

CONSTITUTION 101

Module 6: Separation of Powers and Federalism

6.7 Test Your Knowledge

SEPARATION OF POWERS AND FEDERALISM

Complete the questions in the following quiz to test your knowledge of basic ideas and concepts covered in this module.

1. With the new Constitution, the framers sought to create a balance between _____.
 - a. The national government and state governments
 - b. The three branches of the national government
 - c. A stronger national government and the liberties of the people
 - d. All of the above

2. In the founders' view, the best way to protect the unalienable rights promised by the Declaration of Independence was _____.
 - a. A Constitution founded on the separation of powers
 - b. A virtuous president like George Washington
 - c. A very weak central government
 - d. To establish a true democracy

3. Separation of powers refers to the fact that _____.
 - a. The Constitution distributes power among the three branches of government
 - b. The American colonies had recently separated from the British government
 - c. The smaller states wanted separate power from large states
 - d. The new national government could take away certain powers

4. What are the three different branches of government outlined in the Constitution?
 - a. Electoral, Administrative, Judicial
 - b. Legislative, Executive, Judicial
 - c. Legislative, Presidential, Administrative
 - d. Legislative, Executive, Parliamentary

5. The Constitution established a system of checks and balances, which grants _____.
 - a. Only Congress the power to check other branches
 - b. Only the president the power to check other branches
 - c. Only the Supreme Court the ability to check the other branches
 - d. Each branch the power to check abuses by the other branches

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6. Federalism is the word used to describe the Constitution's system of granting political power _____.
 - a. By giving all political power to the federal government
 - b. By giving all political power to the states
 - c. By dividing political power between the national government and the states
 - d. To the other branches, in theory, but retaining all real power under the president

7. *The Spirit of the Laws*, which articulated the importance of the separation of powers, was written by _____.
 - a. James Madison
 - b. Montesquieu
 - c. John Adams
 - d. John Locke

8. According to Montesquieu, what happens when the legislative and executive powers are united in the same person, or in the same body of magistrates?
 - a. This is an ideal form of government.
 - b. The executive will have great power to help the people.
 - c. There can be no liberty.
 - d. People will know they can trust the legislature if the president is involved, too.

9. According to John Adams's *Thoughts on Government*, what was the very definition of a republic?
 - a. The definition he outlined in the Declaration of Independence.
 - b. Rule directly by the people.
 - c. An empire of men.
 - d. An empire of laws and not of men.

10. James Madison outlined his explanation and defense of the Constitution's separation of powers in which document?
 - a. The Declaration of Independence
 - b. The Virginia Declaration of Rights
 - c. *Federalist* No. 51
 - d. *The Spirit of the Laws*

11. According to Madison, in a good government, "_____ must be made to counteract ambition"?
 - a. A powerful police force
 - b. Ambition
 - c. Difficult election processes
 - d. Delays

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12. What was true about the delegates to the Constitutional Convention?
 - a. They crafted a stronger central government than the one that came before it.
 - b. It created a much weaker central government.
 - c. They were concerned about the central government being too powerful.
 - d. Both A and C

13. What is the primary job of the legislative branch? (Article I)
 - a. To make laws
 - b. To enforce laws
 - c. To interpret laws
 - d. All of the above

14. What is the primary job of the executive branch? (Article II)
 - a. To make laws
 - b. To enforce laws
 - c. To interpret laws
 - d. All of the above

15. What is the primary job of the judicial branch? (Article III)
 - a. To make laws
 - b. To enforce laws
 - c. To interpret laws
 - d. All of the above

16. This series of essays defended the Constitution and the notion of separation of powers:
 - a. The Silence Dogood Letters
 - b. The Federalist Papers
 - c. The Adams-Jefferson Correspondence
 - d. The letters from Brutus

17. Which of these is a famous quote by James Madison?
 - a. Greed is good.
 - b. If men were angels, no government would be necessary.
 - c. If you ain't first, you're last.
 - d. Men are angels, so no government is necessary.

18. Which of these jobs exercises executive power?
 - a. The mayor of your town
 - b. The governor of your state
 - c. The president
 - d. All of the above

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19. Which of these functions of government is an example of checks and balances?
- Vetoing a law
 - Rejecting a judicial nominee
 - Impeachment
 - All of the above
20. Which part of the federal government has the power to hear legal cases and strike down laws which are unconstitutional?
- The judicial branch
 - The House of Representatives
 - The Senate
 - The executive branch

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Answer Key

1. D
2. A
3. A
4. B
5. D
6. C
7. B
8. C
9. D
10. C
11. B
12. D
13. A
14. B
15. C
16. B
17. B
18. D
19. D
20. A