



Simulated Congressional Hearing Scoring Guide

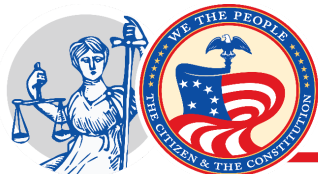
When Congress has to make important decisions that impact the general welfare of the country, they ask experts to speak before them in congressional hearings. These experts share knowledge about important topics, and congressional committee members ask follow-up questions to understand the issue better. In this performance assessment, you are the experts testifying before a simulated congressional committee. In preparing for and participating in this activity, you will better understand the Constitution and how it affects historical and current issues. By the end, you will improve your critical thinking skills, learn to powerfully use different types of evidence, and analyze how the Constitution impacts our society.

After preparing with your class and unit team, your simulated hearing will be evaluated using the following criteria. Scores from all of the class's unit teams will be combined for a total score.

Category	Description	Scoring Criteria
Opening Statement	You and your classmates will write and deliver a well-organized and clear speech based on the questions from your unit. As a unit team, everyone should take part in the writing process as well as in delivering the speech. Use accurate information from the Constitution, history, and other trusted sources to strengthen your speech.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Students have addressed all elements of the question.<input type="checkbox"/> All students participated in the presentation of the opening statement<input type="checkbox"/> Students have taken a well-organized and logical approach to their statement, using appropriate (and accurate) references to the Constitution, scholarly sources, relevant cases, legal opinions, historical documents, and other materials to substantiate their arguments.

After your opening statement, you will be asked follow-up questions evaluated on the categories:

Evidence	When you answer judges' questions during the follow-up period, make sure to back up your ideas with proof. Reference the Constitution itself, its principles, and other important sources to support your arguments. Mention events from history or important people to show that you understand the question in context. It is also important to share real-life examples showing how the Constitution affects issues today.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Students accurately referenced constitutional text, principles, and other relevant primary and secondary sources to support their arguments.<input type="checkbox"/> Students have referenced historical events or influential figures to demonstrate a contextual understanding of the question.<input type="checkbox"/> Students have provided historical or current-day examples or case studies that illustrate the real-world impact of the Constitution or constitutional principles.
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WE THE PEOPLE

The Citizen and the Constitution

Directed by the Center for Civic Education

Scoring Guide 2023–2024

Category	Description	Scoring Criteria
Analysis / Understanding	<p>Show that you really get the topic by talking about key decisions made by judges, changes to the Constitution, and events in history that influenced its meaning. Remember, there can be different opinions about the Constitution, so consider all sides. Think about what happens if we interpret the Constitution in different ways – how does it affect society, our responsibilities, and our rights?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Students have accurately referenced key judicial decisions, amendments, historical context, or societal movements, and described their impact on the Constitution's meaning and application.<input type="checkbox"/> Students have recognized multiple perspectives on constitutional issues, including differing interpretations, dissenting opinions, and alternative arguments by scholars, jurists, or other stakeholders.<input type="checkbox"/> Students have identified the potential consequences of various interpretations of governing documents on society, policy, and individual rights.
Application	<p>Now it's time to see how the Constitution is used in real life. Talk about how we evaluate constitutional issues today, like in courts and public policies. You can also use the Constitution to solve problems we face in the world. Look at how other countries have handled similar issues or how issues were handled in historic times – that can help us understand even better.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Students have accurately addressed how a constitutional issue is currently assessed, including the legal framework, court interpretations, public policies, and prevailing arguments.<input type="checkbox"/> Students analyzed how constitutional provisions and principles can be applied to resolve real-world situations, policies, debates, or contemporary issues.<input type="checkbox"/> Students have demonstrated familiarity with constitutional principles and frameworks from other countries or historical time periods, and they use these comparative perspectives to enrich their analysis.
Discussion	<p>In the follow-up discussions, everyone should join in and share their thoughts. Use good reasoning and evidence to back up your arguments. Build on what others have said and refer back to key ideas from your opening statement. This way, you and the judges can have a meaningful conversation and learn from each other.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> The discussion reflected a balanced level of intellectual engagement, with most students actively participating, generating thoughtful insights, and contributing to a meaningful exchange of ideas.<input type="checkbox"/> In their discussion, students provided logical and well-supported reasoning for their positions, using relevant evidence, constitutional principles, and legal precedents to support their claims.<input type="checkbox"/> Students linked their follow-up discussion to their Opening Statement, further elaborating on the arguments presented in their initial remarks.