

## 2024-2025 We the People State Hearing Questions: Middle School Division

Directions: The following state-level We the People...the Citizen and the Constitution hearing questions are for middle school use with the mock congressional hearings. For each unit, students will prepare a four-minute presentation addressing all bullet points contained in the unit. The judges will read the full set of questions for each unit and the response for four minutes must address all bullet points. Following the prepared testimony, judges will have six minutes to ask a variety of follow up questions. Students will not know the follow up questions in advance.

### Unit 1

What were the Founders' basic ideas about government?

- How did Enlightenment ideas such as separation of powers, natural rights, and social contract influence our Founders?
- How can we organize government to prevent abuses of power? Why is this important?
- What is the rule of law and how is it reflected in our constitutional government?

### Unit 2

What shaped the Founders' thinking about government?

- What documents and people influenced early governments in the Americas?
- What ideas about government are reflected in the Declaration of Independence? How did these ideas serve as a foundation to the United States Constitution?
- How did the Articles of Confederation organize our first national government? Give specific examples. How does the U.S. Constitution differ from the Articles of Confederation?

### Unit 3

What happened at the Philadelphia Convention?

- Why was the Convention called?
- What were some of the major conflicts and key compromises made during the Philadelphia Convention?
- Who were some of the prominent figures that participated in the Philadelphia Convention?
- Were the participants in the Philadelphia Convention a cross-section of America in 1787? Who was not included in the Philadelphia Convention?

## **Unit 4**

How was the Constitution used to establish our government?

- How did the Constitution create a federal system of government?
- How did the people approve the new Constitution?
- What are political parties and how did they develop? What were some of James Madison's fears about political parties or factions?
- What is judicial review and how does it apply to laws passed by the state and federal governments?

## **Unit 5**

How does the Constitution protect our basic rights?

- What rights are protected in the First Amendment?
- How have voting amendments to the U.S. Constitution affected participation in the political process? What groups can vote because of constitutional amendments?
- Which amendment to the Constitution has been most significant? Why?

## **Unit 6**

What are the responsibilities of citizens?

- What are the greatest responsibilities of citizens?
- What are the most important ways citizens can participate in government? How can we improve the participation of citizens in government?
- At your age, how can you participate in government?
- What means of participation in government is at greatest risk today?