

BRIGHT SCHOLARS

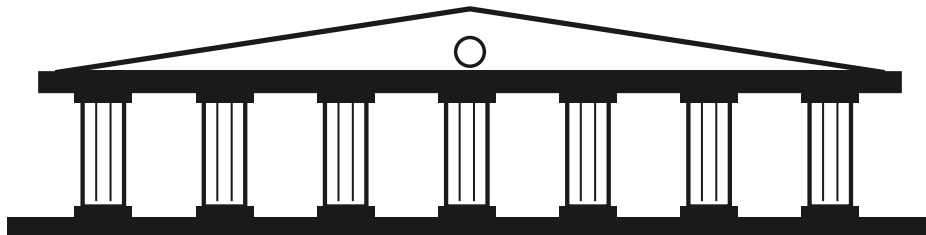
AP+ EXAM PREP SERIES

U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS REVIEW WORKBOOK

2027 EXAM

Documents • Cases • Data • FRQ Strategy

Understand power. Analyze institutions. Write with evidence.



Updated for the 2026-27 course • All 13 required documents • All 14 required cases • Diagnostic test • Full-length practice exam

THIS BOOK BELONGS TO

Name _____

School / Teacher _____

AP exam date _____

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EXAM PREP

FRQ Builder: All Four Free-Response Types	?
Foundational Documents Toolkit	?
Supreme Court Cases Toolkit	?
Full-Length Practice Exam	?

ANSWERS AND REFERENCE

Answer Key and Model FRQ Responses	102
Error Log and Concept Connections	?
Key Terms Glossary	?
Before Exam Day and Final Tracker	?

i KNOW IT

Short concept notes in the margin, next to the questions that use them.

2 FRQ EDGE

A full free-response question in every unit, scored the way the exam scores it.

! FIX IT

The mix-ups that cost the most points, named so you can catch them.

1

AP EXAM WEIGHT: 15–22% OF THE MULTIPLE-CHOICE SECTION

Why did the framers divide power so many ways, and what were they trying to prevent?

- ☐ Apply democratic ideals and the three models of democracy to scenarios.
- ☐ Explain why the Articles failed and how the Constitution responded.
- ☐ Use Federalist No. 10 and Brutus No. 1 as evidence on opposite sides.
- ☐ Explain separation of powers and checks and balances using Federalist No. 51.
- ☐ Tell federalism apart from separation of powers, using Federalist No. 39.
- ☐ Apply *McCulloch v. Maryland* and *United States v. Lopez* to new laws.

- 1.1** Democratic Ideals and Models of Democracy
- 1.2** From the Articles to the Constitution
- 1.3** Separation of Powers and Checks and Balances
- 1.4** Federalism

Unit Review: Mixed Practice, FRQ Edge, Fix It, Exit Ticket, READY+ Check

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UNIT 1 | LESSON 1.1

Democratic Ideals and Models of Democracy

i MODEL IT: THREE MODELS OF DEMOCRACY

MODEL	WHO HOLDS POWER	SCENARIO CLUE
Participatory	Broad, direct participation by ordinary citizens	Citizens vote directly on a ballot initiative
Pluralist	Many groups compete; none dominates	Rival interest groups lobby a committee
Elite	A small, educated or wealthy few	Major donors gain special access

THE MODELS ARE IN THE CONSTITUTION

The Constitution reflects all three. The House was directly elected (participatory); the First Amendment protects groups that petition government (pluralist); the Electoral College and the original indirect election of senators filtered popular choice (elite).

DOC DIVE • DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE (1776) UNIT 1 • REQUIRED

Thomas Jefferson, primary author

Draws on John Locke: people have **unalienable rights** to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”; governments “derive their just powers from the consent of the governed”; when a government destroys those rights, the people may “alter or abolish it.” The list of grievances is evidence that the king broke the social contract.

Use it for: natural rights, popular sovereignty, the social contract, and the purpose of government.

DOC DIVE • GETTYSBURG ADDRESS (1863) UNIT 1 • NEW FOR 2026-27

Abraham Lincoln, at the dedication of a Civil War cemetery

Lincoln returns to the Declaration’s “proposition that all men are created equal” and frames the war as a test of whether a nation built on that idea “can long endure.” He closes by asking listeners to ensure that “government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

Use it for: equality and popular sovereignty as the defining foundations of democracy.

i DEMOCRATIC IDEALS

Natural rights: rights people hold by nature, not by government grant (life, liberty, property).

Popular sovereignty: authority comes from the consent of the governed.

Social contract: people give up some freedom in exchange for government protecting their rights.

Limited government: law restrains even the government.

Republicanism: citizens elect representatives to govern.

! FIX IT

A **republic** is not “a democracy where everyone votes on laws.” Citizens elect representatives who make the laws. Direct votes on laws (initiatives, referendums) are the exception.

🎯 APPLY IT

Name the model of democracy each scenario best illustrates, and give a reason.

- 1 The school levy.** Voters in a city decide directly whether to raise the sales tax for school repairs.

Model and reason:

- 2 The committee fight.** Environmental groups, a manufacturers’ association, and a labor union each lobby a Senate committee on new emissions rules.

Model and reason:

APPLY IT

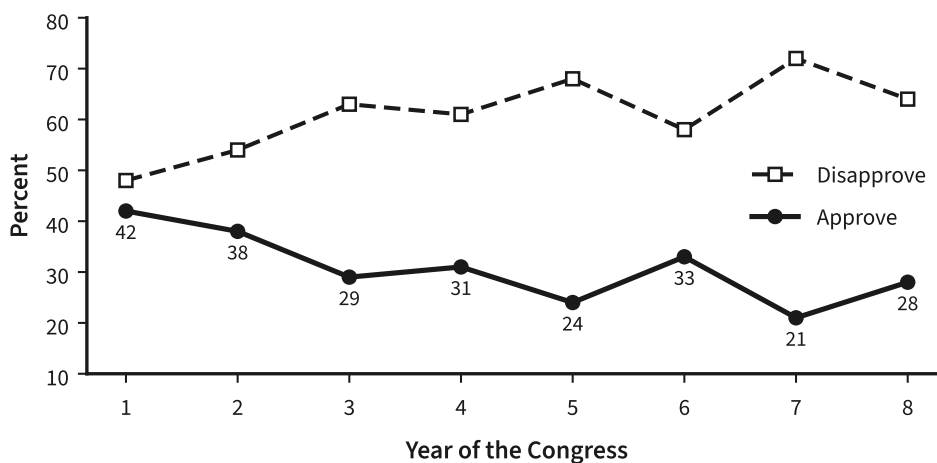
- 1 The buried bill.** A popular bill passes the House by 70 votes. In the Senate, the committee chair schedules hearings, but after the committee approves it, the minority party refuses to end debate.

Identify two points where the bill could still die and the rule that applies at each.

- 2 The deal.** A senator from Iowa agrees to vote for a coastal flood-relief bill if a senator from Florida votes for a farm-subsidy bill.

Identify the practice and explain one effect it has on lawmaking.

DATA CHECK: CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL (FICTIONAL)



Context. Year 3: government shutdown. Year 5: failed reform vote. Year 6: bipartisan highway bill. Year 7: impeachment proceedings begin.

- 3** Identify the year with the lowest approval and the approval in that year.

- 4** Describe the overall trend in approval from Year 1 to Year 8.

- 5** Explain why members of Congress are often re-elected even when Congress as a whole is unpopular.

2

AP EXAM WEIGHT: 25–36% OF THE MULTIPLE-CHOICE SECTION

How do Congress, the president, the courts, and the bureaucracy share, check, and compete for power?

- ☐ Compare the House and Senate and trace where bills die.
- ☐ Explain models of representation, redistricting, *Baker v. Carr*, and *Shaw v. Reno*.
- ☐ Sort formal and informal presidential powers, using *Federalist No. 70*.
- ☐ Explain judicial review, *Marbury v. Madison*, and *Federalist No. 78*.
- ☐ Explain how agencies make and carry out policy, and how they are held accountable.
- ☐ Identify checks that flow in every direction among the branches.

- 2.1** Congress: Structure, Powers, and Lawmaking
- 2.2** Representation and Congressional Behavior
- 2.3** The Presidency
- 2.4** The Federal Courts
- 2.5** The Bureaucracy

Unit Review: Mixed Practice, FRQ Edge, Fix It, Exit Ticket, READY+ Check

Try each one in under a minute.

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FRQ EDGE | UNIT 2 | SCOTUS COMPARISON

Reynolds v. Sims and Baker v. Carr

Read the case summary. Then answer each part. Suggested time: 20 minutes.

NONREQUIRED CASE: REYNOLDS V. SIMS (1964)

Alabama's legislature was still apportioned using the 1900 census. Some state senate districts had about 15,000 people and others more than 600,000, yet each elected one senator. Voters in the large districts sued. The Supreme Court held that the Equal Protection Clause requires seats in both houses of a state legislature to be apportioned by population, so each person's vote carries roughly equal weight.

A Identify the constitutional clause that is common to both Reynolds v. Sims (1964) and Baker v. Carr (1962).

B Based on the clause identified in part A, explain how the facts of Baker v. Carr and the facts of Reynolds v. Sims led to related holdings.

C Explain how the holding in Reynolds v. Sims affects how state legislatures draw districts after each census.

 READY+ CHECK • SCORE YOURSELF
CONFIDENCE ① ② ③ ④

- ☐ Part A names the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment.
- ☐ Part B links the two: Baker opened the courts; Reynolds set the standard.

- ☐ Part B describes Baker's facts and holding, not just Reynolds.
- ☐ Part C names a real effect on redistricting.

Answer Key

DIAGNOSTIC TEST

Diagnostic Test • Multiple Choice

p. 10

- 1 B. Popular sovereignty means the people are the ultimate source of political authority.
- 2 D. Congress could only request money from the states and had no way to enforce its laws.
- 3 A. Many competing factions make it hard for any one to form a dominating majority.
- 4 C. Brutus warned that a large republic and broad clauses would let the national government absorb state power and threaten liberty.
- 5 C. The Necessary and Proper Clause lets Congress pass laws needed to carry out its enumerated powers.
- 6 A. Carrying a gun near a school was not economic activity that substantially affects interstate commerce.
- 7 D. The Declaration grounds government in consent and claims a right to alter or abolish it.
- 8 B. Lincoln reaffirmed equality ("all men are created equal") and popular sovereignty ("government of the people, by the people, for the people").
- 9 A. Investigating how the executive branch carries out laws is congressional oversight.
- 10 C. Hamilton argued that "energy" in a single executive brings decisiveness and accountability.
- 11 B. Marbury v. Madison (1803) struck down part of the Judiciary Act of 1789.
- 12 D. Hamilton argued that life tenure secures independence, letting courts guard the Constitution against temporary majorities.
- 13 A. Committees, agencies, and interest groups trade support, funding, and information.
- 14 C. Agencies have discretion to decide how to carry out a law within its limits.
- 15 B. Article II lets the president make treaties with the advice and consent of two-thirds of the Senate.
- 16 D. Cloture requires 60 votes for most legislation.
- 17 A. A trustee uses her own judgment; a delegate follows constituents.
- 18 C. Districts drawn with race as the predominant factor are subject to strict scrutiny under the Equal Protection Clause.
- 19 B. The bully pulpit is an informal power of persuasion.
- 20 D. The Court applies Bill of Rights protections to the states, case by case, through the Fourteenth Amendment's Due Process Clause.
- 21 A. Students keep free speech rights at school unless their expression substantially disrupts the school.
- 22 C. Brown overturned Plessy v. Ferguson (1896).
- 23 D. Government-sponsored prayer violates the Establishment Clause.
- 24 B. The Sixth Amendment right to counsel applies to state felony defendants.
- 25 A. It freed enslaved people in states in rebellion and marked a shift toward civil rights; the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery nationwide.
- 26 C. A random sample gives every member of the population an equal chance of selection.

- 27 D. True support is likely between 48% and 56%, so majority support is not certain.
- 28 B. Family is the most important early agent of socialization.
- 29 A. Self-interest, competition, and limited regulation underlie free enterprise.
- 30 C. Trust fell from 62% to 22%, with one small rise in Year 13.
- 31 D. Low trust is linked to lower external efficacy and lower participation.
- 32 B. Education is the most consistent predictor of turnout.
- 33 C. Independent spending is political speech protected by the First Amendment.
- 34 A. Parties connect citizens to government by nominating candidates and mobilizing voters.
- 35 B. Winning a close state flips all of its electoral votes.
- 36 D. Agenda setting shapes which issues people think are important; framing shapes how they interpret them.
- 37 A. Judging the incumbent's past performance is retrospective voting.
- 38 C. Benefiting from collective action without contributing is free riding.
- 39 D. The Twenty-Sixth Amendment (1971) set the voting age at 18.
- 40 B. Super PACs raise and spend unlimited amounts but may not give to or coordinate with candidates.

Diagnostic Test • Written

p. 16

- A The Supremacy Clause (Article VI) makes the Constitution and valid federal laws and regulations the supreme law of the land, so the federal standard overrides the conflicting state limit.
- B States keep reserved powers under the Tenth Amendment and share concurrent powers, so a state can set stricter limits than the federal floor, regulate pollution sources the federal law does not cover, or enforce the federal standard through its own agency.
- C The company could argue that the EPA went beyond the authority Congress delegated to it, or that the regulation exceeds Congress's Commerce Clause power. A federal court would decide the question through judicial review.
- D Example: Federalism strengthens American democracy because it gives citizens more points of access, as Federalist No. 39 argues, letting states test policies and respond to local majorities.

UNIT 1 • FOUNDATIONS OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

Unit 1 Quick Start

p. 19

- a Examples: declare war, coin money, make treaties, regulate interstate commerce.
- b The judicial branch (federal courts), through judicial review.
- c The Articles of Confederation (1781).

Lesson 1.1 • Apply It

p. 19

- 1 Participatory: citizens make the decision directly.
- 2 Pluralist: several groups compete for influence and none controls the outcome alone.