

# U.S. Government

Explain historical and philosophical origins that shaped the government of the United States, including the Magna Carta, the Petition of Rights, the English Bill of Rights, the Mayflower Compact, the Virginia Declaration of Rights, and the influence of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Charles de Montesquieu, Jean-Jaques Rousseau, and the Great Awakening. [USGOV.1](#)

- a Comparing characteristics of limited and unlimited governments throughout the world, including constitutional, authoritarian, and totalitarian governments. Examples: constitutional—United States; authoritarian—Iran; totalitarian—North Korea [USGOV.1.A](#)

Summarize the significance of the First and Second Continental Congresses, the Declaration of Independence, Shays' Rebellion, and the Articles of Confederation of 1781 on the writing and ratification of the Constitution of the United States of 1787 and the Bill of Rights of 1791. [USGOV.2](#)

- 2 Summarize the significance of the First and Second Continental Congresses, the Declaration of Independence, Shays' Rebellion, and the Articles of Confederation of 1781 on the writing and ratification of the Constitution of the United States of 1787 and the Bill of Rights of 1791. [USGOV.2](#)

Analyze major features of the Constitution of the United States and the Bill of Rights for purposes, organization, functions, and principles, including

- a Explaining main ideas of the debate over ratification that included the Federalist papers [USGOV.3.A](#)
- b Analyzing the Bill of Rights for its application to historical and current issues [USGOV.3.B](#)

rule of law, federalism, limited government, popular sovereignty, judicial review, separation of powers, and checks and balances. [USGOV.3](#)

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**c** Outlining the formal process of amending the Constitution of the United States [USGOV.3.C](#)

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Explain how the federal system of the United States divides powers between national and state governments. [USGOV.4](#)

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**a** Summarizing obligations that the Constitution of the United States places on a nation for the benefit of the states, including admitting new states and cooperative federalism [USGOV.4.A](#)

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**b** Evaluating the role of the national government in interstate relations [USGOV.4.B](#)

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Compare specific functions, organizations, and purposes of local and state governments, including implementing fiscal and monetary policies, ensuring personal security, and regulating transportation. [USGOV.5](#)

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**a** Analyzing the Constitution of Alabama of 1901 to determine its impact on local funding and campaign funding [USGOV.5.A](#)

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**b** Describing the influence of special interest groups on state government [USGOV.5.B](#)

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Analyze the expansion of suffrage for its effect on the political system of the United States, including suffrage for non-property owners, women, African Americans, and persons eighteen years of age. [USGOV.6](#)

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**a** Describing implications of participation of large numbers of minorities and women in parties and campaigns [USGOV.6.A](#)

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**b** Analyzing the black codes, the Jim Crow laws, and the Selma-toMontgomery March for their impact on the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 [USGOV.6.B](#)

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Describe the process of local, state, and national elections, including the organization, role, and constituency of political parties. [USGOV.7](#)

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**a** Explaining campaign funding and spending [USGOV.7.A](#)

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**b** Evaluating the impact of reapportionment, redistricting, and voter turnout on elections [USGOV.7.B](#)

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Describe functions and the development of special interest groups and campaign

**a** Analyzing rulings by the United States Supreme Court, including Buckley versus Valeo, regarding campaign financing to determine the effect on the election process [USGOV.8.A](#)

**contributions by political action committees and their impact on state and national elections.** [USGOV.8](#)

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**Trace the impact of the media on the political process and public opinion in the United States, including party press, penny press, print media, yellow journalism, radio, television, and electronic media.** [USGOV.9](#)

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- a Describing regional differences in public opinion in the United States** [USGOV.9.A](#)

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  - b Analyzing television and electronic media for their impact on the election process and campaign spending from the John F. Kennedy-Richard M. Nixon debate to the election of Barack Obama as President of the United States** [USGOV.9.B](#)

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  - c Explaining the effect of attack advertisements on voter selection of candidates** [USGOV.9.C](#)
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**Evaluate roles political parties play in the functioning of the political system of the United States.** [USGOV.10](#)

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- a Describing the role of third-party candidates in political elections in the United States** [USGOV.10.A](#)

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  - b Explaining major characteristics of contemporary political parties in the United States, including the role of conventions, party leadership, formal and informal memberships, and regional strongholds** [USGOV.10.B](#)

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  - c Describing the influence of political parties on individuals and elected officials, including the development of party machines, rise of independent voters, and disillusionment with party systems** [USGOV.10.C](#)
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**Evaluate constitutional provisions of the legislative branch of the government of the United States, including checks by the legislative branch on other branches of government.** [USGOV.11](#)

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- a Comparing rules of operations and hierarchies of Congress, including roles of the Speaker of the House, the Senate President Pro Tempore, majority and minority leaders, and party whips** [USGOV.11.A](#)

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  - b Identifying the significance of Congressional committee structure and types of committees** [USGOV.11.B](#)

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  - c Tracing the legislative process, including types of votes and committee action, from a bill's presentation to presidential action** [USGOV.11.C](#)
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**Evaluate constitutional provisions of the executive branch of the government of the United States, including checks by the executive branch on other branches of government and powers, duties as**

- a Critiquing informal powers of the President of the United States, including press conferences, State of the Union addresses, total media access, head of party, and symbolic powers of the Oval Office** [USGOV.12.A](#)

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- b Identifying the influence of White House staff on the President of the United States** [USGOV.12.B](#)

head of state and head of government, the electoral process, and the Twenty-fifth Amendment. [USGOV.12](#)

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**c** Ranking powers held by the President's Cabinet, including roles of Cabinet secretaries, appropriations by Congress, appointment and confirmation, and operation of organization [USGOV.12.C](#)

**d** Comparing diverse backgrounds, socioeconomic status, and levels of education of United States' presidents [USGOV.12.D](#)

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Evaluate constitutional provisions of the judicial branch of government of the United States, including checks by the judicial branch on other branches of government, limits on judicial power, and the process by which cases are argued before the United States Supreme Court [USGOV.13](#)

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**a** Explaining the structure and jurisdiction of court systems of the United States, including lower courts and appellate courts [USGOV.13.A](#)

**b** Identifying the impact of landmark United States Supreme Court cases on constitutional interpretation Examples: Marbury versus Madison, Miranda versus Arizona, Tinker versus Des Moines, Gideon versus Wainwright, Reno versus American Civil Liberties Union, United States versus Nixon, McCulloch versus Maryland, Wallace versus Jaffree, Wyatt versus Stickney, Powell versus Alabama [USGOV.13.B](#)

**c** Describing the shifting political balance of the court system, including the appointment process, the ideology of justices, influences on court decisions regarding executive and legislative opinion, public opinion, and the desire for impartiality [USGOV.13.C](#)

**d** Contrasting strict and loose constructionist views of the Constitution of the United States [USGOV.13.D](#)

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Describe the role of citizens in American democracy, including the meaning, rights, and responsibilities of citizenship; due process and other rights guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States; and participation in the election process. [USGOV.14](#)

**a** Explaining how the balance between individual versus majority rule and state versus national authority is essential to the functioning of the American democratic society. Examples: majority rule and minority rights, liberty and equality, state and national authority in a federal system, civil disobedience and rule of law, freedom of the press, right to a fair trial, relationship of religion and government [USGOV.14.A](#)

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Explain the role and consequences of domestic and foreign policy decisions, including scientific and technological advancements and humanitarian, cultural, economic, and political changes. Examples:

**a** Evaluating financial, political, and social costs of national security [USGOV.15.A](#)

**isolationism versus  
internationalism, policy  
of containment, policy  
of détente,  
multilateralism, war on  
terrorism** [US60V.15](#)