

U.S. Constitutional Principles-Sample Answers

Principle	Definition/Description	How does it contribute to the nation's longevity and its ability to overcome challenges?
checks and balances	a principle that allows each branch of government to limit the power of the other branches	Ensures no branch will ever be "all powerful"
consent of the governed	the idea that government gains its power/authority from the people	The power of government is established by the people
democracy	a form of government in which political power is held by the people	The citizens establish the power of the government through voting/elections
due process of law	the idea that people accused of a crime still have individual rights, that the process of weighing their accused crimes must take place fairly, following an established standard, before they can lose either their life or freedom	All citizens are entitled to the due process of law which ensures their rights are not violated
federalism	a system of government in which power is divided and shared between national, state, and local governments	Ensures that no level of government becomes "all powerful"

U.S. Constitutional Principles-Sample Answers

individual rights	rights guaranteed or belonging to a person	Promised to all people, protected from government infringement
limited government	a government that has been limited in power by a constitution, or written agreement	The U.S. Constitution outlines specific ways that the levels/branches should function as to ensure one entity isn't "all powerful"
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	The power is in the people's hands through elections of representatives
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	People hold the power, all voices are heard through voting/elections
rule of law	the idea that those who govern must also follow the same laws as everyone; no one is above the law	Ensures no one is above discipline, ensures power stays equal
separation of powers	a principle that sets up three branches with their own distinct powers and responsibilities	Ensures no branch will ever be "all powerful"