47	—
☐	Chapter 6: The Federal System	PDF pages 48-57	AP 6.1
☐	Unit quiz	—	—

Page numbers are the PDF page numbers of the Student Reader file, so they match what your PDF reader shows.

Chapter 1: What Is Government?

THE BIG QUESTION

How is power distributed in different government systems?

Words to know

- **city-state** — a city that is an independent political state with its own ruling government *The city-state of Athens was a powerful force in ancient Greece.*
- **aristocracy** — a hereditary ruling class of nobles *The early government of Athens was controlled by a wealthy aristocracy.*
- **democracy** — a form of government in which people choose their leaders *Democracy in Athens formed when its citizens wanted a greater say in government.*
- **assembly** — a group of people; in ancient Athens, the lawmaking body *The assembly met monthly so citizens could debate and vote on laws.*
- **jury** — a group of people who listen to information presented during a trial in a court and make decisions about whether or not someone is guilty *The jury determined the person accused of the crime was not guilty.*
- **republic** — a government in which people elect representatives to rule for them *Elected officials in the republic passed laws on behalf of the citizens they represented.*
- **monarchy** — a government with a hereditary head of state whose powers range from limited to absolute *As the sole ruler in a monarchy, the queen passed laws without a legislature.*
- **totalitarian** — relating to a system in which the government controls the people completely *The totalitarian government prohibited citizens from speaking openly about their political and religious beliefs.*
- **dictator** — a ruler who has total control over a country *Julius Caesar appointed himself dictator for life, giving him complete control over Rome and its vast empire.*
- **oligarchy** — a government controlled by a small group of people from aristocratic and wealthy nonaristocratic families *The Russian oligarchy used its power to increase the wealth and influence of its members.*
- **theocracy** — a system of government ruled by religious leaders *In a theocracy, laws are often based on religious beliefs.*
- **public policy** — a set of government steps for how something is done *The president's public policy improved and expanded the nation's infrastructure.*

Read

Read Chapter 1 in the Student Reader: PDF pages 8–15. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. Who was responsible for organizing the first governments in Sumer?
2. How did ancient Greece and Sumer develop different forms of government?
3. Who was allowed to participate in Athenian democracy?
4. What was the boulē?
5. How did Roman democracy differ from Athenian democracy?
6. Who holds the power in a constitutional monarchy?
7. How are dictators similar to absolute monarchs?
8. What is the basis of the laws in a theocracy?
9. Why do governments institute laws?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: How is power distributed in different government systems?
- Use one of today's words in a sentence of your own.

Chapter 2: Origins of American Government

THE BIG QUESTION

How did ideas and debates about rights and power shape the American Revolution?

Words to know

- **tax** — money that people are required to pay to support the workings of the government *Public schools are largely funded by a property tax charged to owners of real estate.*
- **ratify** — to approve *Three-fourths of the states are required to ratify an amendment to the Constitution before it can become law.*

Read

Read Chapter 2 in the Student Reader: PDF pages 16–23. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. Why did European nations establish colonies in the Americas?
2. Why did the English and the French fight the French and Indian War?
3. Why do you think the British government decided to raise taxes on American colonists rather than on British residents to pay for debts from the French and Indian War?
4. How did the Sugar Act encourage the colonists to buy British sugar?
5. How did the Stamp Act raise revenue for the British government?
6. How did the British king react to American protests?
7. What was the purpose of the Second Continental Congress?
8. Who helped sell the idea of independence from Great Britain to the public?
9. Why is the Declaration of Independence considered revolutionary for its time?
10. What was the nature of the U.S. government when it was new?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: How did ideas and debates about rights and power shape the American Revolution?
- Use one of today's words in a sentence of your own.

Chapter 3: The U.S. Constitution

THE BIG QUESTION

How is the U.S. Constitution designed to ensure that the country simultaneously has an “energetic government” and protects rights?

Words to know

- **social contract** — an agreement made by the people to sacrifice certain freedoms in exchange for protections by their government *Under the social contract, people pay taxes with the understanding that the government will provide protection and services.*
- **popular sovereignty** — the principle that people create the government and the government is subject to the people’s will *The first words of the U.S. Constitution—“We the People”—reflect the idea of popular sovereignty.*
- **rule of law** — the principle that all people in a society, including its leaders, must obey the law *Rule of law means that even monarchs and presidents can be punished for breaking the law.*
- **unicameral** — made up of one chamber *Unlike the other forty-nine states that have two legislative bodies, Nebraska is the only state in the Union with a unicameral legislature.*
- **bicameral** — made up of two chambers *The United States has a bicameral legislature made up of an upper house called the Senate and a lower house called the House of Representatives.*
- **veto** — to reject *The president decided to veto the bill because she thought it limited the rights of citizens.*

Read

Read Chapter 3 in the Student Reader: PDF pages 24–31. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. What is the concept of sovereignty?
2. How did the Founders’ ideas of popular sovereignty differ from traditional ideas of monarchy?
3. What was the Virginia Plan?
4. Who opposed the Virginia Plan? Why?
5. Which plan for Congress was eventually adopted? What did it include?
6. What is the main responsibility of each branch of government?
7. How do checks and balances ensure that none of the branches become too powerful?

8. What specific powers does the Constitution give to the president?
9. How is the U.S. Constitution designed to support reform and redesign over time?
10. Why does the Constitution make the amendment process challenging?
11. When the U.S. Constitution was ratified in 1788, what groups of people were excluded from participating in democratic government and from expressing their political will?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: How is the U.S. Constitution designed to ensure that the country simultaneously has an “energetic government” and protects rights?
- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Activity pages

- Activity Page 3.1: Domain Vocabulary: Chapters 1-3 — Teacher Guide PDF pages 67-68

Chapter 4: Rights and Responsibilities

THE BIG QUESTION

Which rights have been most prominent in American thinking and debates?

Words to know

- **libelous** — relating to a statement that unfairly harms a person's reputation *The libelous claims made by the newspaper damaged the business leader's reputation.*
- **naturalization** — the process of becoming a citizen of a country if born outside that country *The process of naturalization in the United States requires passing a test about the country's history and laws.*

Read

Read Chapter 4 in the Student Reader: PDF pages 32–39. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. Why were Virginia and Massachusetts important to the ratification process?
2. Which document inspired the separation of religion and government in the Bill of Rights?
3. Which rights and protections were included in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments?
4. What does the ratification of the Fifteenth, Nineteenth, and Twenty-Sixth Amendments suggest about voting in the United States?
5. Who had full citizenship rights under the Constitution in 1788?
6. What status did the 1788 Constitution assign to Native Americans?
7. What is naturalization?
8. Which obligations of citizens are outlined in the Constitution?
9. What obligations does self-government place on citizens?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: Which rights have been most prominent in American thinking and debates?
- Use one of today's words in a sentence of your own.

Chapter 5: The Structure of the U.S. Government

THE BIG QUESTION

What are the leading principles and values guiding our ideas of good government?

Words to know

- **enumerated powers** — those powers of the U.S. government that are specifically listed in the Constitution *The Constitution gives Congress the enumerated powers of making laws and regulating commerce.*
- **appropriation** — money devoted to a particular purpose, such as a function of government *Members of the House committee debated the appropriation to fund improvements to federal highways.*
- **budget** — an amount of money available for spending based on a plan for how it will be spent *The family set a monthly budget to help them save for a summer vacation.*
- **levy** — to impose *One shortcoming of the Articles of Confederation was that they deprived the central government of the power to levy taxes.*
- **oversight** — the action of watching over something *Congressional oversight was directed at ensuring the president acted within the limits of his constitutional powers.*
- **hearing** — a meeting in which testimony is heard from witnesses *During the hearing, the scientist testified about the effects of climate change.*
- **executive order** — a decision made by an executive head of government, such as a president, that has the force of law *The president issued an executive order requiring all federal employees to implement new security measures.*
- **popular vote** — the results of an election based on individual ballots cast by citizens *A run-off election is held if neither candidate receives a majority of the popular vote.*
- **Electoral College** — a group of representatives who elect the president and vice president based on the popular vote in each state *The president of the United States is chosen not directly by a popular vote but by the votes of members of the Electoral College.*
- **appeal** — the process of bringing a legal case in front of a higher court to review the decision of the lower court *The defendant filed an appeal with a higher court because she thought the trial court made a mistake in convicting her.*
- **original jurisdiction** — the power to review a legal case and apply the law *The Supreme Court does not have original jurisdiction over petty disputes, which must be heard by state or district courts first.*

Read

Read Chapter 5 in the Student Reader: PDF pages 40–47. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. What are the three branches of government?
2. What is the purpose of separation of powers?
3. Why is the House of Representatives called the “People’s House”?
4. What are some enumerated powers of the Senate?
5. How does Congress hold other branches of government and itself accountable?
6. What executive power allows the president to check the power of the legislative branch?
7. How do executive orders differ from legislation?
8. Why might some people argue in favor of eliminating the Electoral College?
9. What powers does Congress have over the judicial branch?
10. Why do you think the Framers decided that Supreme Court justices should be appointed for life?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: What are the leading principles and values guiding our ideas of good government?
- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Chapter 6: The Federal System

THE BIG QUESTION

What is federalism, and what principles define it? What is its value, and what are its challenges?

Words to know

- **reserved powers** — powers in the U.S. federal system of government that belong to the states rather than the federal government *The states have many reserved powers, including the ability to run elections and regulate schools.*
- **concurrent powers** — powers in the U.S. federal system of government that are shared by the state and federal governments *The federal government and the states share concurrent powers such as collecting taxes and operating courts.*
- **mandate** — a command; a responsibility given by an authority *Some states had to revise their student testing practices to align with a new federal mandate.*
- **infrastructure** — the public works system that includes roads, bridges, water, public transportation, etc. *Congress passed a bill providing more funding for infrastructure, especially maintaining highways and bridges.*
- **ordinance** — a law or government rule *The city ordinance required owners to keep their dogs leashed or risk a fine.*
- **zoning** — the act of organizing a place into different areas with specific purposes *The city council revised zoning in the residential neighborhood to allow some types of small businesses to move into the area.*
- **platform** — the policies supported by a political party *The party changed its platform this year to add support for increased spending for local schools.*
- **union** — an organization of workers that bargains with employers for better pay and working conditions *A labor union might represent workers in a single trade or workers in many trades who all work in a particular industry.*

Read

Read Chapter 6 in the Student Reader: PDF pages 48–57. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. Why did the Framers deny certain powers to the federal government?
2. What is the significance of the Tenth Amendment?
3. What is the supremacy clause?
4. How are state governors similar to the president of the United States?
5. Compared to the federal government, why do state governments have a more direct impact on the daily lives of citizens?

6. How do state governments fund their programs?
7. How does federal funding influence state actions?
8. What are some types of local government units?
9. How are local governments funded?
10. How are local governments similar to state and federal governments?
11. What is the nature and purpose of a political party?
12. Why do political parties publish their platforms?
13. Given their lack of mention in the U.S. Constitution and warnings against their creation, how and why did political parties form in the United States?
14. Which party determines which legislation goes to a vote?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: What is federalism, and what principles define it? What is its value, and what are its challenges?
- Use one of today's words in a sentence of your own.

Activity pages

- Activity Page 6.1: Domain Vocabulary: Chapters 4-6 — Teacher Guide PDF pages 69-70

UNIT QUIZ

Civics in U.S. History

Name: _____ Date: _____

Circle the letter of the best answer.

1. In which type of government do citizens vote directly on laws?
 - a) democracy
 - b) republic
 - c) monarchy
 - d) theocracy
2. Which is a similarity between dictators and absolute monarchs?
 - a) They act in the best interest of the majority.
 - b) They hold all of the power in government.
 - c) They pass laws based on religious beliefs.
 - d) They hold elected office on behalf of citizens.
3. What is the primary purpose of government?
 - a) to represent individual citizens
 - b) to uphold religious values
 - c) to raise and lower taxes
 - d) to serve the needs of society
4. What is one reason the Articles of Confederation were ineffective?
 - a) They forced the states to adopt a national currency.
 - b) They allowed Congress to raise taxes to pay off war debts.
 - c) They required Congress to meet several times a month.
 - d) They enabled the states to pursue their own best interests.
5. Why is the Declaration of Independence considered a revolutionary document?
 - a) It established the Continental Army for defense.
 - b) It attempted to make amends with the home country.
 - c) It stated that the government receives its power from the people.
 - d) It outlined many grievances against the British government.
6. Why did the Framers include checks and balances in the Constitution?
 - a) to prevent any one branch from gaining too much power
 - b) to ensure all members of society follow the law
 - c) to clearly identify the powers of the president
 - d) to highlight the importance of popular sovereignty
7. What was one benefit of the Connecticut Plan?
 - a) It contained a bill of rights.
 - b) It balanced the power between large and small states.
 - c) It introduced the concept of the social contract.
 - d) It borrowed language from other foundational documents.

- 8.** Why did the Framers include an amendment process in the Constitution?
- a) to protect minority rights from majority rule
 - b) to make sure the government could adapt to the needs of citizens over time
 - c) to allow the judicial branch to determine whether laws are unconstitutional
 - d) to encourage states to ratify the document
- 9.** Why were many Americans concerned about ratifying the Constitution?
- a) It lacked explicit protection for their individual rights.
 - b) It gave too much power to the legislative branch.
 - c) It allowed state laws to supersede federal laws.
 - d) It prevented women from participating in elections.
- 10.** Which is a similarity between the Fifteenth, Nineteenth, and Twenty-Sixth Amendments?
- a) Each was passed before a major conflict.
 - b) Each protects personal liberties.
 - c) Each made voting rights more inclusive.
 - d) Each redefined what it means to be a citizen.
- 11.** Why did the Framers include the ideas of Baron de Montesquieu in the Constitution?
- a) to protect powerful leaders
 - b) to set requirements for holding office
 - c) to reduce the size of the government
 - d) to limit the power of government
- 12.** Which is an enumerated power of Congress?
- a) negotiating treaties
 - b) appointing advisors
 - c) enforcing legislation
 - d) regulating commerce
- 13.** What is federalism?
- a) the idea that government gets its power from citizens
 - b) the ability of the judiciary to rule on issues between the states
 - c) the sharing of power between a central government and the states
 - d) the division of counties into smaller jurisdictions
- 14.** Why does the Tenth Amendment create reserved powers?
- a) to define areas where state and federal powers intersect
 - b) to limit the power of the federal government
 - c) to define the relationship between state and local governments
 - d) to require local governments to follow state mandates
- 15.** What is the effect of the supremacy clause?
- a) State laws may not conflict with federal laws.
 - b) The federal government has original jurisdiction over interstate disputes.
 - c) Only state governments may issue licenses.
 - d) Justices of the Supreme Court have no term limits.

Answers

Chapter 1: What Is Government?

1. **Who was responsible for organizing the first governments in Sumer?**
Sumerian priests organized the people to build flood-control and irrigation projects. These efforts led to the development of government over time.
2. **How did ancient Greece and Sumer develop different forms of government?**
The Sumerian city-states united under the rule of a powerful king. The Greek city-states remained independent.
3. **Who was allowed to participate in Athenian democracy?**
Only free male citizens were allowed to participate in Athenian democracy.
4. **What was the boulē?**
The boulē was an elected body of five hundred citizens chosen by the demos that performed administrative tasks for the assembly.
5. **How did Roman democracy differ from Athenian democracy?**
The government of Rome was a republic. Unlike in Athens, where citizens voted directly on laws and policies, in Rome, citizens elected representatives to make decisions on their behalf.
6. **Who holds the power in a constitutional monarchy?**
In a constitutional monarchy, real power rests with an elected parliament and a constitution.
7. **How are dictators similar to absolute monarchs?**
Like absolute monarchs, dictators hold all of the power in government. They make decisions without the consent of the people they rule over.
8. **What is the basis of the laws in a theocracy?**
Theocracies are governments in which religious leaders hold power and laws are based on religious law.
9. **Why do governments institute laws?**
Governments institute laws to make people safe and to prevent citizens from abusing each other.

Chapter 2: Origins of American Government

1. **Why did European nations establish colonies in the Americas?**
European nations established colonies in the Americas for economic gain. They wanted to exploit the natural and human resources they found there.
2. **Why did the English and the French fight the French and Indian War?**
Both nations wanted to control North America for political and economic reasons.
3. **Why do you think the British government decided to raise taxes on American colonists rather than on British residents to pay for debts from the French and Indian War?**
The British government may have chosen to tax American colonists to pay for the

French and Indian War because it believed those colonists benefited most from the war.

4. **How did the Sugar Act encourage the colonists to buy British sugar?**

The Sugar Act placed a tax on refined sugar from the French and Spanish West Indies. This made the price very high. Sugar from the British West Indies was not taxed, so it was much cheaper.

5. **How did the Stamp Act raise revenue for the British government?**

The Stamp Act forced the colonists to buy royal stamps to conduct business. Nearly every American had to pay more for everyday items.

6. **How did the British king react to American protests?**

The king cracked down and sent more troops to the colonies.

7. **What was the purpose of the Second Continental Congress?**

The purpose of the Second Continental Congress was to organize colonial forces to defend against the British army.

8. **Who helped sell the idea of independence from Great Britain to the public?**

Thomas Paine helped sell the idea of independence to the public.

9. **Why is the Declaration of Independence considered revolutionary for its time?**

The Declaration of Independence is considered revolutionary for its time because it put into practice radically different ideas from European philosophers about the role of government. These included the idea that government receives its power from the people, not the other way around.

10. **What was the nature of the U.S. government when it was new?**

The first American government, under the Articles of Confederation, was a weak government. The states retained their sovereignty. The U.S. government had no executive, no judiciary, no power to raise revenue, and no power to settle disputes among states.

Chapter 3: The U.S. Constitution

1. **What is the concept of sovereignty?**

Sovereignty is the ability of a state to govern itself. A sovereign state is one that is independent. Popular sovereignty refers to the sovereignty of the people—the people's right to govern themselves.

2. **How did the Founders' ideas of popular sovereignty differ from traditional ideas of monarchy?**

According to traditional European beliefs, monarchs were given their powers by God. Popular sovereignty challenged this idea by stating that governments are granted their powers by the people.

3. **What was the Virginia Plan?**

The Virginia Plan proposed that representation in the House of Representatives be based on a state's population. Members of the House of Representatives would then select members of the Senate.

4. **Who opposed the Virginia Plan? Why?**

Representatives from the smaller states opposed the Virginia Plan because it gave more power to large states than to small states.

5. **Which plan for Congress was eventually adopted? What did it include?**

The Connecticut Plan, also called the Great Compromise, was adopted. It included an upper chamber, the Senate, in which each state was given equal representation, and a lower chamber, the House of Representatives, in which each state was given representation based on its population.

6. **What is the main responsibility of each branch of government?**

The legislative branch makes the laws. The executive branch carries out the laws. The judicial branch interprets the laws.

7. **How do checks and balances ensure that none of the branches become too powerful?**

The system of checks and balances helps prevent that none of the branches becomes too powerful by giving each branch powers that limit the powers of the other branches.

8. **What specific powers does the Constitution give to the president?**

The Constitution empowers the president to veto laws passed by Congress, to command the military, to pardon criminals for federal crimes, to call Congress into session, to negotiate treaties, and to appoint Supreme Court justices and other federal judges. Chapter 3 | The U.S. Constitution

9. **How is the U.S. Constitution designed to support reform and redesign over time?**

The U.S. Constitution outlines processes for proposing and ratifying amendments.

10. **Why does the Constitution make the amendment process challenging?**

The Framers wanted the amendment process to be challenging to make sure that changes were favored by the majority of citizens.

11. **When the U.S. Constitution was ratified in 1788, what groups of people were excluded from participating in democratic government and from expressing their political will?**

While the Constitution claims to express the will of “We the People,” that phrase was not thought to include women, enslaved people, or Native Americans. These groups were excluded from participating in democratic government and from expressing their political will.

Chapter 4: Rights and Responsibilities

1. **Why were Virginia and Massachusetts important to the ratification process?**

They were states with large populations. If they voted to ratify the Constitution, then it was likely that other states would follow suit.

2. **Which document inspired the separation of religion and government in the Bill of Rights?**

The separation of religion and government in the Bill of Rights was based on the

Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom.

3. **Which rights and protections were included in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments?**

The Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery. The Fourteenth Amendment gave citizenship to newly freed slaves.

4. **What does the ratification of the Fifteenth, Nineteenth, and Twenty-Sixth Amendments suggest about voting in the United States?**

The Fifteenth, Nineteenth, and Twenty-Sixth Amendments all expanded voting rights. This suggests that citizens of the United States hold participation in the political process as an important right and an important value.

5. **Who had full citizenship rights under the Constitution in 1788?**

White male property owners had the full rights of citizenship, including the right to vote. In some states, free Black men were citizens.

6. **What status did the 1788 Constitution assign to Native Americans?**

The Constitution said that Native Americans were not citizens and that Native American nations were sovereign and not part of the United States.

7. **What is naturalization?**

Naturalization is the legal process by which noncitizens become citizens.

8. **Which obligations of citizens are outlined in the Constitution?**

By law, citizens are required to sit on juries, pay taxes, and obey the law. Men aged eighteen and over are required to register for the Selective Service.

9. **What obligations does self-government place on citizens?**

Citizens should stay informed on civic and public issues so they can be informed participants in government.

Chapter 5: The Structure of the U.S. Government

1. **What are the three branches of government?**

The three branches of government are the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.

2. **What is the purpose of separation of powers?**

Separation of powers is intended to promote and protect individual liberty and to rein in powerful leaders.

3. **Why is the House of Representatives called the “People’s House”?**

The House of Representatives is called the “People’s House” in part because a state’s representation is based on its population. Also, the House was also originally the only body of Congress whose members were elected by the people.

4. **What are some enumerated powers of the Senate?**

The Senate has a number of enumerated powers, including confirming presidential appointments, ratifying treaties, and removing impeached officials from office.

5. **How does Congress hold other branches of government and itself accountable?**

Congress has oversight and investigative powers. It can hold hearings and require

people to testify and give evidence.

6. **What executive power allows the president to check the power of the legislative branch?**

The president may check the power of the legislative branch by vetoing bills.

7. **How do executive orders differ from legislation?**

While executive orders have the effect of a law, they do not require the approval of Congress. Instead, executive orders are a way for the president to shape public policy by circumventing the power of Congress.

8. **Why might some people argue in favor of eliminating the Electoral College?**

A candidate who loses the popular vote may still win election by winning the Electoral College vote. People in favor of eliminating the Electoral College may argue that the electoral system should reflect the will of the majority of Americans and that the Electoral College system does not.

9. **What powers does Congress have over the judicial branch?**

Congress has the power to create or abolish courts, to add or subtract judges in the federal court system, and to determine the jurisdiction of the courts. 44

10. **Why do you think the Framers decided that Supreme Court justices should be appointed for life?**

Lifetime appointments help keep the justices independent. They are protected from interference and from threats to their job and their pay. They can be above politics.

Chapter 6: The Federal System

1. **Why did the Framers deny certain powers to the federal government?**

The Framers denied certain powers to the federal government because they feared it would become too powerful.

2. **What is the significance of the Tenth Amendment?**

The Tenth Amendment is significant because it directly limits the federal government's power.

3. **What is the supremacy clause?**

The supremacy clause says that when federal and state laws are in conflict, federal law takes precedence over state law every time.

4. **How are state governors similar to the president of the United States?**

State governors, like the president, lead the executive branch of their states and are responsible for carrying out and enforcing the laws made by the legislative branch. Like the president, governors also issue executive orders, sign bills into law, veto laws, and make executive appointments.

5. **Compared to the federal government, why do state governments have a more direct impact on the daily lives of citizens?**

Much of the federal government's attention is focused on issues affecting the entire nation. It cannot often attend to matters that only affect a single community.

Compared to the federal government, state governments are more focused on issues that citizens directly experience every day.

6. How do state governments fund their programs?

State governments fund programs by collecting taxes, fees, and tolls. States also receive funding from the federal government.

7. How does federal funding influence state actions?

The federal government provides funds for states to conduct specific projects. To get the funding, states must follow the rules set by the federal government.

8. What are some types of local government units?

Counties, towns, cities, villages, boroughs, and school districts are all local government units.

9. How are local governments funded?

Local governments are often funded by local taxes, building permit fees, funding from the state, and license fees.

10. How are local governments similar to state and federal governments?

Like state and federal governments, local governments such as cities and towns have a law- or policy-making body elected by the people; they have a chief executive, who could have a title such as mayor, village president, or town manager; and they enable citizen involvement.

11. What is the nature and purpose of a political party?

The main goal of a political party is to win elections and control government and its policies.

12. Why do political parties publish their platforms?

Political parties publish their platforms to communicate with voters about their values and intentions for government. This is a way to persuade voters to elect the party's chosen candidates.

13. Given their lack of mention in the U.S. Constitution and warnings against their creation, how and why did political parties form in the United States?

Political parties formed in the United States around the issue of ratification of the Constitution: those who favored a strong central government favored the new Constitution, while those who wanted a weak central government opposed it. Each of the two groups became a political party in opposition to the other.

14. Which party determines which legislation goes to a vote?

Generally, the majority party, or the party who has the most members in the House or the Senate, decides which legislation goes to a vote.

Unit quiz key

1. a 2. b 3. d 4. d 5. c 6. a 7. b 8. b 9. a 10. c 11. d 12. d 13. c 14. b 15. a