



2019-2020

We the People

Middle School Questions

for the Simulated Congressional Hearing

Directions: The following questions will be used at the state level for the We the People...the Citizen and the Constitution mock congressional hearings. For each unit, students will prepare a four-minute presentation addressing all bullet points contained in the unit. The judges will read the full set of questions for each unit and the response for four minutes must address all bullet points. Following the prepared testimony, judges will have six minutes to ask a variety of follow up questions. For questions, contact justiceteaching@flsouthern.edu.

Unit 1

What were the Founders' basic ideas about government?

- What are the characteristics of a constitutional government?
- Why do we need to limit the powers of government? How does the United States Constitution limit the powers of government?
- Describe at least three ways the Constitution provided a means of preventing the abuse of governmental power. Explain how these provisions work in our system of government today.

Unit 2

What shaped the Founders thinking about government?

- What basic ideas about government are in the Declaration of Independence?
- How did the Articles of Confederation organize the first national government?
- What were some of the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation? How were these weaknesses addressed in the United States Constitution?



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Unit 3

What happened at the Philadelphia Convention?

- How does Article III of the United States Constitution (judicial branch) address the complaints against the King in the Declaration of Independence?
- What are the powers of the judicial branch?
- What checks exist on the judicial branch?
- How would you distinguish the judicial branch from the other branches of government?

Unit 4

How did the Constitution establish our government?

- How was the new government organized?
- How did the Constitution create a federal system of government?
- What were the major arguments of the Federalists and Anti-Federalists in favor of or in opposition to the Constitution?
- How are the Federalist and Anti-Federalist debates still relevant today?

Unit 5

How does the Constitution protect our basic rights?

- Why was it important to add a Bill of Rights to the Constitution?
- In what ways have the rights in the Bill of Rights and the other amendments to the Constitution been of importance to women and minorities?
- Do you think our rights should have limits? Why or why not? Explain your answer.



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Unit 6

What are the responsibilities of citizens?

- What are some of the responsibilities of citizens?
- How would you distinguish obligations from responsibilities of citizens? Please provide examples of obligations.
- What do you think are the greatest challenges of American citizenship today?
- Why and how does our country depend on the active participation of its citizens?
- What do you think are the most important ways you can participate in government?