

## Con Law Summer Assignment 2022

<https://tinyurl.com/ConLawSummer>

1. Read Unit 1 of the *We the People* Textbook ([Pgs. 1-56](#)).
2. Complete the [Unit 1 Reading Guide](#). Take notes as you go, define key terms listed at the start of each section and answer all of the review questions at the end of each section.

HANDWRITTEN

*Example: Key Term and Review Question/Answer*

**For example: Unit 1, Section 1:**

**Term:** Constitution: *A fundamental or higher law that limits government.* (pg. 5).

**Question:** Identify three characteristics of British Colonies.

*Most Americans in colonial America lived and worked on farms. Their backgrounds were diverse with a number of different languages and religions. A few influential families dominated the colonies of South Carolina, Maryland, and New York. They owned large estates and attempted to copy European culture. (pg. 4).*

3. Pick **one** of the [six essay questions](#). Research the topic and question. Write a 3-4 page response (12pt font, double spaced) that answers the prompt and uses specific evidence from history and politics to support your answer. Make sure it has a clear thesis statement in the introduction that answers all parts of the question. [SAMPLE ESSAY](#) Include a works cited. As well as information from the book, please cite outside information gathered from reliable online sources.

A few additional resources:

AP Government Online Text:

[https://www.neisd.net/cms/lib/TX02215002/Centricity/Domain/4610/governmentinamerica16th\\_edition.pdf](https://www.neisd.net/cms/lib/TX02215002/Centricity/Domain/4610/governmentinamerica16th_edition.pdf)

Online History Text: <https://www.americanyawp.com/>

Center for Civic Education: <https://www.civiced.org/60-second-civics>

For questions about the founders' beliefs, use: <http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/tocs/toc.html>

Also, consider using the Federalist Papers:

<http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/documents/1786-1800/the-federalist-papers/>

Email any questions to:

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## Unit 1 Reading Guide

### What Are the Philosophical and Historical Foundations of the American Political System?

**Directions:** For each lesson you will define and provide an example when applicable for the “terms to understand” listed at the beginning of each unit and then answer each of the “reviewing and using the lesson” questions at the end of the lesson. Be sure to use examples from the text in both your definitions and answer to the questions. All responses should be in your own words, *handwritten*, and not typed.

#### **Lesson 1: What Did the Founders Think about the Constitutional Government?**

Part 1: Define and give an example of the following:

*Constitution*

*Mixed constitution*

*Constitutional government*

*Parliament*

*Democracy*

*Republic*

*Forms of government*

*Unwritten constitution*

*Limited government*

*Written constitution*

Part 2: Answer the following. Be specific in your responses.

1. Identify at least three characteristics of the British colonies.
2. What important lessons did the founding generation learn from political theory and political history?
3. What is the difference between limited government and unlimited government? Do you think the difference is important? Why or why not?
4. What is a constitution?
5. What is a mixed constitution? Explain the advantages and disadvantages of this type of government.
6. Why is a constitution in a constitutional government considered a higher law, and what are the major characteristics of a higher law?
7. According to Aristotle, what are the differences between right and corrupt forms of government?

#### **Lesson 2: What Ideas about Civic Life Informed the Founding Generation?**

Part 1: Define and give an example of the following:

*Civic virtue*

*Political legitimacy*

*Classical republicanism*

*Popular sovereignty*

*Common good*

*Pursuit of happiness*

*Consent of the government*

*Right of revolution*

*Divine right*

*Social contract*

*Inalienable rights*

*State of nature*

*Natural rights*

Part 2: Answer the following. Be specific in your responses.

1. How would you describe the differences between classical republicanism and natural rights philosophy? How are those differences important in thinking about the purposes and goals of government?
2. What is civic virtue? How is it fostered in small, uniform communities? In large, diverse communities?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using the state of nature to explain society and politics?

4. What is meant by social contract? How is it connected to the idea that government derives its authority from the consent of the governed? What is the significance of the idea that society and government are based on agreements rather than occurring naturally?
5. If you were asked to create a government that reflects principles of both classical republicanism and natural rights philosophy, which elements of each would you use? Why?
6. What might be the consequences for individuals and society of too great an emphasis on the rights of individuals over the common good?
7. Do Hobbes's ideas about the establishment of authoritarian states to promote order, security and peace have any relevance today? Why or why not?

### **Lesson 3: What Historical Developments Influenced Modern Ideas of Individual Rights?**

Part 1: Define and give an example of the following:

*Capitalism*

*City-state*

*Feudalism*

*Judeo-Christian*

*nation-state*

*Private morality*

*Public morality*

Part 2: Answer the following. Be specific in your responses.

1. How would you describe the difference between the classical republican idea of civic virtue and Judeo-Christian ideas of morality?
2. How did the Judeo-Christian heritage contribute to the Founders' understanding of human rights?
3. What features of society in the Middle Ages contributed to the view that rights belonged to groups rather than to individuals?
4. How did feudalism contribute to the idea that government is based on contractual relationships?
5. What modern ideas about rights were developed during the Renaissance? How did the Reformation contribute to the development of those ideas?
6. How did the rise of nation-states help to stimulate thinking about principles of government such as constitutionalism, individual rights, and republicanism?
7. How did the development of capitalism encourage new thinking about the individual and society?
8. Why was the invention of the printing press with movable type important in promoting the spirit of individualism?
9. How did the ideas of the Age of Enlightenment influence the Founders?

### **Lesson 4: What were the British Origins of American Constitutionalism?**

Part 1: Define and give an example of the following:

*Common law*

*Magna Carta*

*Precedent*

*Redress of grievances*

*Rights of Englishmen*

*Rule of law*

*Stare decisis*

*Writ of habeas corpus*

Part 2: Answer the following. Be specific in your responses.

1. What is the common law of England? Why is it sometimes called "judge-made law"? How did the common law develop?
2. What is meant by the phrase "rights of Englishmen"? How were these rights established?
3. What is the Magna Carta? How was it created? How did it contribute to the development of constitutional government?
4. One constitutional scholar called the writ of habeas corpus the "greatest guarantee of human freedom ever devised by man." Why is this right so fundamental?

5. Among the key documents in the struggle for power between king and Parliament were the Petition of Right of 1628, the Habeas Corpus Act of 1679, and the English Bill of Rights of 1689. Explain how and why each of these documents contributed to the development of Constitutional government in England.
6. How are the ideas in the Magna Carta, the Petition of Right, and the English Bill of Rights related to natural philosophy and classical republicanism?
7. What other rights and other principles of government in the US Constitution or in your state's constitution can you trace back to the Magna Carta?

### **Lesson 5: What Basic Ideas about Rights and Constitutional Government Did Colonial Americans Hold?**

Part 1: Define and give an example of the following:

*Charter*

*Constituent*

*Covenant*

*Indentured servants*

*Magistrate*

*Mayflower Compact*

*Suffrage*

Part 2: Answer the following. Be specific in your responses.

1. What was the Mayflower Compact? Why was it drafted? How could it be said to reflect the idea that government should be based on consent of the governed?
2. In what ways were eighteenth-century American and British societies similar and different in terms of the rights of individual liberty, equality of opportunity, suffrage, and property?
3. How would you describe the economic, social, and political conditions of life in colonial America? How did these conditions affect the development of American ideas about government?
4. How did the simple governing structures in colonial charters evolve into more comprehensive systems of local government before the Revolution?
5. What basic features of English constitutionalism were found in the governments of the colonies?
6. Why was the right to vote in the colonies limited to those who owned a certain amount of property? Why were colonial governments more representative than the British government?
7. Why were written guarantees of rights in colonial documents important to the development of Americans' ideas about government?
8. Are written guarantees of rights as important today as they were in colonial times? Why or why not?

### **Lesson 6: Why did American Colonists Want to Free Themselves from Great Britain?**

Part 1: Define and give an example of the following:

*Compact*

*Law of nature*

*Sovereignty*

*Writs of assistance*

Part 2: Answer the following. Be specific in your responses.

1. How would you describe British policies toward the colonies before the 1750s? How and why did those policies change in the 1760s and 1770s?
2. What were the colonists' major objections to British policies in the 1760s? What rights did the colonists claim that those policies violated?
3. What is meant by the term sovereignty? How was sovereignty a disputed matter between Great Britain and the colonies?
4. What are the basic ideas and arguments set forth in the Declaration of Independence?
5. What problems identified in the Declaration would have to be corrected for governments created after American independence to be legitimate?
6. How did the colonists justify their revolution against Great Britain?

## **Lesson 7: What Basic Ideas about Government and Rights Did the State Constitutions Include?**

Part 1: Define and give an example of the following:

*Checks and balances*

*Legislative supremacy*

*Veto*

Part 2: Answer the following. Be specific in your responses.

1. What basic ideas about government were contained in the new state constitutions?
2. Explain the meaning and significance of the following concepts:
  - a. Higher law
  - b. Popular sovereignty
  - c. Legislative supremacy
  - d. Check and balances
3. What were the most significant differences between the Massachusetts constitution and the other state constitutions?
4. What important ideas did the Virginia Declaration of Rights contain? How was this document influential throughout the colonies?
5. Examine the declaration of rights in Colorado. How does the list of rights limit state government?

### Option A

**“The doctrine of the separation of powers was adopted by the Convention of 1787 not to promote efficiency, but to preclude the exercise of arbitrary power.”\* How well has the Constitution’s design accomplished what Justice Brandeis described? Explain your position.**

- Which branch has been most constrained by its constitutional limits? Explain your position.

### Option B

**“The U.S. Department of State leads America’s foreign policy through diplomacy, advocacy, and assistance by advancing the interests of the American people, their safety and economic prosperity.”\* Do you agree or disagree with this mission statement? Explain your position.**

- What current international matters or situations do you think are of most concern for the United States? Why? How can our foreign policy deal with these concerns?

### Option C

**The Ninth Amendment to the Constitution says, “The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.” What rights, if any, not listed in the Bill of Rights or the U.S. Constitution should be retained by the people?**

- What branch of government is best suited to establish legal rights? Why?

### Option D

**Patrick Henry famously quipped that he did not attend the Philadelphia Convention because he “smelt a rat.”\* What would have led him to such a conclusion?**

- In your opinion, did the plans of government discussed at the convention support Henry’s suspicions?

### Option E

**The Magna Carta of 1215 included the principle of the rule of law. What is the rule of law and how does our Constitution embrace this principle?**

- To what extent have our institutions and Constitution been adequate guardians of the rule of law?

### Option F

**The Civil War has been called a “second American Revolution.”\* How did both Northern and Southern states use the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution as foundations for their positions?**

- To what extent did the Civil War expand both federal powers and personal rights?