

The Constitution at a Glance

STUDENT HANDOUT

Articles

Sections

Paragraph

Article 1 Legislative Branch

- ORGANIZATION
- POWERS
- RESTRAINTS

1.1 All lawmaking power in Congress

1.1 All lawmaking power in 2 houses, Senate and House of Representatives

1.2 House of Representatives

1.2.1 Election to the House
1.2.2 Qualifications for members of House
1.2.3 Representations and taxes apportioned by population
1.2.4 Vacancies
1.2.5 Power of impeachment in House

1.3 Senate

1.3.1 Senate membership, terms of office
1.3.2 1/3 of Senate elected every 2 years; how vacancies filled
1.3.3 Qualifications of Senators
1.3.4 Vice President is President of Senate
1.3.5 Other officers
1.3.6 Trials of impeachment in Senate
1.3.7 Penalty of impeachment convictions

1.4 Elections and meetings for both houses

1.4.1 Elections
1.4.2 Congress to meet annually

1.5 Rules for each house

1.5.1 Organization and independence of each house of Congress
1.5.2 Rules of proceedings
1.5.3 Journals of each house
1.5.4 Restrictions on adjournment

1.6 Rights and duties of Congressmen

1.6.1 Pay and privileges of members
1.6.2 Prohibitions on members

1.7 Making Laws

1.7.1 Revenue bills to originate in House
1.7.2 How bills become law
1.7.3 How orders, resolutions become law

1.8 Powers granted to Congress

1.8.1 Collect taxes to pay debts and provide for common defense and general welfare
1.8.2 Borrow money on credit of U.S.
1.8.3 Regulate commerce with nations, among states and Indian tribes
1.8.4 Establish rules and laws of naturalization and bankruptcies
1.8.5 Coin money, regulate value, fix weights and measures
1.8.6 Provide for punishment of counterfeiting
1.8.7 Establish post office and post roads
1.8.8 Promote sciences and arts by securing rights of authors and inventors
1.8.9 Establish inferior courts to the Supreme Court
1.8.10 Define and punish piracies and felonies
1.8.11 To declare war
1.8.12 To raise and support armies
1.8.13 To raise and support a navy
1.8.14 To make rules governing land and naval forces
1.8.15 To call militia to execute laws
1.8.16 To provide organization of militia
1.8.17 To govern seat of government [Washington, D.C.] and other federal lands
1.8.18 To make laws necessary for carrying our foregoing powers ["Elastic Clause"]

1.9 Powers forbidden to Congress

1.9.1 No prohibition of slavery before 1808
1.9.2 Habeas corpus guaranteed
1.9.3 No bills of attainder or ex post facto laws
1.9.4 No direct tax [see 16th Amendment]
1.9.5 No taxes on states' exports
1.9.6 No preference in commerce for one state over another
1.9.7 No spending without appropriation by law
1.9.8 Titles of nobility prohibited

1.10 Powers forbidden to states

1.10.1 No treaties, letters of marque or reprisal, coining of money, bills of credit; no bills of attainder, ex post facto laws, titles of nobility
1.10.2 No duties on imports, exports except with Congress' approval
1.10.3 No duty on tonnage, troops, ships of war, agreements with other states, or war without Congress' approval

Article II
Executive Branch

- DUTIES
- POWERS
- RESTRAINTS
- ELECTIONS

2.1 The office of President

- 2.1.1 President's and Vice President's term of office
- 2.1.2 Who appoints electoral college
- 2.1.3 Time of electoral vote
- 2.1.4 Qualifications of President
- 2.1.5 Vacancy and line of succession
- 2.1.6 Salary of President
- 2.1.7 Oath of Office

2.2 Powers of President

- 2.2.1 Military and civil duties
- 2.2.2 Making treaties and appointing officers
- 2.2.3 Filling vacancies during recess of Congress

2.3 Responsibilities of President

- 2.3 Give state of the Union information; may specially convene Congress and adjourn in cases of disagreement; shall receive ambassadors, execute laws

2.4 Impeachment of President

- 2.4 President may be impeached for treason, bribery, or high crimes and misdemeanors

Article III
Judicial Branch

- POWERS
- JURISDICTION
- RESTRAINTS
- TREASON

3.1 One Supreme Court - inferior courts

- 3.1 Judicial power in one Supreme Court and in inferior courts prescribed by Congress; judges hold office during good behavior

3.2 Jurisdiction of courts, all crimes tried by jury

- 3.2.1 Areas of jurisdiction
- 3.2.2 Original and appellate jurisdiction of Supreme Court; congress can limit appellate jurisdiction
- 3.2.3 Rules respecting trials

3.3 Treason defined - punishment

- 3.3.1 Treason - giving aid and comfort to enemies
- 3.3.2 Congress to declare punishment

Article IV
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- TO EACH OTHER
- TO FEDERAL GOV.
- GUARANTEES
- TERRITORIES

4.1 Full faith and credit to each state

- 4.1 Full faith and credit given in each state to public acts, records, and judicial proceedings of all other states

4.2 Citizens' rights and fugitives

- 4.2.1 Equal privileges for all citizens
- 4.2.2 Extradition of criminals
- 4.2.3 Fugitive slaves to be returned [now obsolete]

4.3 New states and territories

- 4.3.1 Creation and admission of new states
- 4.3.2 Congressional power over public lands

4.4 Protection of states

- 4.4 Protection and republican government guaranteed to states

Article V
Amendment Process

5.1 Amendments proposed by 2/3 Ratified by 3/4

- 5.1 Amendments proposed by 2/3 of both houses or by constitutional convention called by 2/3 of states; ratified by 3/4 state legislatures or by 3/4 state conventions

Article VI
Debts of Confederation
Supremacy Clause
Duties of Officials

6.1 Public debts, supremacy of Constitution, pledge of officials to uphold Constitution

- 6.1.1 Public debts under Articles of Confederation to be assumed and paid
- 6.1.2 Supreme law of land defined
- 6.1.3 Duty of federal and state officials to uphold Constitution; no religious test required

Article VII
Ratification

7.1 Method of ratification

- 7.1.1 Constitution takes effect when 9 states approve

Amendments to the Constitution

Bill of Rights (1792)

1. Freedom of religion, speech, press; right of assembly, petition.
2. Right to keep and bear arms.
3. Limitation on quartering of soldiers.
4. Limitations on searches and seizures.
5. Protection of accused in capital crimes.
6. Right to speedy trial of accused by impartial jury.
7. Trial by jury in civil suits.
8. Excessive bail or cruel and unusual punishments forbidden.
9. This list of rights does not deny other rights retained by people.
10. Un delegated powers reserved to the states and the people.

Amendments 11-27

11. Exemption of states from federal suits by citizens of another state. (1798)
12. New method of electing President and Vice President. (1804) (Supersedes part of Art. I, sec. 2.)
13. Slavery prohibited. (1865)
14. 1. Guarantee of due process and equal protection of all citizens.
2. Apportionment of Representatives in Congress. (Supersedes part on Art. I, sec. 2.)
3. Status of public officials engaged in insurrection.
4. Status of Civil War debts. (1868)
15. Protecting of Voting rights. (1870)
16. Income tax. (1913)
17. Election of Senators by the people; senatorial vacancies. (1913)
18. Prohibition of intoxicating liquors. (1919) (Repealed in 1933)
19. Women's suffrage. (1920)
20. Abolition of "lame duck" session in Congress--change in date of assembly. (1933)
21. Repeal of Prohibition. (1933)
22. Limitation of President to two terms of office. (1951)
23. Right of people in District of Columbia to vote for electors of President and Vice President. (1961)
24. Failure to pay taxes not a restriction on federal voting rights. (1964)
25. Succession to the Presidency in case of vacancy or disability. (1967)
26. Suffrage extended to 18, 19, 20-year-olds in all state, local, and federal elections. (1971)
27. No pay increase for Senators and Representatives during current term of office. (1992)