

JUDGES' UNIT AND FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

UNIT 1

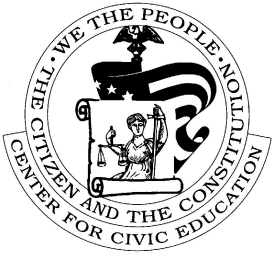
WHY DID WE GO TO WAR?

Congress has formed this congressional committee to examine the United States Constitution and the purposes of government. The members of your group are expert witnesses appearing before this committee. You have been asked to testify about the question, "Why did we go to war?"

- Why did the relationship between the colonists and Great Britain work at first?
- Why were Parliament's taxes so important for the colonists?
- What made some colonists want to be independent from Great Britain?
- How did colonists' views on independence differ?
- Why was the Declaration of Independence so significant?
- How were the underdogs able to win the war?

Follow-up questions for judges:

1. How did different groups of colonists respond to the parliament's new taxes?
2. What is the common good? Give some examples.
3. What do you think is most important, the common good or individual rights?
4. Who do you think was more concerned with individual rights, Loyalists or Patriots? Why?
5. Describe a situation where people disagree about what is best for the community. How do you think such disagreements should be settled?
6. What are the three sections of the Declaration of Independence? In your opinion, which section was the most important?
7. Why was signing the Declaration of Independence such a difficult decision?
8. In your opinion, what was the most important factor that enabled the colonists to win the Revolutionary War?



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UNIT 2

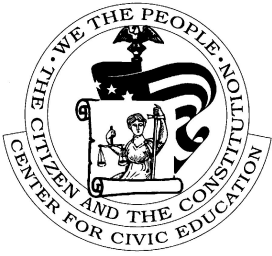
HOW DID THE HISTORY AND BELIEFS OF THE FRAMERS INFLUENCE THE CREATION OF THE CONSTITUTION?

Congress has formed this congressional committee to gather information on the United States Constitution and Bill of Rights. It is also looking at the compromises that were made at the Philadelphia Convention. The members of your group are expert witnesses appearing before this committee. You have been asked to testify on the question, “How did the history and beliefs of the framers influence the creation of the Constitution?”

- According to the founders, what are the basic purposes of government?
- Why did the framers decide to rewrite the Articles of Confederation?
- What major conflicts required the Framers to make compromises? Do you think they made the right decisions?
- How did the framers limit the power of each branch? Give examples.
- What were some objections to the Constitution?
- Why is the Bill of Rights so important?

Suggested follow-up questions for judges:

1. Why did the Framers not abolish slavery at the time they wrote the Constitution?
2. People sometimes disagree about what is best for a community. Describe a situation where this might happen. How do you think such disagreements should be settled?
3. Why did the Framers think a constitution was necessary?
4. How might the constitution have been different if women, blacks and other minorities had also been delegates at the Constitutional Convention?
5. Are there times when freedom of expression should be limited? Why or why not? Give examples.
6. What do you think the framers thought was most important, the common good or individual rights? Why?
7. Which amendment do you think is the most important and why?
8. Who do you agree with most, the Federalists or Anti-Federalists? Why?



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UNIT 3

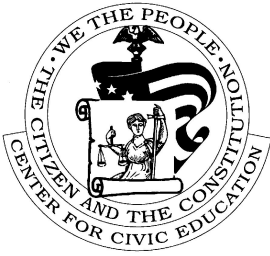
How did Maryland meet the challenges of the 19th century?

Congress has formed this congressional committee to look at how power is divided among the three branches of our national government. The members of your group are expert witnesses appearing before this committee. You have been asked to testify on the question, “How did Maryland meet the challenges of the 19th century?”

- How does Federalism apply to Maryland?
- How is Maryland’s state government similar and different than the federal government of the United States?
- Why was the War of 1812 so significant to Marylanders?
- What was life like for free and enslaved Africans in Maryland during the 1800s?
- How did individuals and groups try to ensure that “We The People” included African Americans?
- What were the perspectives of Marylanders about the Civil War?

Suggested follow-up questions for judges:

1. What do you think was the most significant conflict during the 19th century? Why?
2. If you wanted to lower the voting age to 11, which level of government would you contact and why?
3. How would you handle a situation where your neighbor played extremely loud music all night long?
4. The Bill of Rights did not guarantee rights for all, such as women and African Americans. How was this corrected?
5. Which level of government is the most important to you? Why?
6. What is civic virtue? Give examples of people in your community who practice civic virtue.
7. Why are individual rights important?



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What can citizens do if they think a law is unfair?

UNIT 4

HOW CAN YOU BE A RESPONSIBLE CITIZEN?

Congress has formed this congressional committee to examine the people's rights. They want to know how well they are being protected and what more might be done. The members of your group are expert witnesses appearing before this committee. You have been asked to testify on the question, "How can you be a responsible citizen?"

- How can citizens make informed decisions?
- What are the responsibilities of citizens?
- What do you think is the best way citizens can participate in a democracy?
- What is more important? The common good or individual rights?
- How do environmental concerns impact decisions of citizens and the government?

Suggested follow-up questions for judges:

1. Do you think every citizen should be required to participate in his/her government? Explain why or why not.
2. How does a responsible citizen promote the common good?
3. Why do so many young people not fulfill their responsibility to vote?
4. As a citizen of democracy, do we have responsibilities to other nations of the world? Explain.
5. What can citizens do to change a law they think is unfair?
6. Aside from your social studies class, are schools doing enough to educate voters? Explain.
7. Some candidates choose negative campaigning. Explain your feelings about negative campaigning.
8. What do you think is the best way of balancing concern for the environment with the wants of people?