

RUBRIC – FREE RESPONSE QUESTIONS

1. Political participation in the United States can take place in various forms.
 - a) Other than voting, identify two ways that Americans participate politically.
 - b) Explain one impact that the first type of political participation you identified in (a) might have on the political system.
 - c) Explain one impact that the second type of political participation you identified in (a) might have on the political system.
 - d) Explain one reason why voter turnout among young people is traditionally lower than voter turnout among older people.

General Comments

This question asks students to demonstrate their knowledge of voter participation, how Americans vote and the impact that the participation has on the system. It also requires students to recognize and explain why young people don't vote in as high of numbers as older voters. In (a) student are required to identify two ways that Americans participate politically, other than voting. In (b) students are required to explain one way that the first type of political participation identified in (a) might have on the political system. In (c) students are required to explain the impact that the second type of political participation in (b) might have on the political system. In (d) students must explain one reason why voter turnout among young people is lower than the voter turnout among older people. .

5 Points total**Scoring Guidelines**

- a) Identification of two ways that Americans participate politically, other than voting. = **1 point**

Note: Two types of participation must be identified to earn 1 point.

Some possible ways to participate:

- Join an interest group
- Donate to a campaign
- Work in a campaign
- Demonstrate for or against an issue
- Speak out – write an editorial, write a letter/email to a politician, give testimony at a public hearing
- Run for public office

b) Explain one impact of the first example given in (a) = **1 Point**

Note: 1 point is earned by an accurate explanation of one impact of the first type of political participation identified in (a).

Some possible explanations may include:

- Interest groups have the impact of representing a view with the power and influence of a group behind it. Interest groups also promote candidates through voter mobilization – getting out the vote. Joining an interest group can magnify the influence of one individual.
- Donating to the campaign of a candidate permits candidates to run for office as it takes money to gain TV time for commercials and pay for a staff. It is expensive to run so this provides candidates with less money some help to overcome candidates with money.
- Working in a campaign provides needed workers to elect a candidate. It provides political experience for the campaign workers to observe and understand the electoral process.
- Demonstrations provide a way for citizens who feel passionately about a policy to express their views (positive or negative) with the satisfaction that others also feel as they do. It provides a way to learn political organization in order to stage the demonstration. This sends a message not only to political officials but to other citizens without fear of punishment.
- Speaking out, such as writing opinions, permits citizens to express their views on a policy or issue without fear of punishment.
- Letter to Editor – can be read not only by politicians who read the paper, but also by other citizens; permits an exchange of ideas and beliefs in the community.
- Letter to political leaders – allows those in power to see the support or disapproval of policy that is being presented and debated and take it into consideration.

c) Explain one impact of the second example given in (a) = **1 Point**

Note: 1 point is earned by an accurate explanation of one impact of the second type of political participation identified in (a).

Some possible explanations may include:

- Can be any of those above but must be two different ones.
- Demonstrations and speaking out must emphasize the differences between the two.

Demonstrations are with others, organized and possibly stem from an interest group.

Speaking out – such as writing editorials or letters to political leaders can be done and motivated by individual motives not necessarily through groups.

- d) Explain one reason why voter turnout among young people is traditionally lower than voter turnout among older people. = **2 Points**

Note: 1 or 2 points are earned by an accurate explanation of one reason why voter turnout among young people is traditionally lower than voter turnout among older people.

1 point is earned by a simple description of a difference between young and older voters.

2 points are earned by a response that explains HOW or WHY voter turnout is traditionally lower among young people.

Some possible explanations may include:

Younger voters:

- Have not had much political experience and understanding of issues and candidates.
- Issues don't seem to affect them, ie., Social Security, child care, financial investments, taxes.
- Busy with beginning their career and more focused on their education and building a career.
- May be more affected by voter registration process, since they may not have fixed residences.

Older voters:

- Have more political experience and understanding of issues and candidates.
- Issues more directly affect them, ie., Social Security, child care, financial investments, taxes
- Either set in their career and have time to study political issues. May be drawn to issues due to their career, ie., education, environment

NOTE: In order to gain two points for “d” the student must explain the reason for BOTH young people and older voters. A correct explanation for each group of voters gains a point. If the explanation only addresses young voters the response only gains one point.

Point Matrix (5 points maximum)

ID two ways to participate	One impact of participation	One impact of participation	Explanation voter turnout – younger v older
1 point	1 point	1 point	1 or 2 points
1 point maximum	1 point maximum	1 point maximum	2 points maximum

2. The delegates that attended the Constitutional Convention held many different views about what government structure and functions should be included in the Constitution.
- Identify and explain two different issues that caused disagreement among delegates to the Constitutional Convention.
 - For each of the issues you identified in (a), identify and describe a compromise made by delegates at the Constitutional Convention.
 - Describe one Constitutional provision that resulted from a compromise at the Convention that was amended later in history and explain why it was amended.

General Comments

This question asks students to demonstrate knowledge concerning the disagreements of the delegates during the Constitutional Convention and how those disagreements led to compromises. It requires students to link issues chosen in part (a) to compromises made by delegates at the Convention in part (b). Students must also provide knowledge of how the compromises sometimes continued to evolve, as evidenced in Constitutional amendments. The explanation in part (c) does not require linkage to the points made in (a) and (b).

6 Points Total**Scoring Guidelines:**

- Identification and explanation of two issues in which Constitutional delegates disagreed = **2 points**

Note: 1 point is earned for identification and explanation of one issue that caused disagreement among delegates.

1 point is earned for identification and explanation of a second issue that caused disagreement among delegates.

Possible identification and explanations:

- Slavery – cannot prohibit it due to the south’s dependency on it economically as agricultural workers.
 - Apportionment of members of the House – whether to count slaves as people to determine representation in the House of Representatives.
 - Voter requirements – states differed on who should vote in determining national property requirements to do so.
 - Representation in the House and Senate – based on population or equal representation, large states v small states.
 - Selection of the president – by national legislature or popular election.
- b) Identification and description of a compromise based on the issues explained in (a) = **2 points**

Note: 1 point is earned for identification and description of one compromise at the Convention. 1 point is earned for identification and description of a second compromise at the Convention.

Possible identification and descriptions:

- 3/5 Compromise – 3/5 of the slaves in a state would be counted toward the population that would determine a state’s representation in the House of Representatives.
 - Slave Trade – importation of slaves cannot be prohibited by Congress for 20 years, until 1808.
 - Voter requirements – rather than national requirements permit states to determine their own, age, property requirements, gender of citizens permitted to vote.
 - Great Compromise – The House to be based on population to satisfy those believing in a more democratic body and large state argument. The Senate to be based on equal representation to satisfy small states to have equal power and authority to protect their interests.
 - Electoral college – selection of president by electors chosen by the states.
- c) Description and explanation of one Constitutional compromise later amended = **2 Points**

Note: 1 point is earned for the description of a Constitutional provision that resulted from a compromise that was later amended. 1 point is earned for an explanation for why the provision that resulted from a compromise was amended.

Possible descriptions and explanations

- 3/5 Compromise – 14th Amendment clarified citizenship as those born in U.S. or those naturalized. This made former slaves citizens, who would now be counted 100% as representation for the House.
- Slave Trade – 13th Amendment ended slavery helped by the abolitionist movement and the Civil War. Federal government protection of individual rights, in theory, to end slavery.
- Great Compromise – selection of senators by state legislatures changed to direct popular vote.
- Voter requirements determined by states:
 - 15th Amendment gave freedmen, or former slaves the right to vote – national protection.
 - 19th Amendment gave women the right to vote – national standards and protection
 - 26th Amendment guaranteed right of 18 year olds to vote – national standards due to pressures of the Vietnam War

Point Matrix – 6 points maximum

ID & Explain	ID & Explain	ID & Describe	ID & Describe	Describe & Explain
1 point	1 point	1 point	1 point	1 or 2 points
1 point max.	1 point max.	1 point max.	1 point max.	2 points max

3. Once elected presidents have found that it is difficult to fulfill campaign promises and policy preferences.
 - a) Identify and explain two formal checks that other branches may use to challenge presidential goals.
 - b) Explain two methods (formal or informal) that the president may use to overcome opposition to his policy goals.
 - c) Explain one reason that modern presidents (since 1945) have often found it easier to reach their goals than have presidents of the past.

General Comments:

This question asks students to demonstrate their knowledge of checks and balances as it relates to the executive branch. In part “a” students must identify and explain two formal checks that either the legislature or judicial have to challenge presidential goals. In part “b” students are to explain two methods the president may use to overcome this opposition. The explanation may use either formal or informal powers of the president. In part “c” students must describe one reason that modern presidents find it easier to

accomplish their goals than those before 1945. This requires students to understand factors that have shaped the modern presidency since 1945.

6 Points Total

Scoring Guidelines:

- a) Identification and explanation of 2 formal checks other branches use to check goals of the president = **2 points**.

Note: 1 point is earned for a correct identification and explanation of one formal check another branch uses to check goals of the president.

1 point is earned for a correct identification and explanation of a second check another branch uses to check goals of the president.

Possible identification and explanations may include:

- Congress may override a presidential veto with 2/3 vote in each house to prevent the president from getting his version of a bill.
- Congress may refuse to act on a program the president is promoting preventing him from fulfilling a campaign promise.
- The Senate may refuse to approve his judicial and bureaucratic appointment due to conflicting views between the Senate and the President.
- Courts may make decisions that support policies that are counter to the president's policies.
- Federal courts may rule that the president has exceeded his powers – that his actions are unconstitutional.

- b) Explanation of two methods (formal or informal) used by the president to overcome opposition = **2 points**.

Note: 1 point is earned by an accurate explanation of one method used by the president to overcome opposition.

1 point is earned by an accurate explanation of a second method used by the president to overcome opposition.

Possible explanations may include:

- President may veto a bill that Congress submits to him that does not include his goals.
- President may take his case to the public through the media in order to gain support for his view.

- President may make a recess appointment to the bureaucracy that does not require immediate Senate approval.
- President may begin a similar policy initiative that circumvents the Court’s decision.
- President may negotiate with key leaders in Congress to get support for his initiatives.
- As openings occur in the federal court system, the president may make appointments more in line with his views.

c) Explanation of the ability of modern presidents to accomplish this more than past presidents = **2 points**

Note: 1 or 2 points are earned by an accurate explanation of a reason why modern presidents have often found it easier to reach their goals than have presidents of the past.

1 point is earned for a simple description of a change that has allowed modern presidents to circumvent checks from other branches of government.

2 points are earned for a response that explains HOW or WHY modern presidents are more likely to circumvent checks from other branches of government.

Possible explanations may include:

- Media – Past presidents did not have the advantage of communicating with the voters through the media. Modern presidents since 1945 have had the radio, TV and internet to appeal to citizens to promote their views. Modern presidents have use of the “bully pulpit”.
- President as Policy-maker – Past presidents were not seen as having the power to develop and promote policy but rather to react to the policy sent to them by Congress. Modern presidents are looked to for domestic and foreign goals of their own separate from Congress. Modern presidents must articulate their programs during the campaign and are expected to follow through as campaign promises.
- Growing interconnections among modern nations. The modern president has a world stage much larger than previous presidents.

Point Matrix – 6 points total

ID & Explain	ID & Explain	One Method	One Method	Explanation Modern & Past
1 point	1 point	1 point	1 point	1 or 2 points
1 point maximum	1 point maximum	1 point maximum	1 point maximum	2 points maximum

AMERICAN VIEWS REGARDING THE NEED FOR A THIRD PARTY

	Parties Adequate	Third Party Needed
January, 2007	47	47
June, 2008	40	55
January, 2008	33	58
June, 2007	40	51
January, 2006	48	48
January, 2005	50	43
January, 2004	56	40

Numbers in percentages
Source: Gallup.com

Question: In your view, do the Republican and Democratic parties do an adequate job of representing the American people, or do they do such a poor job that a third major party is needed?

4. a) Using the data in the chart above, describe the changes in the attitudes of American citizens toward the need for a third party in the American political system.
- b) Identify and explain two formal impediments to the development of third parties in the United States.
- c) Describe two contributions that third parties have made to the American political system.

General Comments:

Students must demonstrate an ability to read and interpret the chart in addition to demonstrating knowledge regarding third parties in the United States. In part “a” students must interpret the chart as it relates to dissatisfaction with the Republicans and Democrats and support a third party in the United States. In part “b” students must identify and explain two formal ways that third parties are discouraged in the U.S. system. In part “c” students must recognize two contributions third parties have made to the American political system.

5 Points Total**Scoring Guidelines:**

- a) Describe attitude changes of Americans toward need for third party = **1 Point**

Note: 1 point is earned by an accurate description of attitude changes toward third parties as reflected in the chart.

Possible Descriptions may include:

- The trend from 2004 – 2007 indicates declining satisfaction with the 2 parties until it reached a low of 33% in 2007. However as the presidential election approached in 2008 those that felt the two parties were adequate recovered to 47%.
- General satisfaction with a 2-party system is indicated but from January, 2007 – January 2008 over 50% of Americans felt a third party necessary indicating dissatisfaction with the two parties.
- Satisfaction with the two-party system was never again as high as the 56% that responded in 2004 demonstrating some support for a third party.

- b) Identification and explanation of two impediments to third parties in American system = **2 points**

Note: 1 point is earned for correctly identifying and explaining one formal impediment to the development of third parties in the United States. 1 point is earned for correctly identifying and explaining a second formal impediment to the development of third parties in the United States.

Possible identifications and explanations may include:

- Electoral college awards votes with a “winner take all” making it difficult for third parties to gain votes to win.
- 50 state ballots with different qualifications make it difficult for a third party, with less organization, to meet those demands and get on all 50 ballots.
- No national ballot with national guidelines to make it easier for third parties to organize successfully.
- Winner-take-all electoral system applies to most national elected positions as well as many state and local ones.
- The U.S. traditionally has had only two parties throughout its history.
- The U.S. consensual political culture may not leave room for a third party alternative.

- c) Description of two contributions third parties have made to the American system
= **2 points**

Note: 1 point is earned for an accurate description of one contribution that third parties have made to the American political system.

1 point is earned for an accurate description of a second contribution that third parties have made to the American political system.

Possible descriptions may include:

- Third parties may pull more voters into the system increasing the number of voters.
- Third party candidates may pull enough votes from a candidate to dictate the winner of an election.
- Third parties may attract disaffected voters bringing them into the political system increasing political participation by the citizens.
- Third parties bring issues into the political discussion/debates that may not have been presented by the two main parties.
- Reforms advocated by third parties have been incorporated by one or both of the major political parties.

Point Matrix – 5 Points Total

Attitude change	ID & Explain	ID & Explain	Contribution	Contribution
1 Point	1 Point	1 Point	1 Point	1 Point
1 Point Max.	1 Point Max.	1 Point Max.	1 Point Max.	1 Point Max.