

Historical Influences Activity Packet

	The Constitutional Framework of the United States	Ancient Greece: Democracy is Born	Ancient Rome: Republicanism on the Rise	The Judeo-Christian Tradition	Influencing the Framers
Facts That Stand Out					
One Question I Have					

VOCABULARY

checks and balances	a principle of the federal government, according to the U.S. Constitution, that allows each branch of government to limit the power of the other branches
civic participation	being involved in government processes to voice your opinion or help others
civic virtue	the good characteristics, attitudes, practices, and activities of participants in a political system. Examples include: civility, cooperation, volunteerism, courage, self-discipline, tolerance, wisdom, humility, integrity, justice, perseverance, respect, responsibility, etc.
constitutional republic	a form of government in which there is democratic voting, but governmental power is limited by the existence of a constitution that protects the rights of citizens
democracy	a system of government in which political power is held by the people; can be direct (each individual person makes decisions) or indirect (people elect representatives to make decisions)
individual worth	a sense of value in one's life
justice	the condition of being morally correct or fair
legislative bodies	persons responsible for making or amending laws
personal responsibility	the act of taking full accountability for one's actions, decisions, and thoughts
polis	a city-state in ancient Greece
representative government	a type of government that allows people to vote and elect government officials to represent their beliefs and make decisions on their behalf
republicanism	the political belief that the best form of government is one where citizens choose their representatives and leaders and actively participate in civic life for the common good of the nation/community
rule of law	the idea that those who govern must follow the laws; no one is above the law
separation of powers	a structure of government that sets up different branches with their own distinct powers and responsibilities
voting rights	legal and constitutional protections designed to ensure the opportunity to vote in elections
written constitution	the principles and laws of a nation that determine the structure and powers of government; written out for all to see

ANALYZING THE INFLUENCES

MATCHING

Directions: For each element of America's constitutional republic listed, identify the historical influence. You may simply write a 1,2, or 3 next to each. Note that some elements may have multiple influences.

Historical Influences

1. Ancient Greece
2. Ancient Rome
3. The Judeo-Christian Tradition

In America's constitutional republic...

- A. There are laws against murder and stealing
- B. There is a bicameral legislature: House of Representatives and Senate
- C. Everyone is accountable to the same laws; no one is above the law
- D. Power is in the hands of the people
- E. There are three branches of government: legislative, executive and judicial
- F. There is a written constitution
- G. Everyone has natural/unalienable rights that cannot be taken away by the government
- H. Citizens vote to elect leaders to represent them and make decisions on their behalf
- I. Citizens actively must/should obey the law, participate in elections, serve on juries, and volunteer in their communities
- J. Prior to the 17th amendment, U.S. Senators were selected by state legislatures and not directly elected
- K. After passage of the 26th amendment, any citizen over the age of 18 may vote in national elections
- L. Citizen may sometimes need to set aside individual interests for the common good

QUESTIONS

- 1. Who is being talked about when the word “Framer” is used in the text?**
- 2. Why do you think civic participation was such an important component to the governments of ancient Greece, ancient Rome, and the United States?**
- 3. Based on what you now know about historical influences from the reading, why do you think the United States’ constitutional republic is often referred to as “the great experiment”?**