

Parkway North Government Class Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



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SAMPLE

Questions

- 1. Which of the following is a primary purpose of government?**
 - A. Maintaining international relations**
 - B. Providing social programs**
 - C. Resolving conflicts and ensuring order**
 - D. Controlling economic markets**
- 2. Which branch of government is responsible for interpreting the law?**
 - A. The Legislative branch**
 - B. The Executive branch**
 - C. The Judicial branch**
 - D. The Federal branch**
- 3. Which of the following is NOT a power of Congress?**
 - A. To declare war**
 - B. To regulate commerce and currency**
 - C. To appoint Supreme Court justices**
 - D. To borrow money**
- 4. What is the role of the Electoral College in presidential elections?**
 - A. To directly elect the President**
 - B. To serve as a tiebreaker in congressional votes**
 - C. To elect the President through a system of electors**
 - D. To conduct national referendums**
- 5. The Federalists believed that a large republic could best protect what?**
 - A. The interests of small states**
 - B. Individual liberty**
 - C. National sovereignty**
 - D. Economic stability**

- 6. What are the first seven words of the Constitution?**
- A. We the citizens of the United States**
 - B. We the people of the United States**
 - C. We the government of the United States**
 - D. We the states of the United States**
- 7. What is the general path a bill takes to become a law?**
- A. Approved by a simple majority in Congress and signed by the President**
 - B. Passed by 2/3rds of Congress and signed by the President**
 - C. Voted on only in the Senate before being signed into law**
 - D. Reviewed by the Supreme Court before becoming a law**
- 8. Which of the following is NOT a function of government?**
- A. Ensure national security**
 - B. Provide services**
 - C. Promote trade**
 - D. Maintain order**
- 9. Which principle allows for a division of power between national and state governments?**
- A. Federalism**
 - B. Popular Sovereignty**
 - C. Limited Government**
 - D. Checks and Balances**
- 10. What is the typical path of a case before it reaches the Supreme Court?**
- A. Local court to federal court to Supreme Court**
 - B. Appeal from circuit court to state court to Supreme Court**
 - C. From circuit court to Supreme Court after an appeal**
 - D. State court to district court to appellate court**

Answers

SAMPLE

1. C
2. C
3. C
4. C
5. B
6. B
7. B
8. C
9. A
10. C

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Explanations

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1. Which of the following is a primary purpose of government?

- A. Maintaining international relations**
- B. Providing social programs**
- C. Resolving conflicts and ensuring order**
- D. Controlling economic markets**

The primary purpose of government is to resolve conflicts and ensure order within society. This responsibility is fundamental because it establishes a framework for societal interactions, laying the groundwork for peace and stability. When conflicts arise, whether between individuals, groups, or even larger entities, the government provides mechanisms—such as laws, law enforcement, and judicial systems—to address and manage these disputes. By maintaining order, the government helps to protect the rights and freedoms of its citizens, allowing them to coexist peacefully and cooperatively. In contexts where social unrest or chaos exists, it is the government's role to intervene, establish laws, and maintain peace. This function is crucial for the overall functioning of a society, allowing citizens to pursue their daily activities without fear of violence or disorder. A government that effectively resolves conflicts fosters trust and cooperation among its citizens, which are essential for a stable and thriving community. Thus, providing this structure creates a foundational environment where other purposes, such as maintaining international relations, providing social programs, and controlling economic markets, can also function effectively, but they are secondary to the core purpose of ensuring order and resolving conflicts.

2. Which branch of government is responsible for interpreting the law?

- A. The Legislative branch**
- B. The Executive branch**
- C. The Judicial branch**
- D. The Federal branch**

The Judicial branch is responsible for interpreting the law. This branch includes the Supreme Court and other federal courts, which review laws and determine their constitutionality. The primary role of the Judicial branch is to apply and interpret the law in specific cases, ensuring that laws are consistent with the Constitution. This process includes the examination of statutes, regulations, and lower court rulings, serving as a check on the powers of the Legislative and Executive branches. By interpreting laws, the Judicial branch plays a crucial role in maintaining the rule of law and protecting individual rights within the legal framework of the government. In contrast, the Legislative branch is tasked with making laws, while the Executive branch is responsible for enforcing them. The term "Federal branch" isn't a commonly used designation for any particular branch; typically, the government is divided into the three established branches. Thus, the distinction in roles between these branches highlights why the Judicial branch is integral to interpreting law.

3. Which of the following is NOT a power of Congress?

- A. To declare war
- B. To regulate commerce and currency
- C. To appoint Supreme Court justices**
- D. To borrow money

The ability to appoint Supreme Court justices is not a power vested in Congress; rather, this responsibility falls to the President of the United States. The process involves the President nominating candidates for the Supreme Court, which are then confirmed by the Senate. This reflects the system of checks and balances established by the Constitution, where different branches of government have distinct powers and responsibilities to prevent any one branch from gaining too much authority. In contrast, declaring war, regulating commerce and currency, and borrowing money are all powers specifically granted to Congress under the Constitution. These powers enable Congress to play a crucial role in governance, economic regulation, and national defense. Hence, the distinguishing factor for the correct answer lies in recognizing that the appointment of justices is an executive and legislative collaboration rather than a direct power of Congress.

4. What is the role of the Electoral College in presidential elections?

- A. To directly elect the President
- B. To serve as a tiebreaker in congressional votes
- C. To elect the President through a system of electors**
- D. To conduct national referendums

The Electoral College serves the critical role of electing the President through a system of electors. This process involves each state appointing a number of electors, which is equal to the total number of its Senators and Representatives in Congress. When citizens cast their votes for President, they are actually voting for a slate of electors pledged to vote for their chosen candidate. These electors then formally cast their votes to elect the President and Vice President. This system was established in the U.S. Constitution and is intended to balance the influence of populous states with less populated ones in the presidential selection process, ensuring that all states have a voice in the outcome. The other options do not accurately reflect the function of the Electoral College. It does not directly elect the President, serve as a tiebreaker in congressional votes, or conduct national referendums. Instead, it is specifically designed to facilitate the election of the President in a manner that represents both the electorate and the states.

5. The Federalists believed that a large republic could best protect what?

A. The interests of small states

B. Individual liberty

C. National sovereignty

D. Economic stability

The Federalists argued that a large republic could best protect individual liberty because they believed that a diverse and extensive governmental structure would create a system of checks and balances that could curb the influence of factions and prevent any one group from gaining too much power. They contended that with a greater variety of interests and opinions in a larger republic, it would be harder for a majority faction to oppress minority groups, thus safeguarding personal freedoms and rights. Their vision was rooted in the belief that a well-constructed government would ensure that the rights of individuals were respected and maintained against potential tyranny, whether that tyranny came from the majority or a powerful minority. This principle was foundational to the Federalist Papers, where they made the case for ratifying the Constitution, emphasizing how a large republic would create a more stable and just political environment for all citizens.

6. What are the first seven words of the Constitution?

A. We the citizens of the United States

B. We the people of the United States

C. We the government of the United States

D. We the states of the United States

The correct first seven words of the Constitution are "We the people of the United States." This phrase is significant as it encapsulates the foundational principle of the Constitution, which emphasizes the idea that the government's power derives from the consent of the governed, reflecting a representative democracy. It sets the tone for the entire document, indicating that the Constitution is established by and for the citizens of the nation. This phrase also represents a unifying concept, bringing together individuals from diverse backgrounds under a shared national identity. The Constitution begins with these words to express that the authority of the government comes from the people, signifying a break from monarchist ideals where power was typically held by a king or an elite class. This idea of government serving the people is a cornerstone of American democracy.

7. What is the general path a bill takes to become a law?

- A. Approved by a simple majority in Congress and signed by the President**
- B. Passed by 2/3rds of Congress and signed by the President**
- C. Voted on only in the Senate before being signed into law**
- D. Reviewed by the Supreme Court before becoming a law**

The correct answer reflects the constitutional process that requires a bill to be passed by a two-thirds majority in both the House of Representatives and the Senate before it can be sent to the President for approval. This legislative process ensures that a significant level of agreement is necessary for a bill to become law, particularly on contentious issues. While a simple majority in Congress would suffice for many bills, certain situations, such as overriding a presidential veto, do require that two-thirds supermajority support. This reinforces the system of checks and balances intended by the framers of the Constitution, ensuring that not just a simple majority can dictate significant changes in law without broad support. The other options do not accurately reflect the established legislative process. For instance, only a majority is needed for many bills but not a two-thirds vote for regular legislation unless a veto needs to be overridden. The second option would imply that just a two-thirds majority can enact any bill without consideration of the presidential veto, which is not the case. Additionally, the procedures mentioned involving a vote only in the Senate or a review by the Supreme Court do not accurately describe the full legislative process a bill undergoes before it can be signed into law.

8. Which of the following is NOT a function of government?

- A. Ensure national security**
- B. Provide services**
- C. Promote trade**
- D. Maintain order**

Promoting trade is typically associated with economic activities and business functions rather than being a fundamental purpose of government. While governments may take measures to foster trade through regulation or partnership with businesses, it is not a core function like ensuring national security, providing services, or maintaining order. These core functions are essential for the stability and operation of society. Ensuring national security involves protecting a country from external threats and maintaining the safety of its citizens. Providing services encompasses a wide range of public needs, such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure, which are crucial for citizens' well-being. Maintaining order refers to law enforcement and the establishment of laws and regulations that uphold societal norms. In contrast, promoting trade, while beneficial, falls outside the essential responsibilities that define the primary functions of government.

9. Which principle allows for a division of power between national and state governments?

- A. Federalism**
- B. Popular Sovereignty**
- C. Limited Government**
- D. Checks and Balances**

The principle that allows for a division of power between national and state governments is federalism. This system is designed to create a structure of governance in which power is shared and divided, allowing both levels of government to operate independently within their respective spheres of authority. In a federal system, national governments possess certain exclusive powers, while states retain other powers. This division helps ensure that no single entity has complete control, promoting a balance that can cater to the varying needs of different regions while maintaining national unity. The other principles mentioned, such as popular sovereignty, limited government, and checks and balances, serve different roles in the framework of governance. Popular sovereignty emphasizes the idea that government derives its authority from the consent of the governed. Limited government refers to the restrictions placed on governmental power to protect individual rights. Checks and balances ensure that each branch of government has the ability to limit the powers of the others, preventing any one branch from becoming too powerful. These concepts complement federalism but do not establish the division of power between national and state authorities.

10. What is the typical path of a case before it reaches the Supreme Court?

- A. Local court to federal court to Supreme Court**
- B. Appeal from circuit court to state court to Supreme Court**
- C. From circuit court to Supreme Court after an appeal**
- D. State court to district court to appellate court**

The typical path of a case before it reaches the Supreme Court starts in lower courts and often involves appeals through various levels of the court system. The correct sequence is that a case is usually heard in a trial court, such as a circuit court, and if there is a decision that a party disputes, they can appeal that decision to a higher court. If the case is significant or involves a substantial legal issue, it may eventually be taken to the Supreme Court after going through the appellate processes. The Supreme Court primarily hears cases that have gone through lower courts, particularly when there are differing interpretations of law between circuit courts or when a constitutional issue is raised. This establishes a clear precedent or resolves significant legal questions. Understanding this path is crucial as it highlights the hierarchical nature of the court system and the procedures that must be followed in order for a case to gain the Supreme Court's attention. The other options do not accurately represent the usual progression of cases leading to the Supreme Court.