

AP Government and Politics

In order to understand the government of the United States, you must understand its structure and origins. This assignment will give you some information on the origins of our government. This assignment must be completed by the first class in September.

There are six parts to this assignment. You must complete all six.

1. Origins of the Government of the United States.

The origins of the government of the United States are found in the government of Great Britain and the Enlightenment writings and ideas. You will need to explain how each of the following contributed to the formation of our government.

- Henry II of England
- Magna Carta
- English Petition of Rights
- English Bill of Rights
- Baron de Montesquieu
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau
- Thomas Hobbes
- John Locke

2. Define the following concepts in your own words.

- Natural rights
- Social contract
- Separation of powers
- Branches of government

3. Answer the following questions in separate essays.

- a. According to the English philosopher John Locke, the duty of a government is to protect its citizens and that citizens have the right to revolution if the government does not fulfill its duty. Explain how the government of the United States protects the natural rights of its citizens.
- b. Many people describe the government of the United States as a democracy, a republic or a representative democracy. Explain how the government is all of the terms.

4. Read the following documents. You can find them at

<http://avalon.law.yale.edu/default.asp> . After you have read the documents explain in an essay how these documents influenced the government of the United States.

- Medieval
 - a. Magna Carta

- b. The Dialogue Concerning the Exchequer. Circa 1180
 - 17th Century
 - a. The Articles of Confederation of the United Colonies of New England, May 19, 1643
 - b. English Bill of Rights
 - 18th Century
 - a. Articles of Confederation, March 1, 1781
 - b. Declaration of independence, July 4, 1776
5. Explain your opinion in an essay to the following questions;
- What position governs the United States?
 - What is the goal of those governing the United States?
6. Gather the basic information about the following offices in the federal government. You must tell who is presently holding the office, term of office, the responsibilities of the office and the powers of the office.
- President of the United States
 - Vice President of the United States
 - Speaker of the House of Representatives
 - Number of Representatives in the House
 - President Pro Tempore of the Senate
 - Number of Senators
 - Number and members of the Supreme Court of the United States (you must list the Chief Justice separately)

Some unsolicited advice:

Don't wait until the night before school starts to begin this assignment.

Read the material more than once for better understanding.

Have a great summer. I am looking forward to meeting you in September.

Your work will be checked for plagiarism. Violations will be handled according to the Code of Conduct in the Student Planner (see cheating, honor code violations).

You may reach me with a question at Arleta.Dawson@vbschools.com . I will get back to you as soon as possible.