

Government and Economics – Summer Reading

AP US Government and Politics/AP Macroeconomics

***Miracle at Philadelphia* by Catherine Drinker Bowen**

Objective:

One of the first major concepts that we will investigate in our study of US government is the writing and philosophy behind the United States Constitution. A study of the Constitution is fundamental to the study of US government. This reading guide is intended to help the student take note of the important points of this book.

Due Date:

This reading guide should be emailed to me no later than the first day of school.

Grading:

Discussion of this book will take place within the first few days of the semester, as well as throughout the entire school year. This reading guide will count as a quiz grade. Students will be required to write an essay based on this novel soon after the beginning of school. The in-class essay will count for 50% of a test grade and a test on this book will count for 50% of the test grade.

Short Answer questions:

These answers should be about one sentence long. (2 points each)

Chapter 1

1.Explain the original reason for the meeting in Philadelphia in the summer of 1787.

Chapter 2

1.Explain why there was no limit on the number of delegates which could be sent to the convention from each state.

Chapter 3

1.Edmund Randolph was a delegate from the state of Virginia. What was the main point of Randolph's proposal?

2.What was Benjamin Franklin's role at this convention?

Chapter 4

1. By May 30, 1787, the first major point of disagreement was introduced into the convention. What was this disagreement about?

Chapters 5,6,7

1. Describe the attitudes of the delegates at the convention.

2. Many of the delegates gave excuses for leaving the meeting. In your opinion, why did some delegates leave the convention?

Chapter 8

1. Why did some delegates object to the Virginia Plan?

Chapter 9

1. What was the New Jersey Plan?

Chapter 10

1. What was the Great Debate about?

2. The word “national” was taken out of the final version of the Constitution – why?

Chapter 15 (Do not skip chapters 11-14)

1. Why did Benjamin Franklin issue a statement to a Pennsylvania newspaper which was quite deceptive concerning the meeting. Why would he want to mislead the public?

2. Why did the convention vote to adjourn for ten days?

Chapter 16

1. What was the slavery compromise?

Chapter 17

1. Why did the delegates believe the capitol of the United States should be in a city outside of state government?

Chapter 18

1. Explain why the Preamble was written last.

Chapter 19

1. What was the argument for why states should ratify the Constitution rather than the people.

Chapter 20-21

1. Why did the delegates think it was unnecessary to add a Bill of Rights?

2. Why did some delegates did not want to sign the Constitution?
3. Why do you think Benjamin Franklin never revealed which parts of the Constitution he disagreed with?

Chapter 22

1. In the room where the delegates met, there was a painting of a sun. Artists had been unable to determine if it was a rising sun or a setting sun. Why did Benjamin Franklin say it was a rising sun?

Chapter 23

1. List three criticisms of the Constitution.

Chapter 25

1. Why was it required that Virginia and New York ratify the Constitution in order for it to become effective?

Analysis:

Answers should be in the form of a short paragraph. (9 points each)

1. Why did the author use so much detailed description of the events in this book? Give specific examples.
2. Explain how this book is a record of social history as well as political history. Give specific examples.
3. What is the author's overall view of this historical period? Explain your answer.
4. In the middle of the book the author takes a few chapters to discuss the flora and fauna and culture of the United States. Why does she take this time away from discussion of the meeting in Philadelphia?
5. How does the author write that helped you to understand the time period and its importance in the light of the events which preceded or followed it?
6. How does this book add to your understanding of the writing of the U.S. Constitution?