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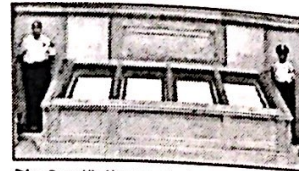
Anatomy of the Constitution Reading

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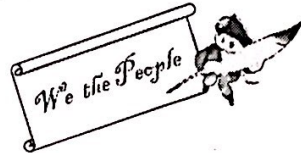
Anatomy of the Constitution Name: _____

How Do They Govern?

The U.S. Constitution is the document that creates our nation's government. The contents of the Constitution create the three branches of our government and give directions for how the federal government works. (It does this with a little over 4,500 words covering only four sheets of paper!) Although the Constitution was written over 220 years ago, it still guides our officials in running our country today. It is also the oldest written constitution in the world that is still in use.



The Constitution on display at the National Archives in Washington, DC

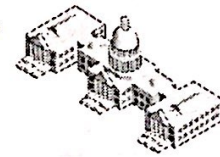


Introducing... The Preamble

Our Constitution is divided into nine parts. The first paragraph is called the *Preamble*. Its job is to introduce the Constitution, explain what the Constitution is meant to do, and describe the purpose of the new government.

Creating Congress: Article I

Article I is the first and longest part of the Constitution. It creates the legislative branch of our government. *Legislative* means law-making. This section is the longest because the people who wrote the Constitution believed that a legislative branch is very important in a government that represents the citizens. Members of the *legislature*, or law-making body, are responsible for turning citizens' wants and needs into laws.



Represent Me!



The legislative branch makes our government a representative democracy. In a *representative democracy*, citizens elect people to represent their needs and concerns in government. Article I creates a legislature called *Congress* and divides it into two parts: the *Senate* and the *House of Representatives*. Article I describes how Congress should be organized, tells what qualifications legislators must have, and says how often Congress should hold elections and meet as a group. It also describes other details of operation that each house of Congress gets to decide for itself.

	The Senate	The House of Representatives
Qualifications	You must be at least 30 years old, been a U.S. citizen for at least 9 years, and live in the state you represent	You must be at least 25 years old, been a U.S. citizen for at least 7 years, and live in the state you represent.
Size	2 senators per state = 100 total	Number per state depends on population = 435 total (in 2011)
They represent...	the interests of the citizens in the entire state for 6 years per term.	the interests of the citizens who live in the district they represent within the state for 2 years per term.
Special Duties	The Senate acts as a court during impeachments.	All bills that raise money must start in the House of Representatives.
Role in Lawmaking	A bill must be approved by BOTH houses of Congress before it can go to the President to become a law.	

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