

## **AP GOVERNMENT SUMMER ASSIGNMENT**

Dear Future AP Students,

Congratulations and welcome to AP Government and Politics!

This is your summer assignment. It's due on the first day that you have AP Government & Politics (for some of you taking seminar this will matter to you. If you're interested in seminar, please see your counselor ASAP. We have about 5 spots remaining). The summer assignment has three parts, all of which is designed to introduce things and get you started when you come back to school next year.

1. Introduce Yourself (20 points) – The video is supposed to be fun. Don't make it harder than it has to be. If you're having issues email me and I'll try to help you.
2. Current Events Journal (5 points each) – AP Government & Politics requires you to keep up to date on the daily news. Last year was quite the whirlwind, and this next year should be pretty exciting. As we progress through the year you will need to submit current events journals periodically. This summer assignment is designed to get you started on that so when you come to school in the fall you will be ready to continue.
3. Constitution Scavenger Hunt (20 points) – Our entire system of government, and every Federal and State law currently in existence all derives from this one document. We should read it. And analyze it. And discuss it. This assignment is designed to start getting you to navigate the Constitution.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR ISSUES PLEASE EMAIL ME AT  
RBAKHURU@AACPS.ORG**

## **ASSIGNMENT 1: INTRODUCE YOURSELF (20 points)**

**Assignment Summary – Using a device, record a short message introducing yourself to Mr. Bakhru by answering the questions below. Feel free to self-record, have someone interview you, or get creative with a video that incorporates your environment!**

Be sure to...

- 1) Answer all of the Essential Questions and at least 3 of the Alternative Questions.
- 2) Not be afraid to talk! Tell me about yourself so we can have a great year!
- 3) Email your video to BakhruSS@gmail.com (I don't check this regularly so....  )
- 4) If you have questions or want to see a sample, email me at rbakhru@aacps.org

Essential Questions:

- 1) Introduce yourself using your full name
- 2) Why are you taking AP Government? What do you hope to get out of it?
- 3) In five years, what do you hope to be doing?
- 4) Pick a topic in the news and tell me what you think about it.

Alternative Questions:

- 1) Introduce your family – siblings? Parents?
- 2) What is your favorite type of music to listen to? Who are you listening to these days?
- 3) What is your favorite food? Do you have a specific dish?
- 4) What is your favorite movie? Why?
- 5) If you could live anywhere in the world where would you live and why?

## **ASSIGNMENT 2: CURRENT EVENTS JOURNAL (50 points)**

Keep track of the news over the summer! As you read/listen/watch the news, you should look for articles that fall into the topics listed below.

For each journal, type or write a minimum of two paragraphs (complete sentences; about 500 words) about the major event or events in American government and/or politics from the past week. In the first paragraph, you should describe the event or events, and, in the second paragraph, you should analyze the significance of it/them and state any opinions, thoughts, or analysis that you might have about it/them. You must intelligently discuss one particularly important issue each week.

Your journal should deal with issues that are of significant importance to American politics and government. Such things include what the president is up to, what Congress is debating or legislation that they are passing, constitutional issues or major federal court decisions concerning them, debates over political issues in America, international crises or foreign policy issues that somehow affect the US or that our government must deal with, etc.

You must provide the source of the article, including the author's name, title of the article, and the publication where it's found.

**You can email me your first current event journal (rbakhru@aacps.org) by June 26<sup>th</sup> if you would like some feedback. The rest of your journals will be due on the first day of school.**

<i>LIBERAL</i>	<i>CONSERVATIVE</i>
The New York Times	The National Review
The Washington Post	The Weekly Standard
The Daily Kos	The American Spectator
The Atlantic	The American Conservative
Slate Magazine	The New American
The Huffington Post	FrontPage
The New Republic	Wall Street Journal
Mother Jones	Washington Times

	Topic
1	Executive Branch – Choose any article that discusses the President, the Cabinet, or any of the Executive Agencies (Dept. of Defense, Dept. of Treasury, Dept. of State, etc.)
2	Judicial Branch – Choose any article that discusses something going on with the United States Supreme Court
3	Legislative Branch – Choose any article that discusses something going on in Congress (House of Representatives or Senate).
4	Domestic Policy – Choose any article that discusses a topic addressing an issue within the United States (homelessness, drugs, education, taxes, etc.)
5	Any topic or article is fine as long as it relates to something our government is doing.

Sample Current Events Journal  
Sally Student  
AP Government and Politics  
Sample Current Events Journal for May 18-12, 2015

Political news this week was dominated by the impending 2016 presidential election. As of now, the focus is on the already large and growing field of Republican primary candidates (the Democratic Party is expected to nominate Hillary Clinton without significant opposition). While several politicians have already declared their candidacy, former Florida Republican governor Jeb Bush and current Wisconsin Republican governor Scott Walker have not, although they are expected to soon. Analysts believe that they are waiting to make an official announcement so that they can continue to raise money for their super PACs (political action committees). The Supreme Court decided in *Citizens United v. FEC* that corporations are protected by the First Amendment and may spend an unlimited amount of money to support or attack a candidate, as long as they are not affiliated with the candidate. This decision gave rise to super PACs, organizations that are allowed to accept unlimited financial contributions from donors that will later be used to support a particular candidate. Until they announce their candidacy, politicians such as Jeb Bush can continue to raise millions of dollars for super PACs that will later support them in the primary elections. Jeb Bush has currently raised the most money of the declared and prospective Republican candidates; he is expected to declare that he has raised "in the high tens of millions." This war chest could prove valuable to him in a crowded Republican primary contest.

The Republican field of candidates is already quite large and the Republican National Committee (RNC) anticipates that as many as twelve candidates may take part in the first primary debate. This week's stories show the impact of the Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision and the growing influence of money in presidential elections. The amount of money that candidates need to run (and win) a presidential election is absolutely staggering, and serves to increase the influence of corporations and the most affluent Americans who are able to make large campaign contributions. The actions of Jeb Bush and Scott Walker, as well as the other declared candidates who are traversing the country fundraising, show that wooing donors and raising cash has become more important than addressing the concerns of everyday Americans. More money means more access to politicians and candidates for the nation's highest offices. In turn, wealthy donors could pressure politicians to support policies that will result in making the rich richer and the poor poorer. Meanwhile, working class

Americans who cannot afford to make large campaign contributions are left without a voice in the political process. The high price tag of becoming president may also exclude qualified candidates who are unable raise such large amounts of money. It is unclear whether the Supreme Court foresaw these negative outcomes when they made their *Citizens United* decision. The Federal Elections Commission and the U.S. government should seriously consider passing regulations and legislation to limit the amount of money that can be spent in a presidential campaign to even the playing field and allow the candidates to focus on the issues that affect the American people.

Bash, Dana. "Election 2016: The Dirty Little Secret of Presidential Announcements - CNNPolitics.com." CNN. Cable News Network, 18 May 2015. Web. 19 May 2015.

Silver, Nate, and Harry Enten. "Jeb Bush Has The Cash, But Not The GOP Support." *FiveThirtyEight*. 28 Apr. 2015. Web. 19 May 2015.

Stokols, Eli. "Florida Quietly Sets up an Epic 2016 Primary Clash." *POLITICO*. Web. 19 May 2015

## **ASSIGNMENT 3: CONSTITUTION**

### **U.S. Constitution Reading Guide**

- Read the U.S. Constitution and complete the attached reading guide. The U.S. Constitution can be found at: <http://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/constitution.table.html#preamble>.
- Complete the attached reading guide for the Constitution. DO NOT write on this guide. Answer the questions on a separate sheet of paper using complete sentences.

### **The U.S. Constitution Reading Guide**

*Answer the following questions as you read the U.S. Constitution. Remember to use complete sentences that reflect the question in the answer.*

1. Summarize the following:

Preamble

Article I

Article II

Article III

Article IV

Article V

Article VI

Article VII

2. Compare Article I with Article II. Which article is longer and more detailed?

3. Identify two powers denied from Congress in the Constitution.

4. Identify two powers the Constitution prohibits from the states.

5. What are the eligibility requirements for members of the house?

6. What are the eligibility requirements for members of the Senate?

7. What are the eligibility requirements for the President?

8. The powers of the Constitution that are specifically granted to the branches of government or to office holders are called expressed powers. Identify two expressed powers of each of the following: 1) The President 2) The Vice President, and 3) Congress

10. According to the Constitution, who has the power to declare war?

11. What power does the Constitution give the president in the area of war?

12. See Article IV. Explain the Supremacy Clause in your own words.

13. What are two ways that amendments to the Constitution can be proposed?

14. What are two ways that amendments to the Constitution can be ratified?

15. The first 10 amendments to the Constitution are called the Bill of Rights. Outline the general purpose of each of those 10 amendments:

16. Which amendment(s) protect the rights of women?

17. Which amendment(s) protect the rights of African Americans?

18. How were U.S. Senators chosen before the seventeenth amendment?