



2015-2016

We the People

Middle School Questions

For the Simulated Congressional Hearing

Unit 1

John Locke was an English philosopher who thought about why it was necessary to have a government.

- What did Locke think would happen without government?
- What did Locke believe to be the purpose of government?
- Do you think government might have purposes that Locke did not mention?
Explain your answer.

Unit 2

The Declaration of Independence told the world why the Americans wanted to free themselves from British rule. The Declaration stated the Founders' beliefs about government.

- Using the Declaration as your source, in your own words describe the principles of good government.
- Where did the Founders get these ideas?
- Do you think these principles are still valid today?

Unit 3

Articles I, II, and III of the Constitution list the powers of the Congress, president, and the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the national government.

- Describe some of the powers the Constitution gives to Congress. In what ways does the Constitution limit the power of Congress?
- Describe some of the powers of the president. In what ways does the Constitution limit the power of the president?
- Describe some of the powers of the judiciary. In what ways does the Constitution limit the power of the U.S. Supreme Court?



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Unit 4

One of the enduring contributions of the Framers was the creation of the federal system of government.

- What is a federal system of government? Compare it with a unitary or a confederal system of government.
- How are the powers distributed between the states and the national government under our federal system? Give examples.
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of the federal system? Give some examples.

Unit 5

Due process of law has been called the “primary and indispensable foundation of individual freedom” because it protects the individual from government wrongdoing.

- What is the right to due process? Where in the Constitution is due process protected and how is the meaning of due process applied?
- How does the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment prevent state governments from practicing unfair discrimination?
- Should young people under the age of eighteen have the same due process rights as adults? Why or why not?

Unit 6

Many people believe that an informed citizenry is essential if democracy is to work.

- Should people be required to pass periodic citizenship tests to maintain their citizenship? Why or why not?
- Would you favor requiring literacy tests, fairly administered, before allowing citizens to vote? Why or why not?