



Selected State Showcase Questions

## Welcome to Michigan's We the People Program!

The Michigan Center for Civic Education has preselected two questions from the released Center for Civic Education [questions](#) for the purposes of the January 2024 showcase. Those questions will be labeled A and B. (This document maintains the original numbers from CCE for those who may find it helpful to refer to those numbers).

### MCCE State Hearing Questions 2023–2024

## Unit One: What Are the Philosophical and Historical Foundations of the American Political System?

### CCE questions 2 & 3

**A. 2. How did concepts such as representative government, common law, and the rights of Englishmen evolve in the British constitutional system?**

- What were the core principles of justice and the rule of law articulated in the British legal and philosophical traditions?
- How did the Founders' experience with British principles impact the creation of colonial governments that protected individual rights and established a just legal system?

**B. 3. To what extent, if any, did the Framers' experiences with state constitutions during the American Revolution influence the formation and content of the United States Constitution?**

- What were the primary characteristics and features of state constitutions established during the American Revolution, and how did they reflect the ideals of self-governance and individual rights?
- In what ways did the successes and challenges of state constitutions provide valuable insights regarding the balance of power and the protection of citizens' rights?



Selected State Showcase Questions

## Unit Two: How Did the Framers Create the Constitution?

### CCE questions 2 & 3

**A. 2. How did Brutus I\* and Federalist 10\*\* assess the problem of factions, and what were their proposed remedies to address the presence of factions?**

- How did these ratification essayists' views influence future interpretations of the nature of representation?
- In your opinion, which of these two has proven to be the most accurate in their assessment?

\* "Brutus I," *New York Journal*, October 18, 1787, Center for the Study of the American Constitution, University of Wisconsin–Madison, [https://csac.history.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/281/2017/07/Brutus\\_I1.pdf](https://csac.history.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/281/2017/07/Brutus_I1.pdf).

\*\* Publius, "The Federalist 10," *New York Daily Advertiser*, November 22, 1787, Center for the Study of the American Constitution, University of Wisconsin–Madison, [https://csac.history.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/281/2017/07/Publius\\_10.pdf](https://csac.history.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/281/2017/07/Publius_10.pdf).

**B. 3. During the ratification debates, one writer claimed, "Most men seem to agree that amendments ought to be made in the proposed plan in some stage of the business."\* What were the major disagreements between the Federalists and Anti-Federalists during the ratification period over the need to amend the proposed Constitution?**

- In your opinion, which side made the most compelling arguments? Why?
- Since so many attempts to amend the Constitution have failed, should we consider changing the amendment process in Article V of the Constitution? Why or why not?

\* "An Old Whig VIII," *Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer*, February 6, 1788, [https://csac.history.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/281/2017/07/an\\_oldwhig\\_viii.pdf](https://csac.history.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/281/2017/07/an_oldwhig_viii.pdf).



Selected State Showcase Questions

## Unit Three: How Has the Constitution Been Changed to Further the Ideals Contained in the Declaration of Independence?

### CCE questions 1 & 2

**A. 1. In what ways was the due process clause of the 14th Amendment interpreted by the courts in the immediate aftermath of the Civil War?**

- To what extent, if any, have rights been better protected as a result of substantive due process?
- To what extent has the incorporation doctrine contributed to an enhanced protection of rights?

**B. 2. How would you account for the origins of political parties, and how have they impacted the checks and balances embedded in the U.S. Constitution?**

- To what extent, if any, do political parties shape electioneering for political office?
- Are the functions of political parties adequate for the needs of U.S. citizens?  
Why or why not?



Selected State Showcase Questions

## Unit Four: How Have the Values and Principles Embodied in the Constitution Shaped American Institutions and Practices?

### CCE questions 1 & 2

**A. 1. “Congress did not create the Supreme Court. ... I know this is a controversial view, but I’m willing to say it. No provision in the Constitution gives them the authority to regulate the Supreme Court—period.”\* Do you agree or disagree with Justice Samuel Alito’s constitutional assessment of judicial independence? Why or why not?**

- Historically, how effective have constitutional checks been in controlling the courts? ○ Alexander Hamilton wrote that the judicial branch would be the “least dangerous to the political rights of the Constitution.”\*\* Do you believe this description is still warranted? Why or why not?

\* Kimberly Strawbridge Robinson, “Congress Can’t Force Ethics Code on Supreme Court, Alito Says,” Bloomberg Law, July 28, 2023,

<https://news.bloomberglaw.com/us-law-week/congress-cant-force-ethics-code-on-supreme-court-alito-says>. \*\*

Publius, “The Federalist 78,” New York, May 28, 1788, Center for the Study of the American Constitution, University of Wisconsin–Madison, <https://csac.history.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/281/2017/07/78.pdf>.

**B. 2. “The Convention with justice & the majority of the people on their side, had nothing to fear. With injustice and the minority on their side they had every thing to fear.”\* Have James Madison’s fears about the Senate’s construction expressed at the Philadelphia Convention come to fruition? Why or why not?**

- What tensions arise from the design of Congress, particularly the bicameral structure and the composition of the Senate and the House of Representatives?
- Should the 17th Amendment be repealed? Why or why not?

\* James Madison, “James Madison's Notes of the Constitutional Convention,” July 5, 1787, vol. 1 in *The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787*, ed. Max Farrand (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1911) 526–34, ConSource, <https://www.consource.org/document/james-madisons-notes-of-the-constitutional-convention-1787-7-5/20180514160636>.



Selected State Showcase Questions

## Unit Five: What Rights Does the Bill of Rights Protect?

### CCE questions 2 & 3

- A. 2. “The 2022–23 school year has been marked to date by an escalation of book bans and censorship in classrooms and school libraries across the United States.”\* To what extent, if any, do these bans limit students’ and teachers’ freedom of speech?**

- How should schools determine student access to certain books and online materials?
- Who should determine whether certain books should be banned or access to them should be restricted, and what criteria should they use?

\* Kasey Meehan and Jonathan Friedman, “Banned in the USA: State Laws Supercharge Book Suppression in Schools,” PEN America, April 20, 2023,

<https://pen.org/report/banned-in-the-usa-state-laws-supercharge-book-suppression-in-schools>.

- B. 3. How does the reasonable suspicion doctrine, as established in *New Jersey v. T.L.O.* (1985), both limit and protect students’ Fourth Amendment rights in public schools?** ○ Can school officials lawfully seize a student’s backpack based on an anonymous tip reported on a social media site? Does it make a difference if the tip is made pursuant to a state statute encouraging students to report tips about school safety concerns anonymously? Why or why not?

- To what extent should the exclusionary rule apply to school searches by school officials? \*

*New Jersey v. T.L.O.*, 469 U.S. 325 (1985).



Selected State Showcase Questions

## Unit Six: What Challenges Might Face American Constitutional Democracy in the Twenty-first Century?

### CCE questions 1 & 2

**A. 1. To what extent, if any, did the Voting Rights Act of 1965 reshape the landscape of American democracy?**

- What were the key provisions within the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and how did they strategically target historical voting barriers that had limited access to voting?
- What practices, if any, are still present that attempt to restrict access to voting or equal representation for marginalized groups?

**B. 2. To what extent, if any, has the protection of individual rights, as enshrined in the U.S. Bill of Rights, influenced international constitutional protections?**

- What are examples of nations that have integrated elements of the U.S. Bill of Rights into their constitutional frameworks, and how have these inclusions impacted their human rights agendas?
- How have cultural, historical, or political conditions influenced the creation of alternative models of democratic government worldwide?