

## 2022- 2023 We the People State Hearing Questions: Middle School Division

Directions: The following state-level *We the People...the Citizen and the Constitution* hearing questions are for middle school use with the 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. Students will not know the follow up questions in advance. Video samples are on the Center for Civic Education website to demonstrate the format and process for the online hearings. See the links below. For questions, contact [apitts@flsouthern.edu](mailto:apitts@flsouthern.edu).

### Unit 1

How can the design of government prevent abuses of power?

- Why do we need government? What is a constitution and what does it generally include?
- What Enlightenment ideas did the Founders consider when developing the U.S. Constitution?
- What is a constitutional government and what specific ways does the United States Constitution limit the powers of our government and prevent abuses of power?
- What is the rule of law and how is it reflected in our constitutional government?

### Unit 2

What ideas did the colonists in America use to create their governments?

- What documents and people influenced early governments in the Americas?
- What ideas about government were in the Declaration of Independence? How did these ideas serve as a foundation to the United States Constitution?
- How is the United States Constitution different from the Articles of Confederation? Give specific examples.

### Unit 3

How is our government organized in the United States Constitution?

- What are the three branches of government? How does the U.S. Constitution limit the powers of each branch of government?
- Why are the separation of powers and checks and balances important in our constitutional design?

- What is federalism? What is the relationship between state and federal governments?

#### **Unit 4**

How was judicial review established?

- What was the significance and outcome of the Marbury v. Madison decision in the United States Supreme Court?
- What is judicial review and how does it apply to laws passed by the state and federal government?
- How does the power of judicial review protect the rights of the people?
- How is the judicial branch different from the other branches?

#### **Unit 5**

How has the right to vote expanded since the adoption of the U.S. Constitution?

- What actions by individuals and groups have expanded the right to vote in the United States? Can you identify any specific people or groups that have contributed to the expansion of voting rights?
- How have voting amendments to the U.S. Constitution affected participation in the political process? What groups can vote because of constitutional amendments?
- How have other governmental decisions or policies brought about changes in voting practices?
- Would you recommend any further amendments addressing voting?

#### **Unit 6**

What are the responsibilities and obligations of citizens to participate in government?

- What are the most effective ways we can participate in government?
- Differentiate between citizen responsibilities to participate and citizen obligations.
- How can we improve citizen participation in government?
- Should citizens be required to vote? Why or why not? Should everyone have the right to vote?

Middle School Hearing Samples on Center for Civic Education Website:

<https://www.civiced.org/we-the-people/hearings/middle-school>