

Outlining the Constitution: A System of Government Devised to Diffuse Power

Directions: Find text of the US Constitution [here](#), read it and complete the following worksheet. Credible outside sources are acceptable to use if needed.

The Preamble: The Constitution's Purposes (Break Them Down Here)

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.

Article I: The _____ Branch

Section 1

What is the primary purpose of this branch – what do these people do?

Section 2: The House of Representatives

How long is each term?

What are the three basic qualifications?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What is the minimum number of Representatives each state shall have?

What is the number of representatives given to each state based on?

How often does a census occur to change the number of representatives in the House?

In the original Constitution, what was the maximum number of people in each district per Representative?

What is the title of the leader of the House?

What is the sole power of the House of Representatives?

Section 3: The Senate

Which amendment created the direct election of Senators?

How long is each term? Every two years, how many Senators are reelected?

What are the qualifications for senators?

Who is the President of the Senate?

If this person is absent, what is the name of the officer in charge?

What is the sole power of the Senate?

Section 4: Elections and Meetings

When did a regular session (“opening day”) of Congress begin?

And what is that date today?

Section 5: Organization and Rules of Procedures

What is a “quorum”?

Each house makes its own rules. Which house has more formal rules of procedure (when a bill becomes a law)? Explain the difference:

Section 6: Privileges and Restrictions

Who pays Congress?

Explain the speech and debate clause and its purpose (“congressional immunity”):

Section 7: Passing Laws

What is a “revenue” bill?

Where/With whom must a revenue bill originate?

What must happen in order for a bill to become a law? Briefly summarize the process:

What is a “veto”? Who has the power to veto a bill? How can a veto be overridden?

Section 8: Powers Granted to Congress

Eighteen powers are expressly granted to Congress to create legislation. List some of the more important (or actively utilized) powers below. For each clause, briefly describe the power. (Be aware that some clauses are omitted here. Clause 1 is the very first paragraph of Art. I, Sec.

8....):

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3): _____

—

(4): _____

—

(5): _____

—

(9): _____

—

(11): _____

—

(12-14) _____

—

The 18th clause is called the “necessary and proper” clause or the “elastic” clause. Explain its significance:

Section 9: Powers Denied to Congress

What are the following terms, and how are they restrictive of governmental power?

Writ of Habeas Corpus:

Bills of Attainder:

Ex Post Facto Laws:

Titles of Nobility:

—

Name three powers that are forbidden to the states

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Article II The Branch

Section 1: The Executive Qualifications

Does Article II define “executive power”?

Who are the two key individuals that make up this branch?

The _____ and the _____

How long is each term for this office? _____

Generally speaking, how is this branch elected? Briefly, what is the Electoral College?

____ Generally speaking, when is Election Day for presidential elections?

Which amendment changed this procedure for electing the President and Vice President?

What qualifications are necessary to run for and be elected to the presidency?

____ Which amendment provides that the Vice President succeeds to the presidency?

As a customary matter, who administers the oath to the President?

Section 2: Powers of the President

Briefly explain the powers of the Executive as described here:

1. _____

—

2. _____

—

In preserving the balance of power in the federal government, who has the power of “advice and consent”?

Section 3: Duties of the President

From “time to time,” the President must deliver an “annual message” to Congress. What do we today call this speech?

—

Section 4: Impeachment

Define impeachment:

On what grounds can a President and/or Vice- President be impeached? Be specific with the phrase:

Article III: The

Branch

Section 1

What is the purpose of this branch of government?

How long may a judge of these courts serve?

In your opinion, what makes this branch so independent; can you divine the Framers' intent?

Section 2: General Authority

List the type of cases heard by the Supreme Court that are stated in the Constitution:

When the Constitution was signed on September 17, 1787, the term “judicial review” was absent from the document. Name the landmark Supreme Court case that established judicial review (even though that case does not mention the term either):

What is the difference between “original jurisdiction” and “appellate jurisdiction”?

Article IV: “Relations Among the States”: Will discuss in the Federalism chapter

Article V: Amending the Constitution

Explain the two common methods of proposing and ratifying an amendment:

Proposing an Amendment	Ratifying an Amendment

Which method has been the most popular?

Is it easy to amend the federal Constitution? Why or why not?

Article VI: Supremacy of the National Government

Section 2 discusses national supremacy.

What does the “Supremacy Clause” entail and mean?

Article VII: The Ratification of the Constitution

How many states were “officially” needed, in 1787, to ratify the Constitution of the United

States? _____

Identify the main point of each Constitutional Amendment (as best you can in this limited space).

Amendment	Big Idea: What did the Amendment accomplish?
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