Political Dictionary

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Practicing the Vocabulary

Matching Choose a term from the list above that best matches each description.
1. A governmental system in which the powers of government are divided on a geographic basis
2. The group that makes the formal selection of the nation’s President
3. The idea that government must conduct itself in accordance with the principles of the Constitution
4. The power of courts to determine the constitutionality of a law or other governmental action
5. A system by which one branch of government can be restrained by one or both of the other branches

Fill in the Blank Choose a term from the list above that best completes each sentence below.
6. Under the principle of ________________, the Federal Government has three equal branches.
7. The Constitution is divided into seven major sections, called ________________.
8. The first ten amendments to the United States Constitution are known as the ________________.
9. ________________ results in changes to the written words of the Constitution.
10. The principle of ________________ states that government must be bound by a fundamental law.

Reviewing Main Ideas

Section 1

11. How is the text of the Constitution organized?
12. What are the six basic principles of the Constitution?
13. (a) How are popular sovereignty and limited government related? (b) Why were these principles important to the Framers of the Constitution?
14. What is the purpose of checks and balances?
15. (a) How can the judicial branch check the legislative branch? (b) How can the executive branch check the legislative branch?

Section 2

16. How many amendments have been formally added to the Constitution?
17. (a) What has been the most common method for adding an amendment to the Constitution? (b) Which method has been used only once?
18. How does the formal amendment process reflect federalism?
19. (a) Which amendment required the longest amount of time to ratify? (b) How long did it take?
20. What event led to the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments?

Section 3

21. By what five ways has the Constitution been changed other than by formal amendment?
22. How has Congress contributed to the process of constitutional change and development?
23. Cite two examples of the exercise of presidential power that illustrate the process of constitutional change by other than formal amendment.
24. How does the presidential nominating process illustrate the process of constitutional change and development?
25. What is the role of custom in government?