

Study Guide for the S.S. - New Nation Test

1. Know the definitions to these words.

Bill of Rights	legislative branch
Constitution	republic
checks and balances	popular sovereignty
separation of powers	executive branch
Supreme Court	judicial branch

2. Congress or the legislative or lawmaking branch is divided into two parts or houses: the House of Representatives (435 members) and the Senate (100 members or 2 from each of the 50 states).

3. The number of members of the House of Representatives is based on a state's population. The larger the state's population, the more representatives it has in the House of Representatives.

4. The Supreme Court has 9 justices, who serve for life.

5. James Madison was the author of the Virginia Plan (two houses of Congress) and came up with the idea that the U.S. should have 3 branches of government: executive, legislative, and judicial.

6. The President's Cabinet includes the Vice President and the President's most important advisors.

7. The legislative branch or lawmaking branch of government is called Congress.

8. The President of the Constitutional Convention was George Washington.

9. The 1st amendment includes these freedoms and rights: the freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, the right to petition (complain to) the government, and the right to assemble (meet).

10. The main problem with the Articles of Confederation was that they made the national or federal government too weak.

11. Under the Constitution, the federal or national government can: declare war with other countries, print money, make treaties (or agreements) with other countries.

12. State governments can: build and manage state highways and parks, oversee public schools and state colleges and universities (education), they might help less fortunate people by supplying them with food or shelter.

13. One power held by BOTH the state and federal government is the power to collect taxes. This means there are taxes collected by the state and the federal government.

14. **Fiscal** responsibility is also called responsibility with money. An example of the government showing fiscal responsibility is keeping a balanced budget. This means spending the money it collects from taxes and nothing more.

15. The jobs or functions of the three branches of government are:

executive - enforcing the laws; this is the President and his Cabinet

legislative - making the laws; this is Congress

judicial - interpreting the laws; this is the court system

16. Four important documents and their purposes:

a. Declaration of Independence - This stated the wrongs or complaints against King George III of Britain. It formally separated the colonies from Britain and established them as a separate, independent country.

b. Articles of Confederation - This document set out the rules to organize a new country and government. This document did not last for long because it gave all of the power to the individual states instead of the federal government.

c. The U.S. Constitution - When the Articles of Confederation did not work, this document was a new set of laws and rules that established a strong federal or central government in the U.S. There were still some powers given to the states.

d. Bill of Rights - These 10 amendments to the Constitution give citizens their individual rights and freedoms.

17. Important People:

a. George Washington - President of the Constitutional Convention and first president of the United States.

b. Thomas Jefferson - Writer of the Declaration of Independence

c. Benjamin Franklin - Inventor who gave a speech at the close of the Constitutional Convention that urged others to sign the Great Compromise, even though it was not perfect.

d. James Madison - Known as the "Father of the Constitution" and worked hard to create a strong federal or national government.

18. The Great Compromise is so important because it allowed for two houses of Congress (the legislative branch or the lawmaking branch). It set up the number of members of the House of Representatives to be based on a state's population and the number of members of the Senate to be equal from each state (each state sends two people). This satisfied the members of the Constitutional Convention from small and large states.

19. The 3/5 Rule - The compromise made on how many slaves should be counted in the population of each state. It was important because southern delegates wanted slaves to count toward their population because they would have more representatives in Congress. Other delegates thought this was unfair because slaves were treated as property rather than citizens. The states compromised and decided every 5 slaves would count as 3 free people.