Assessment

Political Dictionary

- popular sovereignty (p. 689)
- limited government (p. 689)
- fundamental law (p. 688)
- initiative (p. 687)
- statutory law (p. 688)
- police power (p. 687)
- constitutional power (p. 682)
- referendum (p. 689)
- recall (p. 690)
- writ (p. 689)
- civil law (p. 704)
- jury (p. 704)
- information (p. 704)
- bench trial (p. 705)
- Justice of the Peace (p. 707)
- warrant (p. 708)
- preliminary hearing (p. 708)
- magistrate (p. 708)
- appellate jurisdiction (p. 709)

Fill in the Blank: Choose a term from the list above that best completes each sentence.

1. The power of executive _______ includes the power to pardon or parole a convicted criminal.
2. A __________ is a more serious offense than a __________.
3. A __________ is the city council of a Justice of the Peace.
4. A __________ is a process by which voters can petition to propose constitutional amendments and legislation.
5. The __________ is written, judged, and_____ which developed in England.

Practicing the Vocabulary

Using Words in Context: For each of the terms below, write a sentence that shows how it relates to this chapter.

1. popular sovereignty
2. initiative
3. referendum
4. writ
5. police power
6. civil law
7. bench trial
8. Justice of the Peace
9. appellate jurisdiction
10. warrant

Reviewing Main Ideas

Section 1: What are the basic principles on which all state constitutions are based?

17. What are the basic principles on which all state constitutions are based?
18. What kinds of provisions are found in all state constitutions?
19. Describe the two basic steps of constitutional change.
20. Name at least two reasons why many state constitutions are in need of reform.

Section 2: Describe the initiative and referendum processes that are available in several states.

21. What powers does a state legislature have?
22. How are state legislatures chosen?
23. (a) What are the usual steps in the legislative process? (b) Describe the initiative and referendum processes that are available in several states.
24. List the powers of the government.
25. In what ways is a governor the chief executive rather than the executive in state government?
26. Name three other executive officers in state government and describe what they do.
27. Name and describe the four kinds of law applied in the state courts.
28. What is the common law?
29. (a) What are the two most common kinds of courts? (b) Describe the basic function performed by each of them.
30. What are the functions of magistrates’ courts, general trial courts, intermediate appellate courts, and state supreme courts?
31. (a) What are the three ways by which state and local judges are selected today? (b) Which is the most widely used method? (c) Which two methods does the Missouri Plan combine?
32. What are the differences between federal and state courts?
33. Explain how courts and balances work in state government.
34. The state that has the highest court of last resort was _______.

Critical Thinking

32. Applying the Chapter Skill: A local jewelry store insists on charging you for filing your watch, although it is still under warranty. Write a brief consumer complaint letter to a state agency. Describe the documents you have copied and attached to support your claim.
33. Identifying Central Issues: Describe how the system of checks and balances works in state government. What limits does each branch of government place on the others? Then compare these checks and balances with those in place in the federal system.
34. Recognizing Ideologies: The idea that “a war of one’s own” should seek the truth (designate the facts at issue) in a court case has a long history in this country. What does this fact tell you about traditional American views of the proper role of (a) ordinary citizens and (b) officers of government in the judicial process? (c) What does this trend away from the jury process suggest about current American attitudes?
35. Checking Consistency: The governor is both the chief executive and, very often, the chief legislator in most states. Do you think that this circumstance violates the principle of separation of powers? Why or why not?

Analyzing Political Cartoons

Using your knowledge of American government and this cartoon, answer the question below.

36. What does this cartoon suggest about checks and balances in State government?
37. Do you think this cartoonist favors more or less control of the judiciary by other branches of government? On what does the cartoonist base his conclusion?

Participation Activities

30. Current Events Watch: Write a biographical sketch of the governor of your state. Trace his or her life from childhood to the governorship. Attempt to find the major factors—family, school, other experiences—that most influenced the shaping of the governor’s character and abilities. Review the governor’s political career, and try to discover why he or she entered politics. Assess the ways in which the governor uses the powers of the office, and his or her powers of persuasion. Include comments on the relationship between the governor and the media, special interests, and the voters of your state.
31. Diagramming Activity: Using the information in this chapter and additional research, make a diagram of the major steps in changing a state constitution. Include both the revision and the amendment processes.
32. It’s Your Turn: Your state is considering the Missouri Plan for selecting judges. Take a position for or against the plan and write a speech on the subject. State your position clearly, and support it with reasons and facts. Remember your audience will be listening to—not reading—your testimony.

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As a final review, take the Magna’s Chapter 24 Self-Test and receive immediate feedback on your answers. The test consists of 20 multiple-choice questions designed to test your understanding of the chapter content.