

June 6, 2011

Dear AP Government Student,

Welcome to Advanced Placement US Government and Politics. I am greatly looking forward to this course next year.

In this packet you will find information for your summer work.

Part A – Supreme Conflict

You will need to get a copy of the book, Supreme Conflict. You will need to read and take notes on the book (if you purchase your own copy of the book you may take your notes directly in the book). A rubric for your annotations is attached to this packet.

On the first day of school you will have to take a Free Response Question (essay) on the book. Possible FRQ topics are listed in the packet.

Part B - The Constitution in 2011

- I. Read the U.S. Constitution and summarize the topics found in each of the seven articles by July 29, 2011. Make a chart of your own design to organize the topics. Must be emailed to Ms. MacIntosh by midnight on July 29th – amacintosh@fairfield.k12.ct.us

- II. Select a topic below on the Constitution in 2011, only three students are allowed to each topic. Sign up for your topic with Ms. MacIntosh by June 22nd. You will need to write a 2-4 page response to the topic (double spaced, 12 pt. font), if you use outside sources to help research your topic make sure to include in text citations and a works cited page (using MLA format). The papers are due by midnight on Friday August 12th – emailed to Ms. MacIntosh (amacintosh@fairfield.k12.ct.us). You will also need to create a poster on this topic, using information from your paper and visuals. These posters will be displayed around school in preparation for Constitution Day. Posters are due on the first day of class.

If you have any questions at any time please feel free to email me.

I hope that you have a great summer and I look forward to working with you during the next school year.

Sincerely,

Amy E. MacIntosh

AP US Government and Politics Summer 2011 Work

Part A – Supreme Conflict, by Jan Crawford Greenburg (Penguin Press, 2007)

- A. You must read this book in its entirety. Either annotate the book or write notes on each chapter.
- B. On the first day of school you will have to respond to one of the following Free Response Questions based on the reading of the book. You may use your book or book notes to help you.
 - I. Supreme Court Justices are nominated by the president and then confirmed by the Senate.
 - a. Identify and explain two characteristics of a justice that president looks for in nominees to the Supreme Court.
 - b. Give an example of a Supreme Court nominee that did not get confirmed by the Senate and evaluate why they were not confirmed.
 - c. Give an example of a Supreme Court nominee that was confirmed by the Senate, evaluate why they were confirmed.
 - II. Supreme Court Justices often have their personalities come alive from the bench.
 - a. Why would the Supreme Court decide not to hear a case?
 - b. Give a specific example of a case the Supreme Court did not decide to hear and explain why the personalities of a particular justice played a role in this decision?
 - c. Why would a justice change their decision on a case after the initial vote?
 - d. Give an example of a justice who changed his opinion on a case and example why this change was made.
 - III. The Supreme Court bases their opinions on precedent and interpretation of the Constitution.
 - a. Identify one Supreme Court decision that was based on precedent.
 - b. Explain what precedent the case was decided on and why the justices referred to this precedent in deciding the case. (if the precedent is a previous court decision make sure to cite it by name).
 - c. Identify one Supreme Court decision based on interpretation of the Constitution.
 - d. Explain how the justices interpreted the Constitution to reach this decision and explain why they looked towards the Constitution rather than precedent.
- C. Within the first few days of school you will have a discussion on the book. Be prepared with at least three questions that you have about the Supreme Court or its decisions. You must also select one quote from the book that you think is the most thought provoking about the Supreme Court or its decisions.

Book Annotations:

Possible Points	Criteria
90-100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is clear evidence that the student has thoroughly read the entity of the book. • The student creates specific connections between the book and his/her outside knowledge, these connections are not limited to just history or government. • The student asks thought provoking questions to deepen his/her understanding of both the author's message but also a greater understanding of government/politics/history • The student makes an attempt through his/her annotations to analyze the author's message and to assess the author's validity.
80-89	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is evidence that the student had read the entire book. • The student generates connections between the book and his/her outside knowledge. • The student develops questions about the author's meaning and his arguments. • The student is mostly reacting to ideas presented by the author, rather than trying to evaluate those ideas or develop connections.
70-79	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is evidence that the student read the majority of the book, although there may be sections that the student read in more depth than other areas. • The student develops connections between the points brought up by the author and the student's own knowledge of history and government. • The student is stating his/her own opinions without justification. • The student does question the book, although it may be mostly for clarification on certain topics and ideas.
60-69	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student annotated sections of the book, although there is little evidence to support that the student read the book thoroughly. • Rather than developing thoughtful connections or questions, the student reacts to some of the ideas presented by the author. Some of these reactions may be limited to single words or phrases. • The student may have taken notes on the book, and limited those notes to what happened in the book, rather than his/her own connections and questions.
50 and below	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is little to no evidence of the student reading the book. • There are no valid connections or relevant questions. • There are random comments written, but nothing that specifically relates to the ideas presented by the author.

Part B – The Constitution in 2011

Possible Topics

Has the U.S. Supreme Court followed the original intent of our founding fathers? Present key cases of judicial activism and judicial restraint in the 20 th and 21 st centuries.
What is the “Tea Party”? What is their perspective about the current implementation of the U.S. Constitution?
What is the new health care law? Why do critics question its constitutionality?
Can students have religious clubs after school? Can prayers be recited at graduation? Can history instructors teach about the Bible? Why are we allowed to say “under God” in the pledge? Explore the free exercise clause and the establishment clause of the 1 st Amendment.
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Can students be randomly drug tested in school? Can lockers and backpacks be searched? What privacy rights can students expect in school?
Why is it ok for the KKK to have organized demonstrations but students cannot walk out of school and have spontaneous demonstrations? Was it ok for homophobic demonstrators to disrupt military funerals recently? What are the rules around our freedom of assembly?
Does the school have the right to censor the student newspaper? Do private newspapers have the right to publish sensitive material like Wikileaks? How free is our press?
What would Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, James Madison, and Thomas Jefferson have to say about the current state of the U.S.?
What are the constitutional qualifications for being president? Do we need these qualifications? Should we have others? Who are some of the front runners for the 2012 election and what are their platforms?

Is the death penalty a violation of the 8th Amendment's prohibition against cruel and unusual punishment?

What are our constitutional rights if we are accused of a crime?

Why is flag burning considered a constitutional right?

Design your own topic and submit your proposal for teacher approval.