

2016-2017



We the People

Middle School Questions

For the Simulated Congressional Hearing

Unit 1

Constitutional governments are organized in such a way that one person or group cannot get enough power to dominate the government. How might people organize a government to prevent the abuse of power?

- How did the writings of the Baron de Montesquieu influence the Founders?
- How do our systems of separation of powers and checks and balances work?
- Are these systems effective in preventing an abuse of power? Explain your answer.

Unit 2

Following the Revolutionary War, the Continental Congress created a document called the Articles of Confederation that set up a national government. Why did the Founders believe that a national government was necessary?

- How did the Articles of Confederation organize the national government?
- What were the successes of the government under the Articles of Confederation?
- What problems did the country experience under the Articles of Confederation?

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?

We the People

Middle School Questions

For the Simulated Congressional Hearing



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

One of the main purposes of government is to protect the rights of the people. The First Amendment to our Constitution protects our freedom of expression. What are the rights outlined in the First Amendment?

- What are the benefits of freedom of expression to the individual and to society?
- Should there be limits placed on the freedom of expression? Explain your response.
- Should students have the same right to freedom of expression as adults? Why or why not? Provide examples of landmark cases to support your position.

Unit 6

According to the United States Center for Immigration Services, 6.6 million people have become naturalized citizens of the United States in the last decade*. What does it mean to be a citizen and what are some of the rights, responsibilities, and obligations of American citizens?

- How does a person become a citizen of the United States? Distinguish between a natural born citizen and a naturalized citizen.
- Should people be required to pass periodic citizenship tests to maintain their citizenship? Why or why not?

*"Naturalization Fact Sheet." *USCIS*. USCIS, n.d. Web. 01 Sept. 2016.