



***** **BEFORE YOU BEGIN** *****

JUDGING CRITERIA

In addition to the essay topic, *“What is a Republic, and Why Did Our Founders Choose it”* your submission must address the following key questions:

1. **What is a Republic?**
2. **What features of the American Republic are distinctly different from the early Roman Republic? How did these differences improve upon what came before?**
3. **What historical issues related to the infringement of individual liberty were our Founders striving to prevent?**
4. **How does Benjamin Franklin’s exchange with a citizen (to follow) exemplify the high value and vulnerabilities of our Constitutional Republic today?** As Benjamin Franklin left the Constitutional Convention after the Constitution was signed, a woman, Elizabeth Willing Powel—asked him, “Well, Doctor, what have we got—a republic or a monarchy?” Franklin replied, “A republic, if you can keep it.” **Who is the “you” that Franklin is referring to?**
5. **Self-Study & Essay Development - Important Reminders:** Do not confuse the concepts of a Constitutional Republic and the Republican Party. One is a form of government while the other is a fraternal organization, established to promote shared goals. Do not confuse the concepts of Pure Democracy as a form of government and our democratic voting process as a tool to elect our representatives. In other words, we are not a Democracy, we use the democratic concept of voting as a tool only. It’s not foundational to our Republic, it is operational only.
6. **Essay Development:** Pay attention to sentence structure, topic sentences, introduction will contain a thesis statement, body, and conclusion, grammar, and spelling. Avoid general assertions. In other words, provide specific details, for example, explanation of source materials and clear examples.

If quotes are used, avoid their overuse. In other words, use them to emphasize your most relevance points and/or your thematic conclusion. **Proofread your work!**

Essay Structure Suggestion for a 500 Word Essay

This is a representation of the structures of a complete essay. The content of your paragraphs may be different.

- **Introduction** (50–75 words) Define a republic and state your main response to the essay topic (question). You can broaden your understanding of a definition by also stating what it is not, e.g., pure democracy, monarchy, dictatorship, theocracy
- **Body Paragraph 1** (100–125 words) Explain what a republic is and how it differs from other forms of governance. The writings of James Madison and others may be helpful here.
- **Body Paragraph 2** (125–150 words) Discuss why they chose it: lessons from ancient republics (Polybius), English limits on power (Magna Carta/common law), Locke's natural rights, and Montesquieu's separation of powers.
- **Body Paragraph 3** (100–125 words) Reference which sections of the Constitution support these specific ideas: separation of powers, checks and balances federalism, representation and from the Constitution for the United States of America. Keep in mind these same ideas discussed in *Federalist* 47 and 51 are some of the strengths of our new republican form of government.
- **Conclusion** (50–75 words) Reflect on what your essay is building towards, any new discoveries and insights you gained. Perhaps, you could end with why our Constitutional Republic still brings value to us and the world. Remember, your conclusion is ultimately yours.

Engage Material & Think Before You Write

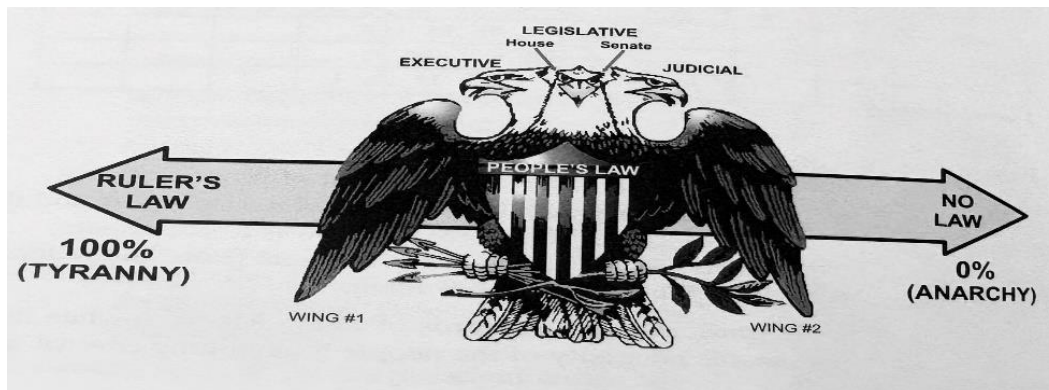
Word Banks:

Can spark curiosity which is a vital part of learning. Feel free to add your own words to this bank – If you do, double check your definitions!

Potential Word Bank: Liberty, limited government, checks & balances, tyranny, bicameralism, Federalism, enumerated powers, Federalist Papers, Anti-Federalists, Articles of Confederation, the Great Compromise, Republic, We the People, government by

As a warm up, some of the following information is to establish a basic understanding of the structure of our Constitutional Republic. Each of you will dive into the concepts that inspired this structure. These concepts are foundational; the structure is operational.

What follows is a basic representation of our government structure. It was developed after careful consideration of guiding principles which later became foundational.



“The Founders provided a horizontal separation of powers among the three major branches of government. This was later copied by all the states. It was like creating a three-headed eagle with a common neck, so that each department would be independent but could not function without the support of the other two. In other words, it was separation of powers with checks to keep everything in balance, as the following illustration demonstrates:”

National Center For Constitutional Studies. (2022). The Making of America Seminar Discussion Guide (www.nccs.net)

Warm-up Analysis Exercise 1: Can you find the key parts of the Preamble of the Declaration of Independence that establish the protection of Liberty as the primary function of governments.

Preamble: The Purpose of Government and the Right to Alter It

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness."

Access the declaration transcript via link - <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript>

Preamble of the U.S. Constitution: The Preamble to the U.S. Constitution does not explicitly mention a Republic, because it serves as a broad introductory statement of intent. However, certain phrases in the Preamble can be interpreted as directly supporting the ideals of our Republic, such as government by consent, power derived from the people, protection of individual liberties, and our duties as responsible citizens.

Warm-up Analysis Exercise 2: See the key phrases we underlined in the preamble - Can you explain how these particular phrases support the formation of our Constitutional Republic?

The Preamble reads:

"We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

Access the preamble transcript via link - <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution>

Did you know?

There is a constitutional provision that guarantees every state a republican form of government.

The relevant statement is found in **Article IV, Section 4** of the U.S. Constitution (commonly called the **Guarantee Clause**):

"The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government, and shall protect each of them against Invasion; and on Application of the Legislature, or of the Executive (when the Legislature cannot be convened) against domestic Violence."

California Constitution

Article III, Section 1

"The State of California is an inseparable part of the United States of America, and the United States Constitution is the supreme law of the land."

Article II, Section 1

"All political power is inherent in the people. Government is instituted for their protection, security, and benefit, and they have the right to alter or reform it when the public good may require."

Article III, Section 3

"The powers of state government are legislative, executive, and judicial. Persons charged with the exercise of one power may not exercise either of the others except as permitted by this Constitution."

