**AMERICAN GOVERNMENT**

**Origins of the U.S. Government – TEST STUDY GUIDE**

**Our Political Beginnings (Ch.2.1)**

**Vocabulary:** *Define the following key terms.*

**Limited government representative government Magna Carta**

**Due process English Bill of Rights charter**

**Bicameral proprietary unicameral**

**English Petition of Right**

**Focus Questions:** *Develop of response to the questions below, which may appear on your test in the form of multiple choice, short answer, or in graphic organizer form.*

1. Identify & explain the 3 concepts of government that influenced the American Colonies.
2. Explain the significance of the three landmark English documents and their influence on American ideas about government and freedom.
3. What principles do the Magna Carta, the Petition of Right, and the English Bill of Rights have in common?
4. Describe the three types of colonies that the English established in the American colonies.

**The Coming of Independence (Ch.2.2)**

**Vocabulary:** *Define the following key terms.*

**Confederation delegate**

**Albany Plan of Union popular sovereignty**

**Focus Questions:** *Develop of response to the questions below, which may appear on your test in the form of multiple choice, short answer, or in graphic organizer form.*

1. How did Britain’s colonial policies contribute to the growth of self-government in the colonies?
2. Identify the major steps that led to growing feelings of colonial unity amongst American colonists.
3. Compare & contrast the First & Second Continental Congresses. In what ways were the goals alike? In what ways were the goals different?
4. What events & ideas led to American independence?
5. Summarize the common features of the first State constitutions.
6. Identify & explain 3 examples of how the ideas in the Declaration of Independence represent:

a). an idealistic statement of human rights

b). a statement of grievances

c). a form of propaganda to persuade American colonists to unite as one nation & fight for independence

**The Critical Period (Ch.2.3)**

**Vocabulary:** *Define the following key terms.*

**Articles of Confederation Ratification**

**Focus Questions:** *Develop of response to the questions below, which may appear on your test in the form of multiple choice, short answer, or in graphic organizer form.*

1. Describe the structure of American government set up under the Articles of Confederation.
2. What was the goal of the Articles of Confederation?
3. Identify at least 5 weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation.
4. Under the Articles of Confederation, was Congress bicameral or unicameral?
5. Which weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation created major problems for our young nation that lead to a critical period for our existence as a nation in the 1780s?
6. Describe how a growing need for a stronger national government led to plans for a Constitutional Convention in the 1780s.

**Creating the Constitution (Ch.2.4)**

**Vocabulary:** *Define the following key terms.*

**Framers Virginia Plan New Jersey Plan**

**Three-Fifths Compromise Commerce & Slave Trade Compromise**

**Enlightenment Philosophy Connecticut Compromise (**aka **The Great Compromise)**

**Focus Questions:** *Develop of response to the questions below, which may appear on your test in the form of multiple choice, short answer, or in graphic organizer form.*

1. Identify the framers of the Constitution & how they organized the Philadelphia Convention.
2. Compare & contrast the New Jersey Plan & the Virginia Plan
3. Summarize the Constitutional Convention’s major compromises and the positive/negative effects of those decisions for the future of our nation.
4. In what ways did the New Jersey & Virginia plans propose to limit the powers of the legislative & executive branches?
5. What problem did large states have with the New Jersey Plan?
6. What problems did small states have with the Virginia Plan?
7. In what ways did the Three-Fifths Compromise & the Commerce & Slave Trade Compromise benefit the southern states?
8. Identify 3 Enlightenment philosophers & explain the influence of Enlightenment ideas on the formation of the American government.

**Ratifying the Constitution (Ch.2.5)**

**Vocabulary:** *Define the following key terms.*

**Federalist Anti-Federalist**

**Federalism States’ Rights**

**Focus Questions:** *Develop of response to the questions below, which may appear on your test in the form of multiple choice, short answer, or in graphic organizer form.*

1. What were the opposing viewpoints on the division of powers between Federalists & Anti-Federalists during the debates to ratify the new U.S. Constitution?
2. What was the goal of the Framers when they met at Independence Hall in Philadelphia?
3. Why did the Anti-Federalists oppose the presidency?
4. Explain the importance of adding a Bill of Rights to the U.S. Constitution.
5. Describe the inauguration of the new government of the United States of America.
6. Why do you think it was important for Virginia to ratify the Constitution? (**HINT**: Recall Virginia’s role in writing the Declaration of Independence, hosting the Second Continental Congress & Virginia being the home state for some of America’s most important leaders of the 1770s-1780s).
7. Identify & explain 5 ways in which the U.S. Constitution corrected the weaknesses & problems found in the Articles of Confederation.

**CRITICAL THINKING ESSAY**

**DIRECTIONS:** Select one of the four essay questions below & write a 3 paragraph response that includes the following criteria:

* **INTRODUCTION**: (1) paragraph that captures the reader’s attention & clearly states a **MAIN IDEA**
* **BODY PARAGRAPH**: (1) paragraph with at least **3 SUPPORTING DETAILS** for the MAIN IDEA
* **CONCLUSION**: (1) paragraph that summarizes & reinforces the MAIN IDEA

**ESSAY #1 –** The British monarchy gave the charter colonies of Connecticut & Rhode Island many freedoms not enjoyed by the other colonies (either royal or proprietary colonies). Do you agree with some historians who claim that the Revolution may never have happened if all the colonies enjoyed the same freedoms? Why or why not?

**ESSAY #2 –** In the Three-Fifths Compromise, the Constitution never uses the words “slave” or “slavery.” Instead, it refers to “free person” & “three-fifths of all other persons.” Why do you think this was so?

**ESSAY #3 –** How might the various plans, compromises and debates of the Constitutional Convention (1787) made between northern & southern states, Federalists and Anti-Federalists, in some ways foreshadow the U.S. Civil War that would occur some 78 years later (1865)?

**ESSAY #4 –** In what ways did the revolutionary philosophical ideas on government & natural rights expressed during the Age of Enlightenment by European philosophers influence the America’s fight for independence & formation of the U.S. Constitution?