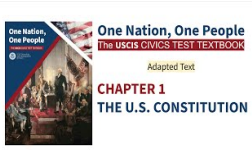

Chapter 1: The U.S. Constitution

eslvideo.com Quiz by: rmd

1. When was the Constitution written?

○ a.) 1776

○ b.) 1787

○ c.) 1791

2. What does the Constitution do?

○ a.) sets up the government

○ b.) elects the President

○ c.) writes new laws

3. What happened at the Constitutional Convention?

○ a.) The Bill of Rights was written.

○ b.) The Constitution was written.

○ c.) The Declaration of Independence was signed.

4. What is an amendment?

○ a.) an election process

○ b.) a new law passed by Congress

○ c.) a change to the Constitution

5. How many amendments does the Constitution have?

○ a.) twenty-seven

○ b.) ten

○ c.) fifty

6. What is the supreme law of the land?

○ a.) the Constitution

○ b.) the Supreme Court

○ c.) the Emancipation Proclamation

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

○ a.) Life, Liberty, Happiness

○ b.) We the People

○ c.) Bill of Rights

8. Name one branch or part of the government.

○ a.) Governor's Office

○ b.) Parliament

○ c.) Congress

9. What are the two parts of the U.S. Congress?

○ a.) the Senate and the House of Representatives

○ b.) the Supreme Court and the President

○ c.) the Cabinet and the Senate

10. Who is in charge of the executive branch?

○ a.) the Chief Justice

○ b.) the Vice President

○ c.) the President

11. What does the President's Cabinet do?

○ a.) passes laws

○ b.) advises the President

○ c.) commands the military

12. What is the highest court in the U.S.?

○ a.) the Supreme Court

○ b.) the Federal Court

○ c.) the District Court

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

○ a.) the President

○ b.) separation of powers

○ c.) the Electoral College

14. Under our Constitution, some powers belong to the federal government. What is one power of the federal government?

○ a.) to print money

○ b.) to provide police services

○ c.) to manage public schools

15. Under our Constitution, some powers belong to the states. What is one power of the states?

○ a.) print money

○ b.) provide schooling and education

○ c.) declare war

16. What do we call the first 10 amendments to the Constitution?

○ a.) the Preamble

○ b.) the Articles of Confederation

○ c.) the Bill of Rights

Transcript

Chapter 1: The US Constitution

The US Constitution was written in 1787. It is the oldest written constitution in the world. The Constitution sets up the government and protects the basic rights of people in the United States. It was written when the country was founded. The period when the country was founded is called the founding era. In 1787, leaders like George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, James Madison, and Alexander Hamilton met in Philadelphia. We call this meeting the Constitutional Convention. These leaders are sometimes called the founders. They wrote the Constitution at the Constitutional Convention.

When the founders wrote the Constitution, it had a preamble and seven sections. Later, people made changes. A change to the Constitution is called an amendment. Today, there are 27 amendments. These 27 amendments are listed after the original seven sections.

We the People

The beginning of the Constitution is called the Preamble. The Preamble explains why the founders wrote the Constitution. It also says that people in the United States will have self-government. This means no king or queen rules the country. Instead, the people choose leaders for local, state, and federal governments. The idea of self-government is in the first three words of the Constitution: We the People.

The Federal Government: The Three Branches of Government

The first three sections of the Constitution set up the US government. The three branches of government are the legislative branch, the executive branch, and the judicial branch.

- The legislative branch is called Congress. Congress has two parts: the House of Representatives and the Senate.
- The executive branch is led by the president. It also includes the vice president, the president's cabinet, and other departments.
- The judicial branch has the Supreme Court and other federal courts. The Supreme Court is the highest court in the United States.

Separation of Powers

During the Constitutional Convention, the founders did not want one person or group to have too much power. They separated government power so no branch is too strong. The powers of each branch of government are:

- The legislative branch makes federal laws.
- The executive branch enforces federal laws.
- The judicial branch reviews federal laws.

Powers of the Federal Government

The Constitution also says the federal government can declare war, make treaties, and print money.

State Government

The fourth section of the Constitution explains how state governments are set up. Each state has a legislative, an executive, and a judicial branch. The person in charge of a state's executive branch is the governor. There are 50 states, and each one has its own governor. To find your governor, visit usa.gov/state-governor.

The Constitution also gives state governments certain powers. For example, state governments can provide protection and safety (such as police and fire departments), and they can provide schooling and education.

Changing the Constitution

The fifth section of the Constitution explains how the Constitution can be changed. A change is called an amendment. For an amendment to be added, 3/4 of the states must agree. Today, there are 50 states in the US. That means that 38 out of the 50 states must approve an amendment for it to be added to the Constitution. There are 27 amendments to the Constitution.

Supreme Law of the Land

The sixth section of the Constitution says the Constitution is the supreme law of the land in the United States. This means that everyone living in the United States must follow the Constitution. In the United States, we support the rule of law. This means that we believe no one is above the law and everyone must follow the law. This also means that the US government, state governments, and local governments must follow

the Constitution and the rule of law.

Approving the Constitution

The seventh section says people had to approve the Constitution for it to become law. When the founders finished writing it in 1787, there were 13 states. Nine of these 13 states had to approve it. In 1788, New Hampshire became the ninth state to approve. By 1790, all 13 original states approved the Constitution.

Amendments to the Constitution

When the Constitution was written in 1787, it did not list individual rights. The founders decided to add 10 amendments to the Constitution. The first 10 amendments to the Constitution are called the Bill of Rights. The Bill of Rights lists some of the basic rights of people living in the United States.

Today, there are 27 amendments. Some of the amendments that were added to the Constitution after the Bill of Rights explain who can be a US citizen and who can vote in elections.