

AP Government and Politics Summer Assignment

Reading assignment: *The Constitution: An Introduction*, Paulsen and Paulsen, Basic Books, 2015. (\$12 on amazon or borrow from the public library)

This book is written by a father-son team; the dad a professor of law, the son a recent college graduate. The duo conceived of the book over the son's high school and college years. The father is the expert, and the son helps make the book easier to digest. Hopefully, their efforts will allow you to easily understand the creation and function of the Constitution and the story of the Constitution throughout our nation's history.

Before you begin reading the book, you need some background knowledge. Read a summary (5-10 pages) on the creation of the Constitution, something online, even a Wikipedia entry will do. Then go to www.constitutioncenter.org. Click on "Read the Constitution" and explore the site. Read the preamble. Skim over all 7 articles, then read through the 27 amendments. Get familiar with this site as it will be a resource that we will use often in class. (If you want to really geek out you can get the interactive constitution app for free on your phone, but you will be using your chromebook in class.)

Now you are ready to read the book. The assignment is in 3 parts as follows:

- Read the Introduction and Chapters 1-5 for the first day of school. (only 115 pages) You will be tested on Thursday, August 15th.
- You will be assigned Chapters 6-7 over the first several weeks of school.
- We will read the final 3 chapters later in the year when we study the Supreme Court, civil rights, and civil liberties.

Current Events Assignment:

Paying attention to what is happening in the world around you is essential to your understanding of AP Government and Politics and to being an educated citizen. It will allow you to relate the concepts we study to real life events and will make the entire course more meaningful.

The American news media are biased even though they strive to remain objective and to report both sides on most issues. "Fake news" was the word of the year in 2017, but the term has been overused. We are going to think critically about what we hear, evaluate our sources, and be aware of bias; we are not going to assume that most of our news is fake. I have chosen *PBS NewsHour* as the source for your news for this assignment. *Business Insider* rates PBS and the Associated Press as the least biased news outlets, and AllSides Media Bias Rating gives *PBS Newshour* a "Center" grade. *PBS Newshour* comes on at 6pm and 9pm on weeknights and full episodes are available online at the following link: <https://www.pbs.org/show/newshour>.

The assignment is as follows:

- Give the date of the episode and summarize the content of **three** of the featured stories in the episode. Each summary should be 2-3 sentences.
- Significance/Impact - Choose **one** of the 3 stories you summarized, and tell how the issue or event in the story impact the country or the world? Why is it important? (at least 3-5 sentences)
- Personal opinion/reaction to the story - Using the same story, give your personal opinion of the event or issue. What did you think of the story? How did it make you feel? What did you learn? Was there anything you agreed or disagreed with? Explain. Give your opinion and/or personal reaction. (at least 3-5 sentences)

Five of these responses are due on Wednesday, August 14th for a 50 pt. classwork grade - 10 pts. per write-up.