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Name Your Government Officials	back cover
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In the months after the Declaration of Independence was signed, Congress wanted to continue to unite the former colonies. The first attempt at a national or federal government came in the form of the *Articles of Confederation*. The Articles, adopted by the Second Continental Congress in 1777, were not ratified by all the states until 1781.

The Articles of Confederation acted as the first constitution of the United States. The Articles were in use until the Constitution was signed in 1787. The Articles were weak because the colonists were reluctant to give much power to a central government. The colonies feared that a new central government might be no better than the English king had been. The states themselves had governments at this time, most with state constitutions.

When it became necessary to have a national or federal government for conducting the Revolutionary War, the states made the government weak. The Articles were so weak that the government could not even pay its bills. It did have limited powers to make war or peace, but other powers were lacking. Robert Morris stated that getting money from the states was like “preaching to the dead.” To raise money, the central government could only ask the states for funds; it could not tax.

At the end of the Revolutionary War, the American government was in serious financial trouble. Soldiers who had served without pay were granted western land certificates instead of money, but most had to sell their certificates for money to live on. Farmers with large debts rebelled against the courts that were taking away their farms. An example of such a rebellion was the *Shays’ Rebellion* by farmers in Massachusetts. Jails were crowded with debtors. States were taxing each other harmfully and arguing about land claims to the West. Tariff laws were needed for business and industry. Prices soared and credit disappeared. It became increasingly evident that the only solution was a stronger central government.

Weaknesses of the Articles

Listed below are weaknesses identified by the colonists:

- No national courts, only state courts.
- No power to tax.
- No real power to regulate commerce.
- All changes in the Articles had to be approved by all of the states.
- All important laws had to be approved by nine states.
- No real president, only a president of Congress who was like a chairman.

Civil Rights & the Articles of Confederation

Civil rights are those rights that are considered to be unquestionable; deserved by all people under all circumstances, especially without regard to race, creed, color or gender. These personal rights are guaranteed and protected by the Constitution.

The fight for civil rights didn’t wait until the 1950s to happen. Some started as early as the Articles of Confederation! Paul Cuffee was a free black from Massachusetts. When he discovered he did not have the same property rights as whites, he refused to pay his taxes and was jailed. Cuffee later became a successful trader with his own fleet of ships and continued to fight for equal rights throughout his lifetime.

QUESTIONS

MATCH THE STATEMENT IN SECTION A WITH THE TERM IN SECTION B.

A

- ___ 1. Started by farmers in Massachusetts who were losing their farms.
- ___ 2. Form of government during the American Revolution.
- ___ 3. Had to approve important acts under the Articles.
- ___ 4. Fear of this was in the minds of many American colonists in the 1780s.
- ___ 5. This power was lacking in the Articles of Confederation.

B

- a. states b. Shays’ Rebellion c. taxation
- d. strong central government e. Articles of Confederation

TRUE OR FALSE? Write a **T** or **F** in the space provided.

- ___ 1. The Articles of Confederation acted as the first U.S. Constitution.
- ___ 2. The Articles were weak because of the fear of a strong central government.
- ___ 3. Shays’ Rebellion was carried out to support a weak central government.
- ___ 4. The Declaration of Independence was signed before the Articles of Confederation were written.
- ___ 5. The Articles were drawn up by the Second Continental Congress.
- ___ 6. Freedom from discrimination is considered an example of a civil right.

SHORT ANSWER

Explain what Morris meant by his statement “preaching to the dead.” _____

The Constitution consists of the Preamble, seven original articles, and 27 amendments. This summary will aid you in gaining an overview of the Constitution or as an index to finding the particular portion of the Constitution that you wish to study. You will find a copy of the entire Constitution in the back of your history book or in the library. Free copies of the federal Constitution and your state constitution are available from the secretary of state in your state capital or on the internet.

The Seven Articles

The main body of the Constitution is the seven Articles. The Articles establish the branches of federal government and explain how the government works. The Articles are the guide to how the federal government interacts with the citizens, states, and people of the country.

Article 1 – Legislative Branch - Outlines the legislative branch, lawmaking requirements for Congress, the elastic clause, and forbidden powers. It is the longest article in the Constitution.

Article 2 – Executive Branch - Explains the presidential and vice presidential duties, terms of office, succession, impeachment, oath of office, and specific executive powers.

Article 3 – Judicial Branch - Addresses the judicial powers of the United States, the Supreme Court and other courts, and specifics about judges. It also defines treason.

Article 4 – States and the Union - Discusses how the states fit in with the plan of the federal government. It sets requirements for new states and requirements of the federal government in respect to states.

Article 5 – Amendments - This article outlines how to amend the Constitution.

Article 6 – United States Constitution Supreme - Makes it clear that the federal Constitution is the supreme law of the land.

Article 7 – Ratifying Procedure - Explains how the Constitution was ratified.

The 27 Amendments

The first 10 amendments were adopted in 1791 and are known as the *Bill of Rights*. A summary of each additional amendment is preceded by the year it was adopted.

No.	Year Adopted	Amendment Summary / Highlights
1st	Bill of Rights - 1791 - First 10 Amendments	Freedom of expression, religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition.
2nd		Protects the rights of individual citizens to keep and bear arms. Establishes a militia that is necessary for a free state.
3rd		Prohibits soldiers from temporarily residing (quartering) in private homes during peace time without getting the permission and consent of the owner.

No.	Year Adopted	Amendment Summary / Highlights
4th	Bill of Rights - 1791 - First 10 Amendments	Protects people from unreasonable searches and seizures by the government.
5th		No person tried without the grand jury indictment or punished twice for same offense. Prohibits being a witness against yourself and guarantees due process of law.
6th		Rights of accused in criminal cases, including legal representation and a fair and speedy trial.
7th		Guarantees a trial by jury.
8th		Insures that punishments for crimes are not excessive, cruel, or unusual.
9th		People retain rights not listed in the United States Constitution.
10th		Power not given to the federal government is given to the people or states (very important for state government).
11th	1795	Individual cannot sue a state in federal courts.
12th	1804	Repeals part of Article 2, Section 1, of the Constitution. Electoral College must cast separate ballots for president and vice president. In 1800, there was difficulty when Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr received the same amount of votes in the Electoral College, even though the electors meant Burr's votes to be for the position of vice president. The election had to go to the House of Representatives where Jefferson won, thanks to support of Alexander Hamilton. This helps explain why Hamilton and Burr later dueled and Hamilton was killed.
13th	1865	Abolished slavery and involuntary servitude.
14th	1868	All persons born or naturalized in the United States enjoy full rights. This was done to protect the rights of freed slaves and minorities after the Civil War, but it applies equally to all Americans. This amendment also made certain rules concerning the southern states after the Civil War.
15th	1870	Protects the rights of Americans to vote in elections. States cannot prevent a person from voting because of race, creed, or color. The right to vote is known as <i>suffrage</i> .

The Senate

The Senate of the United States is discussed in Article 1, Section 3, of the Constitution.

The Senate has 100 members: two from each of the 50 states. As you recall, there was a dispute between the small states and the large states at the Constitutional Convention. The Senate



Senator
Ron Johnson

was designed to calm that dispute by making all states equal. Every state, regardless of size, has two members. Wisconsin's two senators are Democrat Tammy Baldwin (term expires 2025) and Republican Ron Johnson (term expires 2023).



Senator
Tammy Baldwin

Of the 100 senators, one-third are elected every two years for six-year terms. Terms are staggered this way, so only one-third of the Senate goes out of office at any one time. This assures the Senate will have experienced members at all times. Each one-third of the Senate is called a *class*. All senators serve six-year terms.

U.S. Senate Chart of Election

class	have served	years to serve	comments
1	0	6	just elected
2	2	4	elected 2 years ago
3	4	2	elected 4 years ago
	6	0	were just up for re-election and were re-elected or replaced by class 1

Senators may be re-elected for an unlimited number of terms. This is not uncommon; many have had long careers.

Salary and Qualifications

A senator receives a salary of \$174,000 and an expense allowance. A senator must be at least 30 years old, a United States citizen for at least nine years, and a resident of the state he/she represents in the Senate.

Vacancies

If a Senate vacancy occurs, the governor of the state affected makes a temporary appointment until the next election. This appointment is a very important duty for the governor.

Officers of the Senate

The Vice President of the United States is the *president of the Senate*. This is established by the Constitution. Since the vice president is the second highest official in the executive branch of government and the Senate is part of the legislative branch, this is one way in which the two branches are drawn closer.

Although the vice president is the presiding officer of the Senate, this official may not debate or vote except in the case of a tie. The Senate also elects one of its own members to be *president pro tempore*. The president pro tempore serves in the absence of the vice president. There are also Senate *majority* and *minority leaders*. The Senate majority and minority leaders and the president pro tempore receive a salary of \$193,400.

Senate Duties

The Senate passes *bills* (a term for proposed laws) it hopes will become laws according to a plan you will read about shortly. According to this plan, the House of Representatives must also pass the bill before it is sent to the president for approval.

The Senate has the important job of approving treaties made by the president. It also approves the selection of certain federal officers by the president. The Senate is the jury in cases of *impeachment*. If a president is tried for impeachment, the chief justice of the Supreme Court presides over the trial. The Senate has sat in 15 impeachment cases. The earliest was in 1799 when U.S. Senator William Blount of Tennessee had charges dropped. The latest was in 1999 when the U.S. Senate acted as the jury in the impeachment trial of President Bill Clinton. The Senate found him not guilty.

Electing Senators

The 17th Amendment changed the way we elect senators. If you look at Article 1, Section 3, of the Constitution, you will see state legislatures originally had the power to elect senators. A look at the 17th Amendment will show that the people of the states now have that power.

House of Representatives

The House of Representatives is discussed in Article 1, Section 2, of the Constitution. The House of Representatives has 435 members from the various states. This number is fixed by law. Each state is given its share of the 435 members according to population. Going back to the Constitutional Convention, this house of Congress favored the large states in their dispute with the small states, since large states receive more members.

continued

Lawmaking and the Three Branches

A bill is introduced, sent to committee, then voted on. If passed in committee and later on the floor of the house, it is sent to the other house.

The president may sign the bill, and it will become law or may decide to veto. Congress may try to pass it over the veto by a two-thirds vote.

The courts see that justice is administered under the law. The Supreme Court may declare laws unconstitutional.



Legislative Branch

Two Houses of Congress



Executive Branch

The President



Judicial Branch

The Supreme Court and Other Courts

After Congress (legislative branch) has passed a bill and the president (executive branch) has signed it into law, it is the president's duty to enforce the law. The courts (judicial branch) then interpret it and administer justice under it. The Supreme Court may rule whether or not the law is constitutional. Please refer to the chart above.

What are Federal Laws?

There are different types of laws. Federal laws apply to everyone in the United States. States and local laws apply to people who live or work in a particular state, county, or municipality. The U.S. Constitution divides the power to make laws between the federal and state government.

The federal government is responsible for some types of laws, such as those pertaining to national defense, currency, interstate commerce, patents, and so forth. State and local governments may not pass these kinds of laws, nor may they pass laws that conflict with federal laws. One example is the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which insures the Bill of Rights is applicable to all states. You will learn more about the differences between federal, state, and local laws in the upcoming units of this book.

Member of Congress: Typical Day

Regardless of whether they are in Washington, D.C., or in their congressional districts, members of Congress spend the majority of their time working. Members work long hours, up to 70 hours a week

when Congress is in session. Members endure unequalled public scrutiny and sacrifice family time to fulfill work responsibilities.

- 7:00 a.m.** Breakfast with the family, the only time they will see each other until late that evening.
- 8:00 a.m.** Trip to the office to go over e-mail and postal mail with an assistant. The mail may be heavy if a critical issue is pending.
- 10:15 a.m.** Meet with party members considering action on a bill that will come before Congress.
- 10:30 a.m.** House Ethics Committee meeting. This committee, which is his/her most important committee assignment, may be discussing new allegations of concern to Congress. Both senators and representatives may have more than one committee assignment.
- 11:00 a.m.** A party caucus (meeting) takes place.
- Noon** Lunch with other members from his/her home state. Congressional business is discussed.
- 1:30 p.m.** On the way to the House floor, he/she is stopped by the majority leader for a brief discussion of important bills.
- 1:40 p.m.** Remains on the floor for the entire afternoon House of Representatives session, voting on legislation.
- 3:30 p.m.** Short conference with other lawmakers concerning a defense bill.
- 3:45 p.m.** Lobbyist John Jones comes to the office seeking aid favorable to their organization.
- 5:00 p.m.** A reporter calls for an interview concerning the House Ethics Committee.
- 7:00 p.m.** Home for dinner. After dinner reads hometown newspapers, reads topics on social media,

How the Federal Government and States Divide Powers

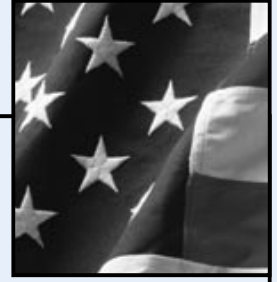
The Constitution Says...



Certain Powers Belong to the Federal Government:

- ★ Regulate Interstate Commerce
- ★ Conduct Foreign Affairs
- ★ Coin and Issue Money
- ★ Establish Post Offices
- ★ Make War and Peace
- ★ Maintain Armed Forces
- ★ Admit New States and Govern Territories
- ★ Punish Crimes Against the U.S.
- ★ Grant Patents and Copyrights
- ★ Make Uniform Laws on Naturalization and Bankruptcy

(Also considered expressed powers.)



Certain Powers Belong to State Governments:

(Mainly comes from an interpretation of the reserved powers.)

- ★ Authorize Establishment of Local Governments
- ★ Establish and Supervise Schools
- ★ Provide for State Militia
- ★ Regulate Commerce Within the State
- ★ Charter Corporations
- ★ Regulate Labor, Industry, and Business Within the State
- ★ All Other Powers Not Delegated to the United States Government or Specifically Prohibited to the States

Certain Powers Are Shared by Both Governments

Tax...Establish Courts...Promote Agriculture and Industry...Borrow Money...
Charter Banks...Protect the Public Health...Provide For Public Welfare



Certain Powers Are Prohibited to Both Governments

The personal rights of citizens of the United States, as listed in the Bill Of Rights (first 10 amendments to the Constitution) and in state constitutions, cannot be reduced or destroyed by the federal or the state governments. Also, certain specific prohibitions in the Constitution itself, such as no title of nobility, no ex post facto laws, no duty on exports, no bill of attainder, etc.

The Road to the White House

Americans pick their presidents and vice presidents from the candidates presented by the Democratic and Republican parties. People do not vote directly for the president and vice president; instead, the Electoral College allows voters to vote for electors. These electors then cast votes a specific candidate, a system described in Article II of the Constitution.

The responsibility of voters has increased with the growth of our country and government. Even if you are not of voting age, now is the time to get familiar with the process and the importance of voting. Students are the future of this country, and your vote determines the fate of policies and tactics of leaders.

Follow this process in the upcoming 2020 Presidential Election.

Campaigning: General election campaigning begins after each political party chooses a single presidential nominee. Those candidates travel the country, holding rallies and town halls, explaining their views and trying to win potential voters' support.

STEP 4 - GENERAL ELECTION

Voting at the General Election:

Every four years, citizens in every state cast their votes for one president and vice president. These voters select groups of electors to represent each state on behalf of the voters.



November 2020
General Election

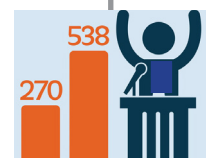
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		3				



STEP 5 - ELECTORAL COLLEGE

Electoral College System:

In the Electoral College system, each state gets a certain number of electors based on its representation in Congress. A simple majority of the 538 (or 270 votes) is needed to win.



FINISH

(Inauguration Day -
January 20, 2021)



START

(in Fall 2018)

STEP 1 - IDENTIFY THE CANDIDATES

Incumbent -

Donald Trump -
eligible for one
more term.

Challengers-

Many candidates
participate in de-
bates to gain party favor.

Candidates must be:

- ☒ a natural-born citizen
- ☒ 35-years old
- ☒ Resident for 14 years

STEP 2 - CAUCUSES and PRIMARIES



Democratic
National
Convention
July 13 -16,
2020



Republican
National
Convention
August 24 -
27, 2020

National Conventions:

Both parties have delegates that will choose the nominees for president and vice president. They will also adopt a platform outlining the party's policy priorities and values.

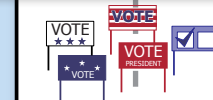
STEP 3 - NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

April 2020
Wisconsin Primary

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		7				

Primary Elections:

A state-level election where party members choose a candidate to represent that political party at the general/presidential election.



Caucuses:

Citizens participate in local meetings where members gather votes for their preferred candidate, used to elect delegates to the national party convention.

The following test will help you prepare for your final Constitution test. It has questions similar to ones you will find on your final. It is suggested you write your answers on a piece of paper so you can take the test multiple times. You will find the correct answers at the bottom of Page 56.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Write the letter of the correct answer in the space provided.

1. _____ The president may serve how many terms? a. 1 b. 2 c. 3 d. 4
2. _____ What is NOT a rule of the flag code?
a. worn flags should be thrown in trash c. nothing should be attached to the flag
b. should be in the front of a parade d. exact likeness should not be used in ads
3. _____ How many amendments have been added to the Constitution? a. 10 b. 21 c. 27 d. 41
4. _____ How many years is the president's term of office? a. 2 b. 4 c. 6 d. 9
5. _____ What is the age requirement to become president? a. 18 b. 21 c. 35 d. 45
6. _____ After a bill has gone through both houses of Congress successfully, it is sent to:
a. the President c. the Speaker of the House
b. the States d. the Supreme Court
7. _____ Which amendment gave women who are citizens the right to vote in all elections?
a. 17th b. 19th c. 22nd d. 27th
8. _____ How many U.S. senators come from each state? a. 1 b. 2 c. 3 d. 4
9. _____ Each state receives at least _____ representative(s) in the U.S. House of Representatives.
a. 1 b. 2 c. 3 d. 4
10. _____ Who may veto a bill proposed by Congress?
a. the President of the United States c. the Vice President
b. the Secretary of State d. all Cabinet members
11. _____ The president of the Senate is:
a. the President of the United States c. the Secretary of State
b. the Speaker of the House d. the Vice President
12. _____ Which of these rights is not an unalienable right from the Declaration of Independence?
a. liberty b. education c. pursuit of happiness d. life
13. _____ The Declaration of Independence was written largely by:
a. Hamilton b. Washington c. Jefferson d. Adams
14. _____ The national budget is presented annually to Congress by the:
a. the Vice President c. the Secretary of State
b. the Governors d. the President
15. _____ There are how many branches of government? a. 1 b. 2 c. 3 d. 4
16. _____ The president takes the oath of office on:
a. January 4th b. January 20th c. November 7th d. September 5th
17. _____ In our First Amendment, which is NOT a "freedom"?
a. freedom of the press c. freedom of speech
b. freedom of employment d. freedom of religion
18. _____ The vote of what group really decides who will be president?
a. Electoral College c. United Nations
b. popular vote by the people d. House of Representatives
19. _____ What is described in Article 1, Section 8, of the Constitution giving Congress broad powers to write laws about new situations?
a. war power b. insight clause c. elastic clause d. inventional clause
20. _____ Which body has the power to borrow money?
a. Congress c. Executive Branch
b. Supreme Court d. State Legislatures

continued

Wisconsin has a tremendously rich and distinguished history. The word Wisconsin was used by Indians to describe their use of the abundant waterways to gather wild rice. The land was densely populated by Winnebago, Dakota, and Menominee tribes, and by the late 1600s, nine other tribes had settled in the area.

The first white man to come to the area was French explorer Jean Nicolet in 1634. While searching for a water route to China, he landed at what is now Green Bay and was surprised at being greeted by Indians instead of Chinese. Nicolet's arrival began the relationship between the red man and the white man, in what was to become Wisconsin.

Several others explored this region looking for valuable furs. French Canadians Louis Joliet and Father Jacques Marquette recorded their explorations of 1673, as they traveled along the shores of Lake Michigan, through Green Bay, down the Fox River, overland to the Wisconsin River, and then down Wisconsin to the Mississippi River. During this same period, Father Rene Menard, who was the first missionary to the area, established a Roman Catholic mission in the northern part of the state.

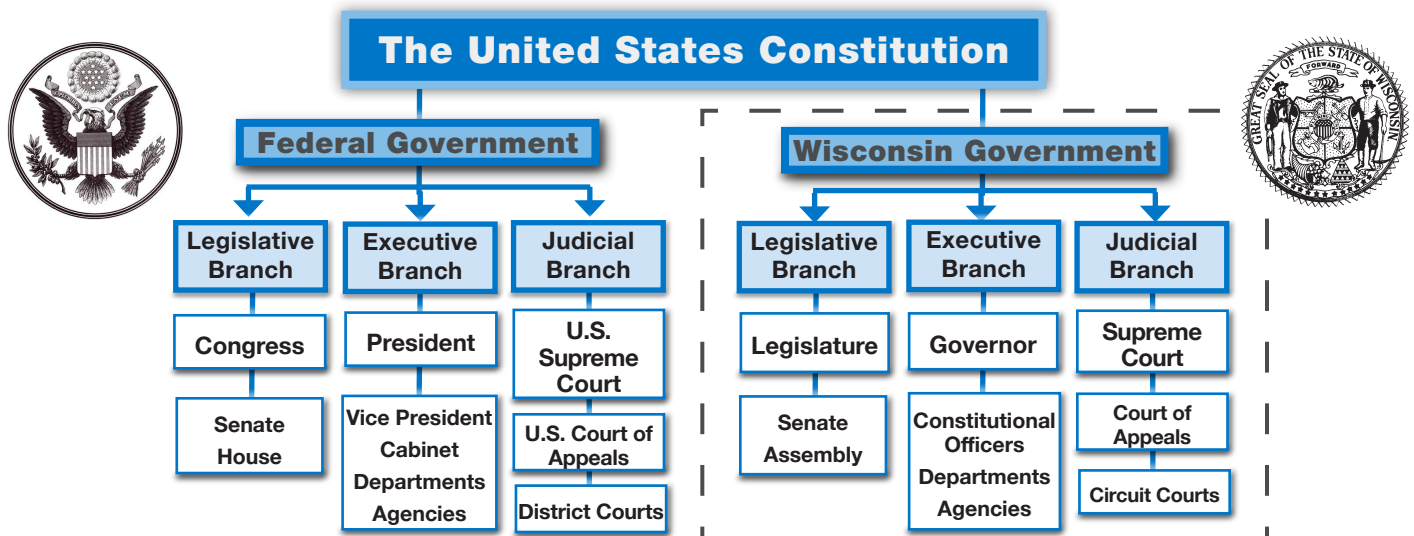
In the early 1700s, the Fox Indians and the French battled over control of the Fox and Wisconsin rivers, the main water routes in the region. The French defeated the Fox, but in doing so, they lost the respect of many other tribes. In 1754, the French and Indian War was fought between the French and the British. Britain gained control of the Wisconsin region by defeating the French in 1763. It was during this period that Charles Langlade made the first permanent settlement at Green Bay. This was only one of three critical early settlements in Wisconsin, the others being in the southeast and the southwest corners of the state. The Milwaukee settlement, because of its geographical location, soon became more populated and surpassed the others in growth.

In 1774, Britain passed the Quebec Act, making Wisconsin part of the province of Quebec. After the Revolutionary War in 1783, the British lost control of all lands east of the Mississippi River and south of the Great Lakes. The Wisconsin region was then part of the United States. A plan had to be devised to settle claims on this territory, so the *Northwest Ordinance of 1787* was passed. This federal law provided that the land would be surveyed, and the territory would be divided into not less than three nor more than five states. Also, a governor and council were appointed to pass laws. One of the more important provisions of the Northwest Ordinance guaranteed the territories representation in the federal government. It also provided the settlers with basic freedoms and guaranteed their right to education. Because of these terms, more pioneers poured into the new territory.

The Wisconsin region was part of the Indiana Territory from 1800 to 1809, part of the Illinois Territory from 1809 to 1818, and part of the Michigan Territory from 1818 to 1836. During this period, the Black Hawk War of 1832 ended the Indians' domination of the area, as the Sauk Tribe lost 850 of its 1,000 members. Also, during this period, the southern part of the region was heavily mined for its rich deposits of lead ore. The miners, who came from neighboring states and territories, found little housing, so they lived in shelters that were dug out of the hillsides. They soon became known as Badgers, which is the mascot of the state.

Congress created the Wisconsin Territory in 1836, which included parts of Minnesota, North and South Dakota, and Iowa. Finally, on May 29, 1848, Wisconsin was admitted to the Union as the 30th state, and its boundaries were set as they remain to this day. Wisconsin is operating under its original constitution, which has been in effect for more than 140 years and makes Wisconsin's constitution one of the oldest original constitutions still in effect.

continued



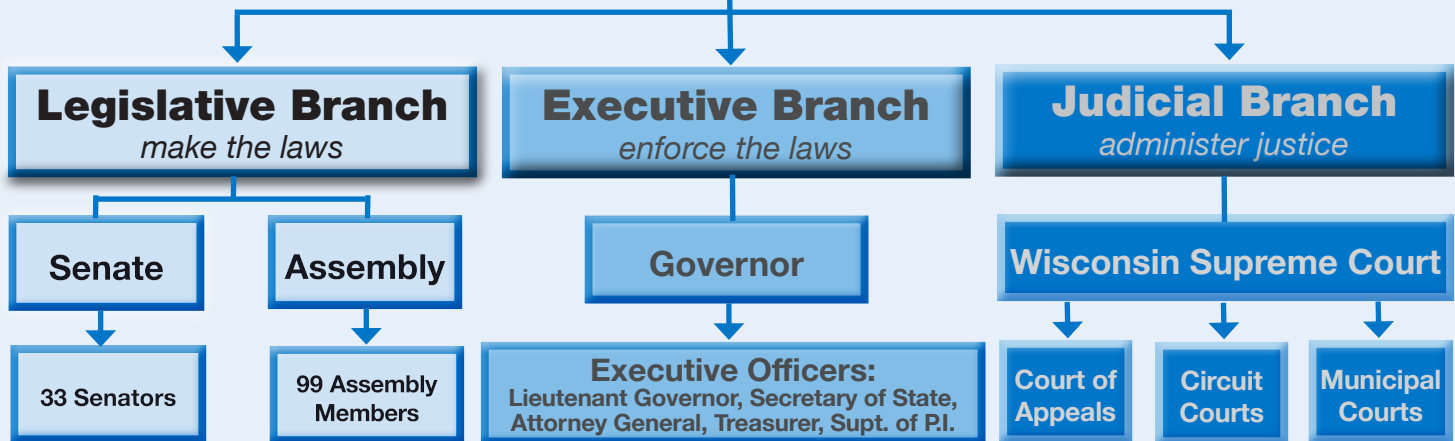
The U.S. Constitution splits governing powers between the federal government and the states. This unit will cover the state government portion of the chart above. It will also include the study of local government bodies.

The Wisconsin Constitution

Present one was adopted during statehood in 1848

The Voters of Wisconsin

Qualified voters choose our elected officials



Legislative Branch Quick Facts

The Wisconsin Legislature is made up of the state Senate and state Assembly, convenes in Madison.

body	members	terms	annual salary	qualifications
Senate	33	4 years (no term limit)	\$52,999	A citizen of the United States, no age requirement, must be a resident of the state for one year, resident voter of the district 10 days prior to the election
Assembly	99	2 years (no term limit)		

Executive Branch Quick Facts

Headed by the governor and responsible for executing the laws of the state.

executive officer	terms	annual salary	notes
Governor	4 years (no term limit)	\$152,756	To be eligible for each of the executive offices of Wisconsin, there are no age or residency requirements, must be a citizen of the United States, and a qualified voter of Wisconsin
Lieutenant Governor	4 years (no term limit)	\$80,684	
Secretary of State	4 years (no term limit)	\$72,551	
Attorney General	4 years (no term limit)	\$148,242	
State Treasurer	4 years (no term limit)	\$72,551	

Judicial Branch Quick Facts

The Wisconsin Court System

Court	Overview
Wisconsin Supreme Court	Highest state court and "court of last resort," seven judges, 10-year terms with no limit, vacancies are filled by gubernatorial appointment, justice salary = \$159,297
Court of Appeals	State's intermediate appellate court, four appellate districts, 16 judges, six-year term with no limit, justice salary = \$150,280
Circuit Courts	Principal trial courts of the state, 69 judicial circuits, 240 judges, six-year terms with no limit, justice salary = \$141,773
Municipal Courts	Majority of cases involve traffic and ordinance matters, 244 municipal courts and 248 municipal judges, voters elect the judges

"The judicial power of this state shall be vested in a unified court system consisting of one supreme court, a court of appeals, a circuit court..." — Wisconsin Constitution, Article 7

The judicial branch of government in Wisconsin administers justice and interprets the laws. These state courts are the workhorses of the American legal system. Each court has specific responsibilities and restrictions on legal matters. It is composed of a network of courts, each designed to fill a particular need. All judges in the system are elected on a non-partisan basis (no party labels appear on the ballots) in the April election and may be reelected.

State Supreme Court

The final authority on the state constitution and the highest tribunal for any action begun in the state courts, except when a federal question is raised, is the state *Supreme Court*. A primary function of the Supreme Court is to ensure independent, open, fair, and efficient resolution of disputes per federal and state constitutions and laws. This court decides which cases to hear, reviewing approximately 1,000 petitions annually, but only hearing about 100 cases each session (September through June).

No testimony is taken in the Supreme Court. The court disposes of cases with printed briefs and oral arguments by counsel. The court reviews cases according to a calendar set by the chief justice. The Supreme Court consists of seven judges elected to 10-year terms with the highest seniority judge serving as chief justice. The courtroom and offices of the court are in the state capital.

Court of Appeals

Wisconsin has established a *court of appeals* to hear appeals from the lower courts. The primary duty of this court is to determine whether legal procedures have been properly followed. In some

cases, an unfavorable decision from this court may be appealed to the state Supreme Court. Like the Supreme Court, no testimony is taken in the Court of Appeals. The court relies on the circuit court record and the written briefs of the parties. The court hears oral argument when the judges feel it would be beneficial to their decision.

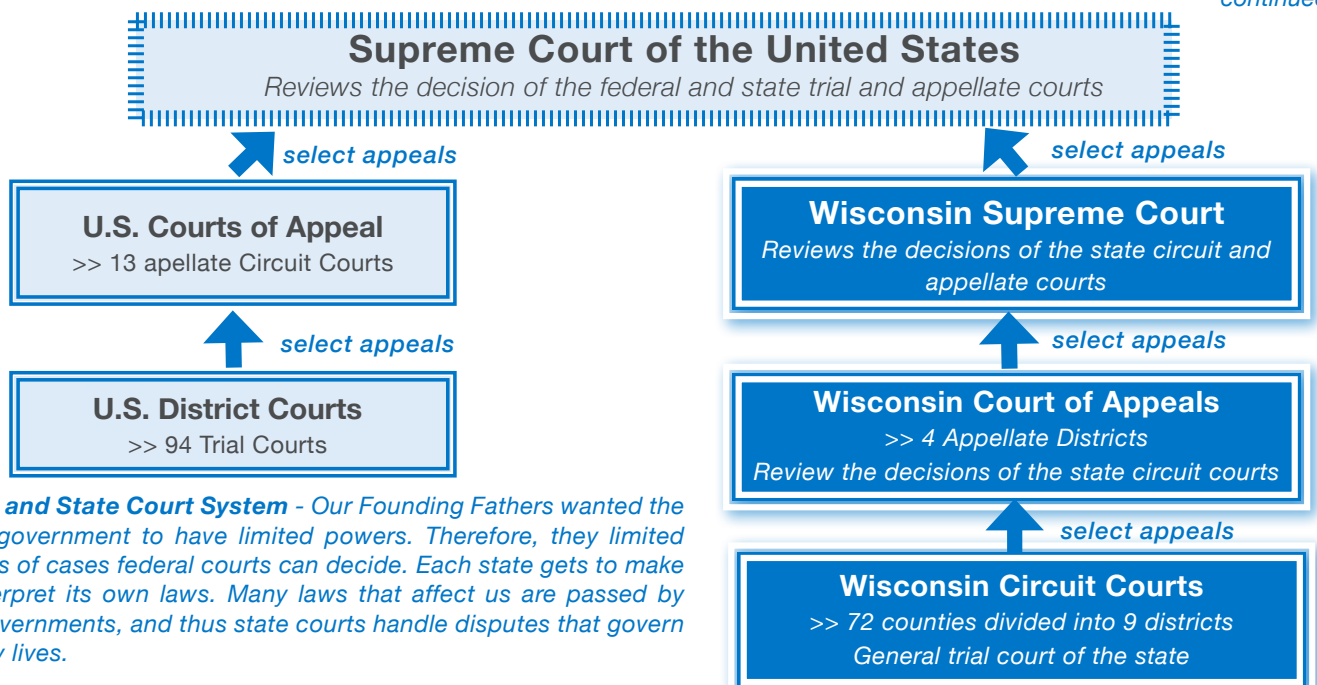
The state is divided into four appellate districts with chambers in Madison, Waukesha, Milwaukee, and Wausau. There are 16 judges statewide, all elected to six-year terms. A chief judge handles administrative matters for the entire Court of Appeals while continuing to participate fully in deciding cases. The chief judge term lasts three years.

Circuit Courts

The *circuit court* is the principal trial court under the state Constitution, deciding all civil and criminal cases. The 72 counties of the state are divided into nine judicial administrative districts. In each district, there is a chief judge appointed by the Supreme Court. The chief judge, who may serve up to three consecutive two-year terms, supervises and directs the administration of the district. In carrying out these duties, the chief judge is charged by the Supreme Court rule to cooperate with the director of state courts.

The circuit courts are divided into branches with at least one branch in every county, except for six counties that are paired off and share judges. The paired counties are Buffalo/Pepin, Florence/Forest, and Shawano/Menominee. Approximately half of the circuits have several branches, each with its own judge. Wisconsin has 249 circuit judges. Circuit judges are elected to six-year terms.

continued



Federal and State Court System - Our Founding Fathers wanted the federal government to have limited powers. Therefore, they limited the kinds of cases federal courts can decide. Each state gets to make and interpret its own laws. Many laws that affect us are passed by state governments, and thus state courts handle disputes that govern our daily lives.

Upcoming Elections in Wisconsin

Upcoming General Elections: 2020, 2022 (will include gubernatorial election), 2024

Upcoming Presidential Elections: 2020, 2024

*General elections are always held on the Tuesday following the first Monday of November in even-numbered years.

Election Security

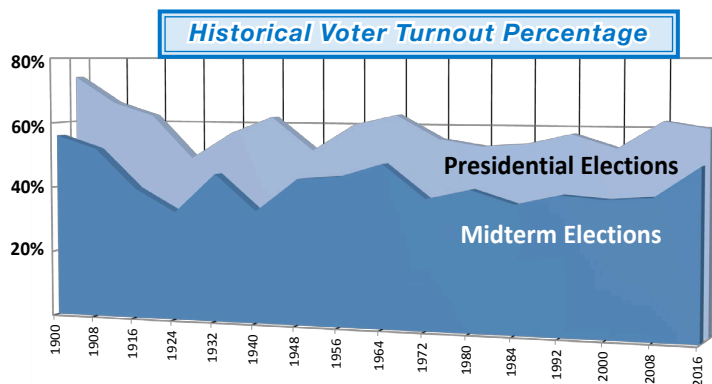
The security of our election systems in the United States is of the utmost importance. After Russian hackers successfully gained access to voting systems in the United States, the state has spent the last few years hardening its cyber-defenses.

Wisconsin has two central elections systems: voter registration and vote counting. The voter registration system is very centralized and mostly online. The vote-counting system is very decentralized and primarily offline. Election officials are working with national agencies like the Department of Homeland Security and the FBI, implementing tools and precautions to ensure safe and secure voting.

In addition to partnering with outside agencies, Wisconsin election officials have performed mock election security incident situations along with suggested responses and communication efforts. Local elections officials can use this enhanced training to create or update their existing election security contingency plans and to understand the importance of communicating any incidents to the proper authority.

Voter Turnout

The chart below shows the voter turnout in the United States and shows the fluctuations in presidential and midterm elections. In recent elections, about 60 percent of the voting-eligible population participated in presidential elections, and about 40 percent voted during midterm elections. The 2018 midterm turnout of 49.6 percent set a record. Turnout is lower for odd-year, primary, and local elections.



Voter turnout can vary considerably from one state to the next. Colorado had the highest voter turnout in the 2016 presidential election, with 76.9 percent of the state's voting-age population casting a ballot. Wisconsin typically has high voter turnout. This election was no exception, with 67.3 percent of voting-eligible citizens casting a vote for a presidential candidate.

There also are striking disparities in participation among different demographic groups. For example, the turnout rate among people ages 60 and over was about 70 percent, which compares to a little over 40 percent among 18- to 29-year-olds.

The United States has historically trailed most developed countries when it comes to getting people to cast a ballot for their elected officials. Even as 70 percent of Americans agree high turnout is very important in presidential elections, just 56 percent of the voting-age population turned out in 2016.

QUESTIONS

FILL IN THE BLANKS

- How often is a general election held? _____
- On what day are general elections held? _____
- When is the next presidential election? _____
- When is the next gubernatorial election? _____
- What is the youngest age you can vote? _____

SHORT ANSWER

- If you are going to be absent on Election Day, how can you still vote? _____
- What are the requirements for Wisconsin voters? _____
- What is the purpose of a primary election? _____

EXPRESS YOUR OPINION

Review the voter turnout data in this unit. Do you feel that the current voter participation is acceptable? When you meet the age requirement to vote, will you and why?
