

Summer Reading Assignment:

AP Government and Politics

Mr. Griffin

1.) Books Needed For Class

A. *The Summer of 1787: The Men Who Invented the Constitution*,
by David O. Stewart (Summer Reading)

Stewart, David O. *The Summer of 1787 The Men Who Invented the Constitution*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2008. Print.

*The book may have to be ordered by a bookstore or through Amazon.com. Please make sure you do so in a timely fashion.

B. AMSCO® *Advanced Placement® United States Government & Politics*
By David Wolford (Textbook)

*This book can be found in either softcover or digital version for \$18.95 online at

<https://www.amscopub.com/social-studies/advanced-placement/united-states-government-politics-ap-exam.html> OR just do a search for AMSCO Advanced Placement United States Government & Politics

2.) Reading Exam: The exam will be taken over a two day period and the exam will be broken into two parts: multiple choice section and an extended response essay section (50 points). Students may use their book while taking the exam. Students may mark pages or make notes in the book that may be useful for them on the exam; however, nothing else may be used. Please note that NO ELECTRONIC DEVICES may be used on any part of the exam.

3.) Discussion: Before the exam, the class will hold a class-wide discussion over the book. The discussion will concentrate on the following -

Each student is expected to read this book in its entirety (including Appendix 1 and Appendix 2) and respond to the following questions fully, providing details, explanations and specific supporting examples from the reading. Students are to use the material in the book to answer the questions.

You can be certain that the following questions will serve as the foundation for the exam multiple choice and essay questions.

Discussion Question 1: (Be sure to keep a list of significant members of the Constitutional Convention, identifying their contributions)

James Madison is known to history as the “Father of the Constitution.” However, Madison himself hated this nickname, as he felt it discounted the efforts of others who were equally important in crafting the U.S. Constitution.

- a) Describe the reasons why James Madison is given the title “Father of the Constitution,” using specific details and examples from the book.
- b) Identify three other persons who you believe are also deserving of recognition and describe their contributions to the creation of the U.S. Constitution, using specific details and examples from the book.

Discussion Question 2:

At the start of the Civil War, John Adams’ grandson, Charles Francis Adams Sr., wrote of slavery that “We the children of the third and fourth generations are doomed to pay the penalty of the compromises of the first.”

- a) Describe three compromises over slavery that the delegates made during the Constitutional Convention, using specific details and examples from the book.
- b) Discuss the arguments presented in the book that, without these compromises over slavery, the Constitution would never have been ratified.
- c) Discuss the arguments presented in the book that the northern delegates caved in too easily to implausible southern threats to abandon the Convention and the Union.
- d) Describe the consequences of the Constitutional compromises over slavery.

Discussion Question 3:

Although Americans typically describe their form of government as a “democracy,” many of the founders actually feared “rule of the people.” As a result, in the U.S. Constitution, they included a good number of measures intended to mitigate the dangers of “rule by the many.” Some of these

limitations on democracy have been removed from the Constitution, but others are still in effect.

a) List 3 ways that the delegates limited democracy and explain how each of these provisions limited the “rule of the people,” using details and specific examples provided in the book.

b) Describe the reasons why the founders feared the “rule of the many,” using details and specific examples provided in the book.

c) Discuss whether these reasons still exist in current-day America and whether the Constitution should or should not be further amended to remove the limitations on democracy that remain in the U.S. Constitution.

Discussion Question 4:

The founders created a unique system known as the “electoral college”* to choose the U.S. President. A number of times in U.S. history, this system has caused surprising results in presidential elections.

a) Describe the presidential elector system created by the founders.*

b) Explain in detail the reasons why the founders created the electoral college, using specifics and examples provided in the book.

c) Discuss arguments in support of retaining the electoral college system, using details and examples provided in the book.

d) Discuss arguments in support of eliminating or modifying the electoral college system, using details and examples provided in the book.

* Make sure you carefully read Article II, Section 1, Clauses 2, 3 and 4, in Appendix 2 before attempting to respond to these questions. Much of what you think you already know about how the electoral college works is inaccurate information in so far as what the founders created and what is actually in the US Constitution.

Key Terms/IDs to Define - (In relation to their significance to the Constitution)

1. George Washington
2. George Mason
3. Articles of Confederation
4. Shay's Rebellion
5. James Madison
6. James Wilson
7. Benjamin Franklin
8. % Compromise (and all agreements on slavery)
9. Ipswich Miracle
10. John Rutledge
11. Rutledge Committee
12. Gouverneur Morris
13. Connecticut Compromise (Great Compromise)
14. Bicameral
15. Alexander Hamilton
16. Committee of Style
17. Elbridge Gerry
18. Virginia Plan
19. New Jersey Plan

* If you have questions about the summer assignment, you can contact Mr. Griffin at

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