



UNIT 4 How Was the Constitution Used to Establish Our Government?
STATE QUESTION

2. “Contemporary political scientists suspect that democratic politics is fundamentally unworkable without parties and partisanship. Parties connect the ordinary citizen to government and politics and offer them broad policy choices, thereby giving voters a chance to direct and control government through party politics.”* Do you agree or disagree? Why? What evidence can you offer to support your response?

- Why did the Founders initially oppose the formation of political parties, and why did they change their stances?
- In what ways does America’s two-party system promote its constitutional principles? In what ways might it hinder them?
- Why do you think the United States has remained essentially a two-party system, while many democracies have multiparty systems?

* Rick Valelly, “Who Needs Political Parties?” in Princeton Readings in American Politics, ed. Richard M. Valelly (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 513.



UNIT 5

How Does the Constitution Protect Our Basic Rights?
REGIONAL + STATE QUESTION

1. In 1870 Congress passed the Fifteenth Amendment, which prohibits the federal and state governments from denying a citizen the right to vote based on that citizen's "race, color, or previous condition of servitude." Is voting a fundamental right? Why or why not?

- How has the right to vote expanded to more Americans since 1870?
- How does voting play an important role in a constitutional democracy?
- What might be done to improve voter participation, particularly that of young voters?



UNIT 5

How Does the Constitution Protect Our Basic Rights?
STATE QUESTION

2. How and why did the Fourteenth Amendment enlarge and extend due process protections?

- The Constitution does not define due process of law. How would you explain the meaning of due process of law?
- How can the rights of individuals and the rights of society conflict?
- How does due process of law protect individuals from possible abuses of powers? Provide examples in the response.



2020-2021 We the People Middle School
Simulated Congressional Hearing Questions

UNIT 6

What Are the Responsibilities of Citizens?
REGIONAL + STATE QUESTION

1. “The first requisite of a good citizen in this Republic of ours is that he shall be able and willing to pull his weight.”* Do you agree or disagree with President Theodore Roosevelt? Why or why not? What are the attributes of good citizenship?

- How is citizenship defined in the Fourteenth Amendment?
- What, if any, are the responsibilities of citizenship in the United States?
- Is criticizing the government, when necessary, consistent with good citizenship? Why or why not?

*Theodore Roosevelt, *Addresses and Presidential Messages of Theodore Roosevelt, 1902–1904*, introduction by Henry Cabot Lodge (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1904), 85.



UNIT 6

What Are the Responsibilities of Citizens?
STATE QUESTION

2. An English historian once said, “The powers of technology appear to be unlimited. If some of the dangers may be great, the potential rewards are greater still.”* Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not? Provide examples of how technology has had both positive and negative effects on our lives today.

- In what ways, if any, does modern technology affect the privacy rights of Americans?
- How might the Internet encourage or discourage the achievement of democratic principles and values?
- What actions, if any, do you think citizens, Congress, or your state legislature should take to limit the tools of modern technology, such as social media?

*D.S.L. Cardwell, Dictionary of the History of Ideas, vol. 4, Technology (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), 364, quoted in Practically Speaking: A Dictionary of Quotations on Engineering, Technology and Architecture, ed. Carl C. Gaither and Alma E. Cavados-Gaither (Bristol, UK: Institute of Physics Publishing, 1999), 364.