A Comparison of the Impact of the
*We the People...* Curricular Materials on
High School Students compared to
University Students

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Educational Testing Service
Pasadena, CA
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*We the People*...Curricular Materials on
High School Students compared to
University Students

The Center for Civic Education developed curricular materials (both a textbook and a
teacher’s guide), called *We The People*..., to promote greater knowledge and understanding
among students of the history and principles of the United States Constitution.

During the 1987-88 school year, Educational Testing Service conducted an evaluation
of the instructional effects of the high school level *We the People*... curricular materials. That
study found that 11th and 12th grade students participating in the *We the People*... program
scored significantly higher on a test of the history and principles of the U.S. Constitution than
similar students in comparison classes.

During the 1990-91 school year, ETS conducted a comparison study to determine how
well high school students participating in the *We the People*... program would do when
compared to university students. The following report summarizes the results of the original
high school study and reports on the results of the study comparing the high school students
to university students.

**High School Students**

Educational Testing Service was selected to evaluate the instructional effects of the
use of the *We The People*... curriculum materials on 11th and 12th grade students’ knowledge
of the history and principles of the Constitution. A random sample of 117 districts from 17
states was selected for the study. Coordinators in each of these districts were informed by
mail that they had been selected to participate. They were asked to select one 11th grade
participating class, one 12th grade participating class, and one comparison class at either the
11th or 12th grade level. District coordinators were given specific information on how to
select the participating classes in a random fashion. They were also told to select a comparison class that was as similar as possible to one of the participating classes. Coordinators received three sets of tests and scannable answer sheets. Completed answer sheets were received from approximately 20% of the districts in the sample (26 districts in nine states). In all, test results were received from 463 11th grade participating students and 463 12th grade participating students, and from 203 11th grade comparison students and 385 12th grade comparison students.

The test of the history and principles of the U.S. Constitution developed by the Center for Civic Education [Appendix A] was used to measure students’ knowledge of the materials covered in the curriculum. The test was given to all students in participating and comparison classes. Total scores and subtest scores were compared to assess the impact of program participation. T-tests were used to determine the significance of the observed differences in average scores of the participating and comparison groups. Standard reliability and item analyses were also conducted on the completed examinations received from 11th and 12th grade students.

The program had a strong positive impact on students’ knowledge of the history and principles of the U.S. Constitution. Students who participated in the program scored significantly higher on the test than similar students in classes not using the We The People... materials. (See Table 1).
Table 1
Average Total Percentage Correct By Grade Level*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Participating Classes</th>
<th>Comparison Classes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Comparisons between participating and comparison classes were statistically significant, p < .01.

In grade 12, participating students answered 70% of the questions correctly on the average, compared to 49% correct for students in comparison classes. The differences between the scores of participating and comparison students in grade 11 were also significant, 65% for participants compared to 53% for nonparticipants. This is a clear indication that the use of the curriculum materials significantly improved students' knowledge of the history and founding of the United States and the development of the U.S. Constitution.

Significant differences in favor of program participants also were observed in each of the six major curriculum units covered by the test. (See Tables 2 and 3)
### Table 2
Average Percentage Correct For Grade 11
By Curriculum Unit*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum Unit (Number of Items)</th>
<th>Participating Classes</th>
<th>Comparison Classes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political Philosophy (13)</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History and Experience (10)</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Constitution (11)</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of the Government (7)</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundamental Rights (17)</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibilities of the Citizen (2)</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Comparisons between participating and comparison classes were statistically significant, \( p < .01 \).

### Table 3
Average Percentage Correct For Grade 12
By Curriculum Unit*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum Unit (Number of Items)</th>
<th>Participating Classes</th>
<th>Comparison Classes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political Philosophy (13)</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History and Experience (10)</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Constitution (11)</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of the Government (7)</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundamental Rights (17)</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibilities of the Citizen (2)</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Comparisons between participating and comparison classes were statistically significant, \( p < .01 \).
The greatest differences between the groups occurred in the area of Political Philosophy. On the questions relating to political philosophy, the average scores of 12th grade participating students were 27 percentage points higher than the average scores of comparison students, and the average scores of 11th grade participating students were 18 percentage points higher than comparison students. Significant differences in favor of participating students were found in all six curriculum units among 12th grade students. In fact, participating 12th grade students scored at least 20 percentage points higher than comparison students on five of the six units. Grade 11 participants also did significantly better than the comparison group on all six units, though the differences were not as great as those in grade 12.

**High School Students versus University Students**

The Center for Civic Education also wanted to determine how well participating high school students would do when compared to university students. To make this comparison, a Political Science class at a major west coast urban university was administered the test of the history and principles of the U.S. Constitution developed by the Center for Civic Education. This was the same test administered to the high school students. 280 university students completed the test. This included 47 Freshmen, 112 Sophomores, 103 Juniors, and 17 Seniors. No major differences on test scores were observed among these four college groups. The scores of the participating 11th and 12th grade high school students were combined and compared to the combined scores of the university students. It should be noted that it is the policy of this university to accept only the top 12 percent of graduating high school seniors; hence, the high school sample was compared to a very select group of university students. (See Table 4)
### Table 4
Average Percentage Correct for High School Students and University Students by Curriculum Unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum Unit (Number of Items)</th>
<th>High School Students 11th &amp; 12 Grades %</th>
<th>University Students %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political Philosophy (13)</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>+ 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History and Experience (10)</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>+ 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Constitution (11)</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>+ 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of the Government (7)</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>+ 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundamental Rights (17)</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>+ 05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibilities of the Citizen (2)</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>+ 09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Total</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>+ 08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The combined 11th and 12th grade participating students answered 67% of the questions correctly compared to the university group who answered 59% of the questions correctly. Percentage differences in favor of the participating high school students were also observed for each of the six curriculum units. The greatest difference was observed in the areas of Political Philosophy, History and Experience, and the Constitution where the participating high school students scored 14, 12, and 10 percentage points higher, respectively, than the university students. With respect to all sixty test items, the combined 11th and 12th grade participating students scored higher on 49 of the test items, scored the same on two items, and scored lower on nine items when compared to the scores of university students. (See Table 5) Examples of individual items are given below:
Eighty percent of the participating high school students knew that an agreement among people to form a government to protect their rights is known as a social contract while only 53% of the university students knew this.

Seventy eight percent of the participating high school students knew that the main purpose of government, according to the natural rights philosophy, is to protect the individual's rights while only 54% of the university students understood this.

Eighty three percent of the participating high school students knew that the purpose of republican government is to promote the common welfare while only 47% of the university students knew this concept.

Eighty two percent of the participating high school students knew that the Magna Carta sets limits on the power of the English king while only 56% of the university students knew this fact.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Participating 11th &amp; 12th</th>
<th>Dif. between university group</th>
<th>Participating 11th &amp; 12th</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>Total University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>(725) 78% +15</td>
<td>(297) 51%</td>
<td>(177) 63%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>(740) 80% +27</td>
<td>(243) 41%</td>
<td>(149) 53%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>(721) 78% +24</td>
<td>(269) 46%</td>
<td>(150) 54%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>(859) 97% +12</td>
<td>(530) 90%</td>
<td>(238) 85%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>(771) 83% +36</td>
<td>(312) 53%</td>
<td>(132) 47%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>(617) 67% +14</td>
<td>(218) 37%</td>
<td>(148) 53%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>(686) 74% -----</td>
<td>(348) 59%</td>
<td>(206) 74%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>(499) 54% +13</td>
<td>(193) 33%</td>
<td>(115) 41%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>(664) 72% +06</td>
<td>(304) 52%</td>
<td>(187) 67%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>(855) 92% +02</td>
<td>(475) 81%</td>
<td>(263) 94%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>(564) 61% +17</td>
<td>(243) 41%</td>
<td>(122) 44%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>(486) 52% +25</td>
<td>(137) 23%</td>
<td>(76) 27%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>(782) 84% +05</td>
<td>(423) 72%</td>
<td>(222) 79%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>(760) 82% +26</td>
<td>(361) 61%</td>
<td>(157) 56%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>(738) 80% +13</td>
<td>(400) 68%</td>
<td>(187) 67%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>(808) 87% -----</td>
<td>(457) 78%</td>
<td>(244) 67%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>(422) 46% +16</td>
<td>(98) 17%</td>
<td>(85) 30%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>(345) 37% +19</td>
<td>(115) 20%</td>
<td>(50) 18%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>(592) 64% +10</td>
<td>(440) 75%</td>
<td>(152) 64%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>(793) 86% -03</td>
<td>(258) 44%</td>
<td>(250) 89%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>(676) 73% +21</td>
<td>(213) 36%</td>
<td>(145) 52%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>(447) 48% +11</td>
<td>(347) 59%</td>
<td>(103) 37%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Constitution</td>
<td>(730) 79% +23</td>
<td>(394) 67%</td>
<td>(158) 56%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Constitution</td>
<td>(808) 87% +02</td>
<td>(444) 75%</td>
<td>(239) 85%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Constitution</td>
<td>(812) 88% +03</td>
<td>(300) 51%</td>
<td>(237) 85%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Constitution</td>
<td>(633) 68% +06</td>
<td>(370) 53%</td>
<td>(173) 62%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Constitution</td>
<td>(709) 77% +11</td>
<td>(423) 72%</td>
<td>(191) 68%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Constitution</td>
<td>(637) 90% +02</td>
<td>(219) 37%</td>
<td>(247) 68%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Constitution</td>
<td>(504) 54% +11</td>
<td>(382) 65%</td>
<td>(120) 43%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Constitution</td>
<td>(799) 86% +03</td>
<td>(100) 17%</td>
<td>(232) 83%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Constitution</td>
<td>(303) 33% +07</td>
<td>(171) 29%</td>
<td>(72) 26%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Constitution</td>
<td>(584) 64% +13</td>
<td>(124) 21%</td>
<td>(143) 51%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Constitution</td>
<td>(325) 35% +03</td>
<td>(251) 43%</td>
<td>(54) 19%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Constitution</td>
<td>(586) 63% +12</td>
<td>(496) 84%</td>
<td>(142) 51%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Constitution</td>
<td>(855) 92% +05</td>
<td>(487) 83%</td>
<td>(243) 87%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>(843) 91% +05</td>
<td>(272) 46%</td>
<td>(241) 86%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>(550) 59% - 06</td>
<td>(136) 23%</td>
<td>(182) 65%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>(685) 63% +04</td>
<td>(113) 19%</td>
<td>(184) 59%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>(353) 38% +15</td>
<td>(89) 17%</td>
<td>(64) 23%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>(245) 26% +07</td>
<td>(198) 33%</td>
<td>(82) 32%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>(451) 45% +09</td>
<td>(377) 64%</td>
<td>(112) 40%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>(704) 76% +12</td>
<td>(438) 74%</td>
<td>(179) 64%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>(810) 87% +10</td>
<td>(395) 67%</td>
<td>(216) 77%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>(748) 81% +06</td>
<td>(341) 58%</td>
<td>(209) 75%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>(671) 72% +12</td>
<td>(371) 63%</td>
<td>(236) 84%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>(722) 76% +13</td>
<td>(218) 37%</td>
<td>(182) 65%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>(470) 51% +14</td>
<td>(356) 61%</td>
<td>(104) 37%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>(614) 66% - 10</td>
<td>(161) 27%</td>
<td>(212) 76%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>(313) 34% +06</td>
<td>(217) 37%</td>
<td>(81) 28%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>(451) 49% - 06</td>
<td>(418) 71%</td>
<td>(154) 55%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>(749) 81% - 03</td>
<td>(223) 38%</td>
<td>(233) 93%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>(480) 52% +02</td>
<td>(340) 58%</td>
<td>(104) 50%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>(691) 75% - 01</td>
<td>(128) 22%</td>
<td>(213) 76%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>(313) 34% +13</td>
<td>(335) 57%</td>
<td>(59) 21%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>(687) 73% +09</td>
<td>(227) 38%</td>
<td>(178) 64%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>(454) 49% - 09</td>
<td>(341) 58%</td>
<td>(163) 58%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Percent Correct Participating 11th &amp; 12th</th>
<th>Percent Correct Comparison 11th &amp; 12th</th>
<th>Percent Correct Total University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Dif. between university group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>(408)</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>+03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>(705)</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>+10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>Responsib.</td>
<td>(499)</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>+10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Responsib.</td>
<td>(853)</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>+08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusions

The *We the People*... program had a strong positive impact on high school students' knowledge of the history and principles of the U.S. Constitution. High school students who participated in the program scored significantly higher on the test than similar high school students in classes not using the *We The People*... materials. The impact of the program was so strong that the high school students who participated in the program also scored significantly higher than did a Political Science class of students at a major urban university.
Appendix A:

The Test on the History and Principles of the U.S. Constitution
Test on the History and Principles of the United States Constitution

National Bicentennial Competition on the Constitution and Bill of Rights

a project of the Center for Civic Education

cosponsored by the Commission on the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution
1. According to the natural rights philosophers, governments get their authority to rule from
   a. ancient traditions.
   b. the consent of the governed.
   c. elected leaders.
   d. all of the above.

2. An agreement among people to form a government to protect their rights is known as a
   a. state of nature.
   b. confederation.
   c. social contract.
   d. proclamation.

3. According to the natural rights philosophy, the main purpose of government is
   a. to create a democracy.
   b. to protect the individual's rights.
   c. to create a system of separation of powers.
   d. all of the above.

4. According to John Locke, if a government does not serve the purposes for which it was established, the people
   a. should accept it and wait for the next election.
   b. have a right to change it or do away with it.
   c. should refuse to obey laws with which they disagree.
   d. should refuse to pay its taxes.

5. The purpose of republican government is to
   a. promote the common welfare.
   b. establish a monarchy.
   c. provide voting rights to all citizens.
   d. maintain public order.

6. Which of the following best defines “civic virtue”? 
   a. Giving authority to government in exchange for protection of your natural rights.
   b. Putting the common welfare above your own individual interests.
   c. Giving up some of your natural rights in order to create a strong government.
   d. Separating power among groups to maintain a balanced government.

7. James Madison defined a republic as a government in which
   a. laws are made directly by the people.
   b. all citizens, rich or poor, may vote.
   c. laws are made by representatives of the people.
   d. there are two houses in the legislature.

8. What is more characteristic of a constitutional government than of a dictatorial government?
   a. Efficient government officials.
   b. Effective legal limitations on powers.
   c. A written constitution.
   d. Elected public officials.

9. Which of the following is required for a constitution to be considered a “higher law”?
   a. No other law may conflict with it.
   b. It provides for three branches of government.
   c. It cannot be changed.
   d. It must be written.

10. The purpose of the separation of powers in the United States Constitution is to
    a. make the government more efficient.
    b. allow more people to hold office.
    c. prevent the misuse of power.
    d. provide for legislative supremacy.

11. Most of the Framers of our Constitution would have agreed with which statement?
    a. Only a wise and fair few can be trusted with power.
    b. Only kings cannot be trusted with power.
    c. Human beings tend to abuse powers given to them.
    d. Most people are naturally good and will protect the common welfare when given power.

12. Which of the following statements about a constitution is correct?
    a. All governments with constitutions are limited governments.
    b. Some societies do not have constitutions.
    c. Dictatorial governments lack constitutions.
    d. Constitutions may be unwritten.
13. The Founders' ideas of constitutional government were influenced by
   a. the development of English government.
   b. their colonial experiences.
   c. their reading of history and political philosophy.
   d. all of the above.

14. The Magna Carta is an important document in the development of English government because it
   a. authorized the first Parliament.
   b. announced that England was a monarchy.
   c. set limits on the power of the king.
   d. eliminated the powers of the nobility.

15. Which basic ideas of constitutional government could be found in the American colonies?
   a. Separation of powers.
   b. Checks and balances.
   c. Representative government.
   d. All of the above.

16. The right to vote in colonial America was usually restricted to which group?
   a. People who had been born in England.
   b. White men who owned property.
   c. Men who had been in military service.
   d. Descendants of the original settlers.

17. Which statement best describes the English colonies during most of the period under British rule?
   a. They were under the strict control of the king.
   b. They frequently united to deal with common problems.
   c. They quarrelled bitterly with the Parliament.
   d. They were largely free to govern themselves.

18. Many colonists looked to the English political system as a good example of
   a. federalism.
   b. efficient monarchy.
   c. extension of voting rights.
   d. separation of powers.

19. Which of the following ideas is NOT in the Declaration of Independence?
   a. Government is based on a social contract.
   b. Government's purpose is to protect natural rights.
   c. All men have the right to vote.
   d. People have the right to change their government.

20. The belief that political power is derived from the people is called
   a. judicial review.
   b. unitary government.
   c. popular sovereignty.
   d. legislative supremacy.

21. Which of the following did the authors of the Articles of Confederation fear?
   a. The will of the people.
   b. Too much democracy.
   c. Legislative supremacy.
   d. A strong national government.

22. Some Founders believed that majority rule could be a threat to
   a. representative government.
   b. local self-government.
   c. natural rights.
   d. laissez faire.

23. The major purpose of the articles in The Federalist was to
   a. describe the debates at the Convention.
   b. show how compromises had been arrived at.
   c. call for a bill of rights to be added to the Constitution.
   d. convince people to support ratification of the Constitution.

24. In the debate over representation in Congress, the larger states generally favored
   a. equal representation.
   b. proportional representation.
   c. bipartisan representation.
   d. limited representation.
25. The Great Compromise at the Philadelphia Convention settled the problem of
   a. who would control trade between the states.
   b. how justices of the Supreme Court would be selected.
   c. what the term of office for the president would be.
   d. how the states would be represented in the Congress.

26. The major reason that Framers from non-slaveholding states agreed to recognize slavery in the Constitution was that they
   a. expected to expand slavery to the Northern states.
   b. wanted equal representation in Congress.
   c. wanted greater representation in Congress.
   d. wanted slaveholding states to join the new nation.

27. According to the supremacy clause of the Constitution, the “supreme law of the land” refers to
   a. the Constitution, federal laws, and treaties.
   b. decisions of the Supreme Court.
   c. acts of the president.
   d. laws passed by state legislatures.

28. The right of the Senate to approve or disapprove a presidential treaty is an example of
   a. impeachment.
   b. checks and balances.
   c. pluralism.
   d. federalism.

29. Why did the Framers adopt the electoral college method of choosing a president?
   a. They didn’t trust the judgment of the people.
   b. They were afraid the people would not vote.
   c. They had used that system in the colonies.
   d. They modeled it after the successful British system.

30. When the Supreme Court declares a law unconstitutional, it is using its power of
   a. legislative discretion.
   b. judicial review.
   c. judicial restraint.
   d. habeas corpus.

31. The Federalists believed that the best way to protect natural rights was to
   a. have a bill of rights in the Constitution.
   b. rely on checks and balances and separation of powers.
   c. provide for a highly educated people.
   d. allow all adult males the right to vote.

32. A major argument in The Federalist was that the Constitution would effectively control
   a. factions.
   b. voters.
   c. the electoral college.
   d. property owners.

33. The Constitution was ratified by
   a. special conventions called in each state.
   b. the state legislatures.
   c. the Continental Congress.
   d. delegates to the Philadelphia Convention.

34. Anti-Federalists opposed the Constitution because they believed it
   a. established a weak national government.
   b. lacked enforcement power for its laws.
   c. would lead to domestic violence.
   d. threatened the rights of the people.

35. The Bill of Rights
   a. sets up the system of checks and balances.
   b. is part of Article I outlining the powers of Congress.
   c. deals with the powers of the president.
   d. is the first ten amendments to the Constitution.

36. The Bill of Rights was adopted to
   a. protect the rights of the state governments.
   b. guarantee that the rights of the executive branch are not violated.
   c. protect minority rights.
   d. list and guarantee basic individual rights.

37. The first political parties in the United States developed because of differences regarding
   a. the role of the president in the new nation.
   b. the power of the federal government.
   c. the power of the judiciary over the legislature.
   d. the interpretation of the Bill of Rights.
38. The Framers called a group of citizens that pursued its own selfish interests at the expense of the general welfare a
   a. faction.
   b. bureaucracy.
   c. private domain.
   d. monopoly.

39. In the Constitution the right of judicial review is
   a. not mentioned.
   b. specifically forbidden.
   c. reserved for the state courts only.
   d. given to the Supreme Court.

40. Critics of judicial review claim that it conflicts with principles of
   a. original jurisdiction.
   b. the supremacy clause.
   c. constitutionalism.
   d. representative government.

41. The Supreme Court’s restriction of wiretapping as a violation of the Fourth Amendment is an example of which method of interpreting the Constitution?
   a. Literal meaning of the words.
   b. Intentions of the Framers.
   c. Basic principles and values under contemporary circumstances.
   d. All of the above.

42. Sovereignty in the United States system of government resides in the
   a. Constitution.
   b. states.
   c. Congress.
   d. people.

43. The decision in the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education case moved toward a goal of the civil rights movement in ruling that
   a. civil service workers should be protected.
   b. accused criminals should be given greater rights.
   c. there should be a “wall of separation” between church and state.
   d. racial segregation should be ended in public schools.

44. The basic reason for the passage of the Civil War Amendments to the Constitution was to
   a. abolish slavery.
   b. give the recently freed slaves national and state citizenship.
   c. give the recently freed male slaves the right to vote.
   d. all of the above.

45. In the past, poll taxes, literacy tests, and grandfather clauses were used to
   a. expand suffrage.
   b. deny black citizens the right to vote.
   c. establish uniform national voting requirements.
   d. enforce the provisions of the 15th Amendment.

46. “Due process” means that the laws and procedures of government must be
   a. widely publicized.
   b. speedy and final.
   c. obeyed by all citizens.
   d. fair and reasonable.

47. The right to a fair trial provided in the Bill of Rights reflects which of the following values?
   a. Privacy.
   b. Authority.
   c. Limited government.
   d. Responsibility.

48. The protections of procedural due process provided by the Bill of Rights are intended to
   a. protect criminals.
   b. make it more difficult for the police to enforce the law.
   c. prevent the abuse of power.
   d. increase the probability of convicting guilty persons.

49. The freedoms guaranteed by the Bill of Rights are protected against state actions by the Supreme Court’s interpretation of the
   a. “necessary and proper” clause.
   b. First Amendment.
   c. “full faith and credit” clause.
   d. Fourteenth Amendment.
50. The purpose of the right to a writ of habeas corpus is to protect the individual against
   a. accusation of treason.
   b. unlawful detention.
   c. cruel and unusual punishment.
   d. self-incrimination.

51. The Supreme Court has held that the government may regulate religious practices if they
   a. differ from those of most of society.
   b. are thought to be unpatriotic during time of war.
   c. threaten the public’s health and safety.
   d. subject all religions to ridicule.

52. Which of the following situations might violate a “First Amendment right”?
   a. Police examine a high school student’s locker.
   b. A state legislature passes a law prohibiting the possession of firearms.
   c. Prisoners are not allowed to consult their attorneys.
   d. A town council refuses to grant a permit for the Ku Klux Klan to march.

53. Which was the largest group of American citizens ever denied the right to vote?
   a. Blacks.
   b. Women.
   c. Indians.
   d. Catholics.

54. With regard to voting, the Constitution in 1787
   a. extended the right to vote to all white males over the age of twenty-one.
   b. allowed only male property owners over twenty-one to vote in national elections.
   c. established twenty-one as the voting age but left other requirements to the states.
   d. allowed the states to set the voting requirements.

55. Prayer periods in public schools are allowed by the Supreme Court
   a. if the prayers are short and non-denominational.
   b. if students may be excused from participating.
   c. if the prayers do not favor one religion.
   d. in no instances.

56. The right of freedom of speech in western civilization has been
   a. allowed by most governments, with minor exceptions.
   b. accepted since the Middle Ages.
   c. a gradual development over centuries.
   d. always accepted in theory.

57. The Supreme Court has interpreted the First Amendment to mean that freedom of expression may be
   a. considered an absolute right.
   b. balanced against other values and interests.
   c. exercised only by citizens.
   d. suspended only by a two-thirds vote of Congress.

58. Freedom of expression is valued in our democracy because it
   a. aids in discovering the truth.
   b. is essential to representative democracy.
   c. provides a “safety-valve” for dissatisfied citizens.
   d. all of the above.

59. In the United States, the responsibilities that accompany basic rights are considered to be based on
   a. coercion.
   b. law.
   c. consent.
   d. interest.

60. Which of the following rights do citizens have that aliens do not?
   a. The right to due process.
   b. The right to inherit property.
   c. The right to vote and hold public office.
   d. The right to trial by jury.
### Answer Sheet

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Answer Key for Test on the
History and Principles of the U.S. Constitution

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17. d  37. b  57. b
18. d  38. a  58. d
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