

AP Government and Politics 2023 Summer Reading

There WILL be an exam the first week of school that you will be able to use as a replacement grade for a future unit exam in the course based on the content of the reading. It is highly recommended, but not required, that you take a page or more of notes at the end of each chapter on the overall narrative and significant concepts, details. You can use your notes to review the material before the exam, though they CAN'T be used on the exam. The process of notetaking itself also helps in comprehension. Here are some tips from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Learning Center:

<https://learningcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/taking-notes-while-reading/>

Assigned Book:

Bodenhamer, David J. *The U.S. Constitution: A Very Short Introduction*.
Oxford University Press

ISBN-13: 978-0195378320

ISBN-10: 0195378326

Recommended Reading Schedule: (*Approximately 45 minutes to 1.5 hours per week*):

Week	Section to Read
<i>Post-Exams: Mid-May - June 10th</i>	<i>Preface</i>
<i>Week 1: June 11th- June 17th</i>	<i>Ch. 1- The revolutionary Constitution</i>
<i>Week 2: June 18th- June 24th</i>	<i>Ch. 2- Federalism</i>
<i>Week 3: June 25th- July 1st</i>	<i>Ch. 3- Balance of Powers</i>
<i>Week 4: July 2nd - July 8th</i>	<i>Ch. 4- Property</i>
<i>Week 5: July 9th- July 15th</i>	<i>Ch. 5- Representation</i>
<i>Week 6: July 16th- July 22nd</i>	<i>Ch. 6- Equality</i>
<i>Week 7: July 23rd- July 29th</i>	<i>Ch. 7- Rights</i>
<i>Week 8: July 30th- August 5th</i>	<i>Ch. 8- Security</i>
<i>Week 9: August 6th- August 12th</i>	<i>Epilogue: The future Constitution</i>

Social Studies Textbook Reading and Note-Taking Tips:

Here are a few tips to help you in this class and to help you with note taking while reading.

- **Take Notes While Reading:** Studies have shown that people who take notes correctly remember the information *significantly* better than those who don't. Note-taking is not just about writing information, it's about *processing* the information.
- **Write All the Main Titles to organize your notes:** Use the titles and subtitles to help organize your notes. The titles and subtitles also help you focus on what's important or the main idea from the section or subsection as you read.
- **Wait till the End of the Subsection:** Don't take notes until you get to the next titled section. Otherwise, you won't know what's important and you'll write too much.
- **Focus on The Narrative:** When you get to the next titled subsection in blue (usually 3 to 7 paragraphs later), try to think about what are the main ideas being expressed or the general narrative. You won't remember random dates, facts and names isolated, you need the narrative of each section to tell you why it's important. Write down a short outline of that narrative.
- **Support the Narrative with key Details:** Any significant terms, concepts or details that are highlighted by the book or are fundamental examples to the narrative, jot down those details.
- **Use your own words:** Don't rewrite word for word what the textbook says. This isn't learning and processing the information, it's only recording information without learning it. Instead, rewrite the information in your own words in order to process it.
- **Don't Write Complete Sentences:** use phrases, bullet points, lists and other methods so you don't waste time on complete sentences.
- **Don't Write Complete Words for all words:** Use abbreviations for many of the words that make sense to you ("ag" for "agriculture", "pol" for "politics", "rev" for revolution, "Am" for "American", "c." for "circa", "w" for "with", etc.); don't overdo the abbreviations to the point that you can't understand your notes. Also, the abbreviations should come relatively naturally and smoothly to help you save you time instead of wasting time trying to think of clever abbreviations that you might not even remember for the next time. Also use symbols (% , \$, & , etc.) to save time and arrows to denote causation from one thing to the other.
- **Break it Up:** Don't do your reading all in one day, divide it up over two days.
- **Remove Distractions:** Find a quiet, distraction free area to study and if possible play melodic instrumental music in the background when you study and (when possible) utilize lighting that is centered around your reading and keep the rest of your study area dark or dimly lit. Eliminate access to all communication devices that might distract you.
- **Practice, Practice, Practice:** Notetaking like anything takes time to develop your practice. It may take longer at first, but over time, it will help you comprehend the content and build the skills necessary to be successful in class and in college. The goal should be to master your note-taking skills by about mid-way through the year and the rest of the year is just refinement.
- **Use Your Notes:** Although the main purpose of note-taking is to help you process and learn the content as you read. It's also very helpful for reference. So, look over your notes at the end of reading if you have time to summarize in your brain. Also, look over them just before class for a Reading Check, before a Unit Exam, and definitely before the AP Exam. Don't go back and reread the chapter- it's a waste of time- unless a particular section of your notes doesn't make sense to you and you want to clarify.