



AP Government & Politics Summer Assignment

The AP course for US Government is a college-level class that is designed to prepare you for the AP exam in May. In order to set you up for success in this class, the AP Government teachers are giving you a summer assignment to help you review the Constitution and major Supreme Court cases in our country's history.

The 2019 summer assignment for Advanced Placement U.S. Government consists of three activities. **ALL THREE** activities will be due the first day of class. (If you are taking the course in the spring, your assignment will be due the first day of spring semester classes.)

ACTIVITIES

1. **The United States Constitution**- the essential guide to our government's structure and core philosophy
 - ❖ Find---- this website has a searchable version:
<https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution#>
 - ❖ Read----We will be using the Constitution all year long. Read every word thoroughly—from the beginning of the end. Look up what you don't understand.
 - ❖ Write----Complete the worksheet attached. You'll use it all year as your personal guide to the Constitution.
 - ❖ Test----This information will be tested in the first weeks of school. Also, you will need to know the Constitution very well on the AP test - get started now.

2. **Supreme Court Case Journals** - research the **15 required** Supreme Court cases within the AP GoPo Course Framework. Within your 15 case summaries you will compare each case to similar relevant SCOTUS. In AP Government you will be required to analyze and compare Supreme Court cases, *so having an understanding of relevant court cases will be a needed skill for your AP test.*

For each of the **15 SCOTUS** case summaries you should answer the Constitutional Question, Background Information, Summary of the Court's Opinion, and Compare to a similar case from the list provided.

Each case summary should be typed on its own page. The Constitutional question, background information, summary, and comparison should be written in complete sentences. See sample on last page of packet.

For each case, you will need to provide the following:

- ❖ Constitutional Question - You need to establish what Constitutional question arose from the specific case. Make sure to include which article or amendment is in question.
- ❖ Background Information - In one paragraph, summarize the background information of the case. What is this case about? What happened in this case to bring it to the Supreme Court? This section should be 6-8 sentences to explain the details of the case.
- ❖ Summary of the Court's Opinion - The summary should include the vote of the court as well as explain what they decided and why. If you see connections to other cases, make sure that you note that in this section. This section should be 6-8 sentences to explain what the ruling means.
- ❖ Comparative Cases - In complete sentences, compare/contrast the similarities and differences of the required case and the additional case provided. Use the facts of the cases, the opinions of the Court, and constitutional clause or amendment to compare/contrast the cases.

WHERE DO I FIND THIS INFORMATION?

Resources: I recommend that you use oyez.org or landmarkcases.org to help get you started. Wikipedia.com is a source that you can read over but it should not be your only source for information on a court case. You may also use other sources you can locate to help clarify the information, but they must be reliable sources. Be sure that your background of the case and the opinion of the Court are in your own words.

*The Supreme Court case journal should be in your own words. Take the material and re-write it so it makes sense to you. *

3. **Read and Annotate: "A Brilliant Solution - Inventing the American Constitution"**

We will be reviewing, discussing and testing on this book by Carol Berkin during the first month of class. "A Brilliant Solution" discusses the circumstances around the writing of the Constitution and what the founders argued about during the Constitutional Convention. You will be tested on this content and the historical background will be on the AP test. For every chapter, you will need to write a brief summary or at least 3 main annotations. This should contain content that "jumps out" to you as you read. You will also provide 2 thought provoking questions per chapter that concern ideas and content to enhance our class discussions of the material.

Activity #1- THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION

DIRECTIONS: Read the U.S. Constitution. Complete this worksheet using any online or print resource you require—you will keep it in your notebook for reference throughout the course. This review of the Constitution does not need to be in complete sentences.

A. The Original Constitution

Read each article of the Constitution. Summarize the general purpose or subject of each article, and then write down the meanings of any unfamiliar terms (look them up) or bigger questions you have for discussion. This can be a place for creative “what-if” questions, too---now is the time to write them down.

Article #	Big Idea - The Main Topics	Details - Questions
I		
II		
III		

IV		
V		
VI		
VII		

Follow-up #1

Which is the longest and most detailed article? Why do you think that is?

B. The Three Branches - Powers

Enumerated powers are those listed specifically in the Constitution. Look through the first three Articles for examples. Pay careful attention to checks and balances—how each branch of government controls the others. Remember to answer in your own words, and to look up what you don't understand.

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Checks & Balances: What are TWO enumerated powers it has over the President?

1.

2.

Checks and Balances: What is ONE enumerated power it has over the courts?

What other enumerated powers does Congress have?

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

Checks & Balances: What is ONE enumerated power it has over the courts?

Checks & Balances: What is ONE enumerated power it has over Congress?

What other enumerated powers does the President have?

JUDICIAL BRANCH

Checks & Balances: What's ONE enumerated power it has over the President?

Checks & Balances: What is ONE enumerated power it has over Congress?

What other enumerated powers do the courts have?

Follow-up #2

Identify and explain two powers that the Constitution specifically DENIES to Congress.

C. The Amendment Process

In your own words, describe TWO ways to propose an amendment, and TWO ways to ratify an amendment.

2 Ways to Propose an Amendment	2 Ways to Ratify an Amendment

Follow-up #3

Can you find which process of proposal and ratification has been used most often?

Which has never been used? Why do you think it has never been used?

D. Requirements for National Office

What requirements can you find to hold political office in the United States? Fill in the table below with your findings from the Constitution and the amendments.

	House of Representatives	Senate	President	Supreme Court Justice
Age Requirement				
Citizenship Requirement				
Length of Term				
Gaining Office- How does it happen? Who is involved?				

Follow-Up #4

Why would the requirements vary for different offices? Come up with some theories on why the founders would make different rules for different branches.

Follow-Up #5

Where and what is the Elastic Clause in the U.S. Constitution?

E. The Amendments to the Constitution

Identify the main point of each Constitutional amendment.

Amendment	What Did This Amendment Accomplish?
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	
13	

14	
15	
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22	
23	
24	
25	
26	
27	

Activity #2 - Supreme Court Case Journals

You need to research each of the 15 Supreme Court cases listed below. Each case summary should be typed on its own page. The Constitutional question, background information, summary, and comparison should be written in complete sentences. See example on next page.

For each case, you will need to provide the following. For more details, see first page of packet.

- **Constitutional Question**
- **Background Information**
- **Summary of the Court's Opinion**
- **Comparison** to the Supreme Court Case provided

WHERE DO I FIND THIS INFORMATION?

Remember you can read over Wikipedia, but your answer should not be from Wikipedia. Oyez.org and landmarkcases.org are both good resources but you may use other legitimate resources.

SUPREME COURT CASES (CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER)

REQUIRED Cases	COMPARISON Cases
Marbury v. Madison (1803)	US v. Nixon (1974)
McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)	Heart of Atlanta Motel v. United States (1964)
Schenck v. US (1919)	Texas v. Johnson (1989)
Brown v. Board of Education (1954)	Plessy v. Ferguson (1896)
Baker v. Carr (1961)	Wesberry v. Sanders (1964)
Engel v. Vitale (1962)	Everson v. Board of Education (1947)
Gideon v. Wainwright (1963)	Mapp v. Ohio (1961)
Tinker v. Des Moines (1969)	Brandenburg v. Ohio (1966)
New York Times Co. v. United States (1971)	Korematsu v. United States (1944)
Wisconsin v. Yoder (1972)	Reynolds v United States (1878)
Roe v. Wade (1973)	Planned Parenthood v. Casey (1992)
Shaw v. Reno (1993)	League of United Latin American Citizens v. Perry (2003)
U.S. vs Lopez (1995)	Gibbons v. Ogden (1824)
Citizens United v. FEC (2010)	Buckley v. Valeo (1976)
McDonald v. City of Chicago (2010)	District of Columbia v. Heller (2008)

A SAMPLE CASE SUMMARY IS ON THE NEXT PAGE

*Yes, you may use the information from this case summary to help you write your own. *

SAMPLE
Marbury v. Madison (1803)

a. Constitutional Question:

Does the Supreme Court of the United States have the power, under Article III, Section 2, of the Constitution, to interpret the constitutionality of a law or statute passed by Congress?

b. Background Information:

In the last few hours of office, President John Adams made a series of “midnight appointments” to fill as many government posts as possible with Federalists. One of these appointments was William Marbury as a federal justice of the peace. When Jefferson he took office as President, he instructed his Secretary of State James Madison to not deliver the appointment. Marbury sued Madison to get the appointment he felt he deserved. He asked the court to issue a writ of mandamus requiring him to deliver the appointment. The Judiciary Act, passed by Congress in 1789, permitted the Supreme Court of the U.S. to issue such a writ.

c. Opinion

Court said yes to judicial review - voted 4-0.

The Court decided that Marbury’s request for a writ of mandamus was based on a law passed by Congress that the Court held to be unconstitutional. The court said that the federal law contradicted the Constitution, and since the Constitution is the Supreme Law of the Land, it must reign supreme. Through this case, Chief Justice John Marshall established the power of judicial review: the power of the court not only to interpret the constitutionality of a law or statute, but also to carry out the process and enforce its decision.

d. Comparison

Marbury v. Madison (1803) was a landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision in which the Court established the basis for the exercise of judicial review in the United States under Article III of the Constitution. The landmark decision helped define the power of the judiciary as a co-equal branch of the government, constitutionally separate from the executive and judicial branches.

Gibbons v. Ogden (1824) was a landmark decision in which the Supreme Court held that the power to regulate interstate commerce was granted to Congress by the Commerce Clause of the Constitution. The decision overturned the New York state legislature’s monopoly over certain steamships operating between New York and New Jersey.

Both cases exhibited the Supreme Court’s ability to make decisions that ***expanded the power and reach of the federal government***. Because the U.S. Constitution does not specifically delegate certain powers among the federal and state governments, the issue often has fallen to the judicial branch for resolution. ***Both cases broadly expanded the power and supremacy of the national government.***

Activity #3 "A Brilliant Solution- Inventing the American Constitution"

Read and Annotate: For every chapter, you will need to annotate key ideas + themes. In addition, you will write 2 discussion questions that analyze the information in the chapter using the discussion question stem guide. We will use these discussion questions throughout the year.

CHAPTER	Annotations
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

CHAPTER	Annotations
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

Discussion Questions

CHAPTER	Discussion Questions
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

CHAPTER	Discussion Questions
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	