

Advanced Placement Government and Politics
Summer Reading Guidelines - 2008
(Mr. Van Orden)

READ THE FOLLOWING CAREFULLY:

Before the first day of school you must *carefully* read/study two books, The Constitution of the United States and Cracking the AP U.S. Government & Politics Exam (2008 Edition). The summer reading books are available in the Judge Bookstore. (*In addition to these books* there are two texts, three collections of readings, and a study guide to comparative government that you will use in the class. You will get these in the fall at the Judge book sale.)

NOTE: You will have a ***Summer Reading Test*** on the Constitution booklet and the assigned section of “Cracking the AP U.S. Government & Politics Exam” during the ***first week of class, usually the second or third day of class!*** (The test is made up of multiple-choice, true-false, fill-in, matching, and short answer questions. Be prepared!)

1. The Constitution of the United States: Read **this entire** booklet. This reading is designed to familiarize you with the general structure and legal environment of the government of the United States of America. Since this reading is so short you need to read with care and depth. (Be careful not to lose the booklet, as we will use it often during the school year.) After reading the booklet you should know the following: **(1)** The *general history* of the U.S. Constitution, **(2)** The contributions and philosophies of the *personalities* discussed, **(3)** The *general structure and functions of the parts* of the United States government, **(4)** The *goals* of the U.S. Constitution found in the *Preamble*, **(5)** The *general philosophy* of government presented in the Declaration of Independence, **(6)** The *topic* of each Article and each Amendment of the U.S. Constitution (e.g., Amendment 17 provides for the direct election of Senators), **(7)** The general procedures followed by the U.S. Supreme Court. It would be very helpful for you to make a good *outline* of the U.S. Constitution as you read it; we will refer to it frequently during the first semester of the class. You will have a **test** on this material during the ***first week of class***.

2. Cracking the AP U.S. Government & Politics Exam: Read Chapter 5: “The Constitutional Underpinnings”(pages 41-56). Reading this will familiarize you with the basic terminology and structure of the U.S. Constitution, and will supplement the Constitution booklet. **READ** the material carefully; don't just skim it for the identifications. You are expected to know this chapter well! **WHILE YOU ARE READING, PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO** “The Concepts,” “The Terms,” and any bolded terms in the chapter. Some of these questions and terms will appear on the first-of-the-year test. You will have a **test** on this material during the ***first week of class***.

3. This summer you should become a news junkie. You should get in the habit of checking national and international news **every day**. It is an essential part of the study of government and politics. You need to get a subscription to a good weekly news magazine. **The College Board recommends** *The Washington Post Weekly* **or** *The Economist* for students taking AP Government and Politics. All current events quizzes and discussions will be taken from topics that appear in these publications. Therefore, **before school starts you need to get a subscription to one of these publications**. (Initial copies of these with subscription forms can be obtained at most local bookstores or ordering information can be found on line.) *TIME* or *NEWSWEEK* are good supplements, if you have them already, but they do not provide the depth of *The Washington Post Weekly* **or** *The Economist*, a depth necessary for students in a class at the AP level.

Note: **Don't wait until the week before school starts to begin studying or to send for your subscription. The summer work will take some time to complete. You should study carefully, take notes, and do whatever is necessary for you to learn the material. Excuses for failing to complete the summer work will not be accepted in the fall! I hope you learn a lot from your summer reading and return to school with a new awareness of the world and ready to explore it in depth.**