

Chapter One

Reading-Comprehension Quiz

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. Which of the following is NOT true about Sarah Palin's appeal as a vice-presidential candidate in 2008?
 - A) She was considered more honest than other politicians.
 - B) She appealed primarily to Republican women.
 - C) She was considered charming.
 - D) Her relative lack of previous exposure in Washington was an advantage.
 - E) She was considered down-to-earth.

Answer: B

Reference: *Opening vignette, pgs. 2–3*

Skill: *Analysis*

2. ALL BUT WHICH of the following can you logically infer from what you have learned about the 2008 presidential election?
 - A) The state of the economy tends to matter a great deal in presidential elections.
 - B) Voters tend to blame incumbents for current problems.
 - C) Voters prefer experienced candidates.
 - D) Support for war is short-lived among voters.
 - E) All of the above can be inferred.

Answer: C

Reference: *LO 1.3, pgs. 2–3*

Skill: *Analysis*

3. ALL BUT WHICH of the following are causal questions?
 - A) What is the likely impact of the government's bailout plan on the economic crisis?
 - B) Does political apathy lead to a decrease in democracy in a country?
 - C) What is the relationship between a person's religion and his or her likelihood of voting?
 - D) Should abortion be made illegal, unless the mother's life is in danger?
 - E) How does a person's perception of a political candidate's personality affect his or her vote choice?

Answer: D

Reference: *LO 1.1, pgs. 3–5*

Skill: *Application*

4. Before we can tackle causal questions in political science, we need to be able to
- A) describe the basic characteristics of American society.
 - B) describe the basic characteristics of American government.
 - C) measure the basic aspects of American government.
 - D) understand how American society is organized.
 - E) All of the above

Answer: E

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 3–5

Skill: Understanding

5. A good researcher tries to do ALL BUT WHICH of the following?
- A) Determine causal relationships
 - B) Realize that real-world issues are extremely complex
 - C) Find the most simplistic solution to a problem
 - D) Find good measures for concepts
 - E) Think about issues on different levels

Answer: E

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 3–5

Skill: Understanding

6. Which of the following could NOT be a potential causal factor that explains the low voter turnout in the United States?
- A) Voters get tired of voting so often.
 - B) The two-party system doesn't offer a meaningful choice.
 - C) The quality of candidates running makes voters not care about politics.
 - D) Registration makes it harder to vote.
 - E) Election Day is on a workday.

Answer: C

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 3–5

Skill: Analysis

7. What is the definition of a “correlation”?
- A) Two or more phenomena happen to change at the same time.
 - B) Two or more phenomena change at the same time, suggesting a potential causal relationship.
 - C) Two or more phenomena occur at the same time, suggesting that one is definitely causing the other.
 - D) Two or more phenomena are directly causing each other.
 - E) Two or more phenomena are indirectly causing each other.

Answer: B

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7

Skill: Understanding

8. A study has shown that college students who smoke tend to get worse grades than college students who do not smoke. From this we can conclude that
- A) smoking causes one to perform worse in school.
 - B) getting bad grades causes students to smoke.
 - C) there may be a third variable that causes both the smoking habit and the school performance.
 - D) there is no causal relationship whatsoever.
 - E) None of the above

Answer: C

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7

Skill: Application

9. Which of the following is NOT a necessary condition for making a causal argument?
- A) Correlation
 - B) Time order
 - C) Non-spuriousness
 - D) Empirical evidence
 - E) All of the above are necessary.

Answer: D

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7

Skill: Application

10. The textbook's definition of "government" refers to ALL BUT WHICH of the following?
- A) Institutions that create rules
 - B) Institutions that enforce rules
 - C) A specific territory
 - D) A specific type of government
 - E) A specific people

Answer: D

Reference: LO 1.2, p. 7

Skill: Understanding

11. In the United States, most citizens enter into the social contract
- A) explicitly, by applying for a driver's license.
 - B) explicitly, by applying for a passport.
 - C) implicitly, by living in the United States.
 - D) implicitly, by voting in national elections.
 - E) None of the above

Answer: C

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 10–12

Skill: Analysis

12. Because everyone can take advantage of so-called public goods without necessarily contributing to them, such goods tend to be
- A) plentiful.
 - B) replaceable.
 - C) underprovided.
 - D) overprovided.
 - E) cheap.

Answer: C

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 13–14

Skill: Analysis

13. Generally speaking, is a capitalist economic system, such as the United States has, conducive to the provision of public goods?
- A) Yes, because the inherent competition in capitalist systems will lead to public goods of higher quality.
 - B) Yes, because the great demand for public goods will ensure that the market will supply them.
 - C) Yes, because capitalist states also tend to be democratic, and in democracies people care about each other.
 - D) No, because the costs of providing public goods are much higher than the benefits of doing so.
 - E) No, because the demand for public goods is simply not there, and capitalist economies operate based on the laws of supply and demand.

Answer: D

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 13–14

Skill: Application

14. The concept of “one person, one vote” illustrates the idea of
- A) equal opportunity.
 - B) representative democracy.
 - C) political equality.
 - D) direct democracy.
 - E) political unity.

Answer: C

Reference: LO 1.2, p. 16

Skill: Understanding

15. In a presidential system, the election of the head of government more closely represents a(n) _____ democracy, whereas in a parliamentary system the election of the head of government more closely represents a(n) _____ democracy.
- A) indirect, direct
 - B) direct, indirect
 - C) consolidated, electoral
 - D) electoral, consolidated
 - E) true, quasi

Answer: B

Reference: LO 1.3, p. 18

Skill: Understanding

True-False Questions

1. Sarah Palin's appeal to the Republican base was due to the fact that she perfectly matched the long-standing type of politicians that most Republicans tended to vote for.

Answer: False

Reference: Opening vignette, pgs. 2–3

Skill: Understanding

2. The 2008 presidential election suggests that during times of economic insecurity voters tend to punish the incumbent party for the economy's performance.

Answer: True

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 2–3

Skill: Analysis

3. According to the textbook, what we know about politics is largely defined by how we come by this knowledge.

Answer: True

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 3–5

Skill: Analysis

4. From observing that the richer countries around the world are also overwhelmingly democratic, we can conclude that democracy causes wealth to increase.

Answer: False

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 3–5

Skill: Application

5. In a truly spurious relationship, the relationship between two correlated phenomena will disappear once we control for the true causes of both.

Answer: True

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7

Skill: Analysis

6. In order to make a causal argument, we have to be sure that our variable is the only one that causes the outcome we are trying to explain.

Answer: False

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7

Skill: Understanding

7. Clearing public roads cannot be considered a public good in the United States.

Answer: False

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 13–14

Skill: Application

8. Most Americans believe that citizens should have equal opportunities, but Americans do not necessarily expect or desire an equal outcome.

Answer: True

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 16–17

Skill: Understanding

9. Since England has a queen, it should be considered an autocracy.

Answer: False

Reference: LO 1.3, pgs. 16–17

Skill: Application

10. In a parliamentary system, the head of government is largely dependent on the legislature.

Answer: False

Reference: LO 1.3, p. 18

Skill: Analysis

Chapter Exam

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. John McCain's initial decision to choose Governor Palin as his running mate
- A) drew a lot of criticism from Republicans.
 - B) was considered a huge gamble by his advisers, owing to her inexperience.
 - C) was believed to help McCain's campaign.
 - D) was welcomed by Democrats because they believed she could never win.
 - E) drew a lot of criticism from the conservative base of the party.

Answer: C

Reference: Opening vignette, pgs. 2–3

Skill: Understanding

2. Who would ultimately decide the outcome of the 2008 presidential election, according to the textbook?
- A) Moderate Republicans
 - B) Moderate Democrats
 - C) Undecided voters
 - D) Male voters
 - E) Young voters

Answer: C

Reference: Opening vignette, pgs. 2–3

Skill: Understanding

3. Which of the following ultimately contributed to Sarah Palin's downfall as a vice-presidential candidate?
- A) The American media
 - B) Late-night comedians
 - C) Her inexperience with foreign policy
 - D) Her handlers' poor strategy
 - E) All of the above

Answer: E

Reference: Opening vignette, pgs. 2–3

Skill: Understanding

4. Sarah Palin's experience during the 2008 presidential election primarily illustrates the power of
- A) the media.
 - B) female voters.
 - C) male voters.
 - D) the incumbent party.
 - E) party politics.

Answer: A

Reference: Opening vignette, pgs. 2–3

Skill: Analysis

5. Which of the following is a causal question?
- A) Should Congress adopt term limits?
 - B) Is American foreign policy ethical?
 - C) How important are human rights in foreign policy?
 - D) Do federal judges make fair decisions?
 - E) None of the above are causal questions.

Answer: E

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 3–5

Skill: Application

6. Casual understanding depends on accurate
- A) prediction.
 - B) description.
 - C) mathematics.
 - D) inquiry.
 - E) guessing.

Answer: B

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7

Skill: Understanding

7. Understanding the fundamentals of the American political system and of analytical thinking allows you to
- A) hold political leaders accountable.
 - B) become a better citizen.
 - C) become more involved in politics.
 - D) maximize your personal benefits in the system.
 - E) All of the above

Answer: E

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7

Skill: Understanding

8. Which of the following is NOT a potential causal factor that explains the president's approval rating?
- A) The state of the economy
 - B) Partisanship
 - C) War
 - D) The president's perceived competence
 - E) All of the above

Answer: E

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7

Skill: Application

9. Good political-science research
- A) tries to identify the one factor that causes an outcome.
 - B) looks for the single most important causal variable.
 - C) attempts to explain an issue with a quick sound bite.
 - D) realizes that real-world phenomena are extremely complex.
 - E) identifies only correlations.

Answer: D

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7

Skill: Analysis

10. According to the textbook, single-cause explanations often result from ALL BUT WHICH of the following?

- A) A lack of alternative explanations
- B) Partisan posturing
- C) A need for quick explanation
- D) Personal bias
- E) Sensationalism

Answer: A

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7

Skill: Understanding

11. When two variables are related in such a way that change in one variable is directly responsible for change in the other variable, this is called

- A) a spurious relationship.
- B) causation.
- C) a correlation.
- D) a coincidence.
- E) proof.

Answer: B

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7

Skill: Understanding

12. When a third, previously unobserved variable causes changes in both variables you had previously thought were causally related, this illustrates

- A) a causal relationship.
- B) an intervening variable.
- C) a spurious relationship.
- D) a triangular relationship.
- E) a reciprocal relationship.

Answer: C

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7

Skill: Understanding

13. Some empirical studies have shown that in countries with high Internet usage people tend to live longer. From this evidence we should conclude that

- A) the fact that people live longer means they have more time to use the Internet, which explains the higher Internet-usage rates.
- B) using the Internet makes people live longer.
- C) there is a causal connection between Internet usage and life expectancy.
- D) there could be a spurious relationship between the two variables.
- E) Internet usage has nothing to do with life expectancy.

Answer: D

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7

Skill: Application

14. What happens in a spurious relationship between variables A and B when you control for alternative variables?

- A) The relationship between A and B will get stronger.
- B) The relationship between A and B will become negative.
- C) The relationship will disappear if it is completely spurious.
- D) The relationship between A and B will remain the same.
- E) None of the above

Answer: C

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7

Skill: Analysis

15. Which of the following is NOT a necessary condition for arguing that variable 1 *causes* variable 2?

- A) The two variables have to be correlated.
- B) Variable 2 cannot precede variable 1.
- C) There are no other variables that can potentially also cause variable 2.
- D) There is no third factor that causes both variables.
- E) All of the above are necessary conditions.

Answer: C

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7

Skill: Understanding

16. We know that a person's income and his or her level of education are correlated. ALL BUT WHICH of the following are potential causal explanations for this?

- A) More education results in higher income.
- B) Higher income results in more education.
- C) A third variable may be causing both.
- D) Only people who are educated make a lot of money.
- E) It depends on the context.

Answer: D

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7

Skill: Application

17. If we can establish that variable X happened before variable Q in time, then we can say that

- A) variable X is the only cause of variable Q.
- B) variable X is a cause of variable Q.
- C) variable X is NOT a cause of variable Q.
- D) variable Q is a cause of variable X.
- E) We can't say any of the above for certain.

Answer: E

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7

Skill: Analysis

18. In order to assess a researcher's findings, you should ask ALL BUT WHICH of the following questions?

- A) What is the research question?
- B) Why is it important?
- C) What were the methods used?
- D) What are the variables and the proposed relationships?
- E) What other research has the researcher published?

Answer: E

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 9–10

Skill: Understanding

19. ALL BUT WHICH of the following entities have authorities similar to governments, according to the textbook?

- A) Wealthy individuals
- B) Corporations
- C) Churches
- D) Courts
- E) Parents

Answer: E

Reference: LO 1.2, p. 10

Skill: Understanding

20. According to the textbook's definition, what characterizes the alternative to government?

- A) Anarchy
- B) Communism
- C) Socialism
- D) Tribalism
- E) Authoritarianism

Answer: A

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 9–11

Skill: Understanding

21. In order to be called a democracy, a majority of citizens in a country have to

- A) be informed about politics.
- B) participate directly in the political process.
- C) participate in the political process.
- D) actively monitor their representatives.
- E) not participate at all.

Answer: C

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 9–11

Skill: Understanding

22. The defining principle in a democracy is
- A) political participation.
 - B) voter turnout.
 - C) the consent of the governed.
 - D) the approval of government policies by the governed.
 - E) direct participation.

Answer: C

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 9–11

Skill: Understanding

23. In a modern democracy, the majority of citizens participate
- A) directly.
 - B) indirectly.
 - C) not at all.
 - D) through elections only.
 - E) mainly through letter writing.

Answer: B

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 9–11

Skill: Understanding

24. Which of the following is NOT a characteristic of life without government, according to Thomas Hobbes?
- A) Shortness
 - B) Meanness
 - C) Solitariness
 - D) Brutishness
 - E) Nastiness

Answer: B

Reference: LO 1.2, p. 11

Skill: Understanding

25. Thomas Hobbes wrote *Leviathan* in the context of which war?
- A) The French and Indian War
 - B) The American War of Independence
 - C) The French Revolution
 - D) The English Civil War
 - E) The War of 1812

Answer: D

Reference: LO 1.2, p. 11

Skill: Understanding

26. Thomas Hobbes viewed the social contract primarily as a means for
- A) self-government.
 - B) self-discovery.
 - C) social justice.
 - D) self-preservation.
 - E) governmental authority.

Answer: D

Reference: LO 1.2, p. 11

Skill: Understanding

27. The social contract is made by
- A) citizens with each other.
 - B) citizens and the government.
 - C) federal and local government.
 - D) federal and state government.
 - E) American and foreign governments.

Answer: B

Reference: LO 1.2, p. 11

Skill: Understanding

28. Instruments of compulsion include ALL BUT WHICH of the following?
- A) Laws
 - B) Courts
 - C) Police
 - D) Prisons
 - E) Retaliation

Answer: E

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 11

Skill: Understanding

29. In the United States, the social contract is
- A) unwritten.
 - B) the Constitution.
 - C) citizenship.
 - D) a social norm.
 - E) the Declaration of Independence.

Answer: B

Reference: LO 1.2, p. 11

Skill: Understanding

30. According to the social-contract theory,
- A) the government grants specific rights to the citizens and retains all others.
 - B) the government retains only those rights it specifically claims for itself. All others revert back to the citizens.
 - C) the government receives only those rights that citizens specifically grant it.
 - D) the government receives those rights that citizens do not specifically retain for themselves.
 - E) the government receives all rights.

Answer: C

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 11–12

Skill: Understanding

31. A public good is one that
- A) is paid for by tax dollars.
 - B) citizens cannot be excluded from using.
 - C) is underprovided.
 - D) is diminished by overuse.
 - E) All of the above

Answer: E

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 13–14

Skill: Analysis

32. Which of the following is NOT an example of a public good in the United States?
- A) Pensions
 - B) Highways
 - C) Public education
 - D) National security
 - E) Clean air

Answer: A

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 13–14

Skill: Understanding

33. ALL BUT WHICH of the following are reasons why most nongovernmental organizations do not have an incentive to provide public goods?
- A) It is almost impossible to exclude non-payers.
 - B) It is expensive.
 - C) People will abuse them.
 - D) They may not have the resources and the ability.
 - E) They do not need public goods.

Answer: E

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 13–14

Skill: Understanding

34. The term “democracy,” derived from ancient Greek, refers to
- A) the rule of all.
 - B) the rule of many.
 - C) the rule of few.
 - D) the rule of one.
 - E) the rule of none.

Answer: B

Reference: LO 1.2, p. 16

Skill: Understanding

35. Before the American invasion in 2003, Iraq would have been considered a(n)
- A) monarchy.
 - B) autocracy.
 - C) quasi democracy.
 - D) oligarchy.
 - E) failed state.

Answer: B

Reference: LO 1.2, p. 16

Skill: Application

36. In a representative democracy,
- A) elected officials accurately represent all their voters’ interests.
 - B) elected officials accurately match the general population’s demographics.
 - C) the majority of citizens directly participate in the political process.
 - D) elected officials have the consent of the people.
 - E) important decisions are made by all citizens.

Answer: D

Reference: LO 1.2, p. 16

Skill: Understanding

37. When California citizens successfully launched and passed an initiative that reduced property taxes by 57 percent, this was an example of
- A) a public referendum.
 - B) direct democracy.
 - C) indirect democracy.
 - D) representative democracy.
 - E) federalism.

Answer: B

Reference: LO 1.2, p. 16

Skill: Application

38. Political equality implies all but which of the following?
- A) Every citizen in the United States has the right to vote.
 - B) All votes count equally.
 - C) All Americans have the right to participate in politics at all levels.
 - D) All Americans have equal access to politics.
 - E) All of the above

Answer: A

Reference: LO 1.2, p. 16

Skill: Understanding

39. Americans all have the same _____ to participate in politics.
- A) right
 - B) opportunity
 - C) willingness
 - D) ability
 - E) desire

Answer: A

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 16–17

Skill: Understanding

40. Plurality rule means that in order to win one has to garner
- A) unanimity.
 - B) three-quarters of the vote.
 - C) at least two-thirds of the vote.
 - D) at least 50 percent of the vote.
 - E) more votes than one's opponent.

Answer: E

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 16–17

Skill: Understanding

41. Specific minority rights in the United States are granted in
- A) federal law.
 - B) state law.
 - C) federal and state constitutions.
 - D) federal and state court decisions.
 - E) All of the above

Answer: E

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 16–17

Skill: Understanding

42. If in the same election citizen M casts her ballot for a Republican candidate for president and a Democratic candidate for Senate, this is called
- A) disloyal voting.
 - B) preferential voting.
 - C) split-ticket voting.
 - D) strategic voting.
 - E) Citizen M has to vote for the same party.

Answer: C

Reference: LO 1.2, p. 18

Skill: Application

43. If in a parliamentary system the head of government is voted into (or out of) office by the legislature, then we can assume that
- A) the head of government is dependent for his or her political survival on the legislature.
 - B) the head of government will usually be chosen by the majority party or a majority coalition in the legislature.
 - C) there is less of a separation of powers between the legislature and the executive than in other systems.
 - D) the government can theoretically fall at any time, if the legislature loses trust in it.
 - E) All of the above

Answer: E

Reference: LO 1.3, p. 18

Skill: Analysis

44. Which of the following can we NOT typically assume of a parliamentary system?
- A) The head of government has less independent power than in a presidential system.
 - B) The head of government represents the majority party.
 - C) People feel less close to the head of government.
 - D) The government is potentially unstable because it depends on the consent of the legislature that elects it.
 - E) We can conclude all of the above.

Answer: C

Reference: LO 1.3, p. 18

Skill: Analysis

45. The United States is considered to have a federal system owing to the fact that
- A) it is a representative democracy.
 - B) each state has equal representation in the U.S. Senate.
 - C) the president is elected by an electoral college.
 - D) it contains national and state governments.
 - E) power is centralized within the federal government.

Answer: D

Reference: LO 1.3, p. 18

Skill: Understanding

46. In which system would you expect the head of government to be more accountable to the citizens?
- A) In a parliamentary system
 - B) In a presidential system
 - C) Equally in a parliamentary and a presidential system
 - D) Neither in a parliamentary nor a presidential system
 - E) Only in some parliamentary systems

Answer: B

Reference: LO 1.3, pgs. 18–19

Skill: Analysis

47. Which of the following is mentioned in the textbook as a primary component of American political culture?
- A) Individualism
 - B) Capitalism
 - C) Socialism
 - D) Welfare
 - E) Diversity

Answer: A

Reference: LO 1.3, p. 19

Skill: Understanding

48. Political culture could be thought of as a _____ through which to view American politics.
- A) magnifying glass
 - B) lens
 - C) kaleidoscope
 - D) window
 - E) None of the above

Answer: B

Reference: LO 1.3, pgs. 19

Skill: Understanding

49. Americans believe in the concepts associated with the American creed
- A) both in the abstract and in specific cases.
 - B) less in the abstract than in specific cases.
 - C) less in specific cases than in the abstract.
 - D) There is not much agreement in either the abstract or in specific cases.
 - E) no matter what.

Answer: C

Reference: LO 1.3, p. 19

Skill: Understanding

50. American political culture is sometimes referred to as
- A) the American creed.
 - B) the American mission.
 - C) the American manifest.
 - D) the American destiny.
 - E) None of the above

Answer: A

Reference: LO 1.3, p. 19

Skill: Understanding

True-False Questions

1. One of the main reasons Sarah Palin appealed to Republicans was that she acted like a seasoned politician.

Answer: False

Reference: Opening vignette, pgs. 2–3

Skill: Understanding

2. It could be argued that in Sarah Palin John McCain picked a running mate who overcame his weaknesses among Republican Party members.

Answer: True

Reference: Opening vignette, pgs. 2–3

Skill: Analysis

3. The failure of the McCain-Palin ticket can most likely be attributed to Sarah Palin's low approval ratings.

Answer: False

Reference: Opening vignette, pgs. 2–3

Skill: Understanding

4. Voters were equally critical of both parties during the 2008 presidential election, blaming both for the global financial crisis.

Answer: False

Reference: *Opening vignette, pgs. 2–3*

Skill: *Analysis*

5. Based on what you have learned about the 2008 presidential election, voters will be likely to still blame the Bush administration for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in 2012.

Answer: False

Reference: *Opening vignette, pgs. 2–3*

Skill: *Application*

6. “Should the United States continue to give foreign aid to developing countries?” is an example of a causal question.

Answer: False

Reference: *LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7*

Skill: *Application*

7. In a truly spurious relationship, the relationship between two correlated phenomena will disappear once we control for the true causes of both.

Answer: True

Reference: *LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7*

Skill: *Analysis*

8. In order to make a causal argument, we have to be sure that our variable is the only one that causes the outcome we are trying to explain.

Answer: False

Reference: *LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7*

Skill: *Application*

9. In order to determine a causal relationship between two or more phenomena, we need to establish time order and rule out alternative variables.

Answer: True

Reference: *LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7*

Skill: *Understanding*

10. In order to assess a researcher’s findings, you need to be aware of the questions asked and the methods used.

Answer: True

Reference: *LO 1.1, pgs. 8–9*

Skill: *Understanding*

11. The United States has only one government.

Answer: False

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 9–11

Skill: Understanding

12. The textbook defines “government” as the political institutions that create and enforce rules and the people who are ruled by these institutions.

Answer: False

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 9–11

Skill: Understanding

13. Thomas Hobbes’s most influential work was entitled *Social Contract Theory*.

Answer: False

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 11–12

Skill: Understanding

14. According to Thomas Hobbes, without a social contract there would be “war of all against all.”

Answer: True

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 11–12

Skill: Understanding

15. National security can be considered a public good in the United States.

Answer: True

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 13–14

Skill: Understanding

16. Having roads that are in good condition is an example of a public good.

Answer: True

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 13–14

Skill: Understanding

17. Politics starts once an issue makes it to the governmental agenda.

Answer: False

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 15

Skill: Understanding

18. Without politics, issues would be more likely to be settled violently.

Answer: True

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 15

Skill: Understanding

19. The term “democracy” is derived from ancient Greek and means the “rule of many.”

Answer: True

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 16–18

Skill: Understanding

20. With regard to the accountability of leaders, democracies and autocracies can be considered opposing ends of the spectrum.

Answer: True

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 16–18

Skill: Understanding

21. The U.S. federal government is an example of a direct democracy.

Answer: False

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 16–18

Skill: Understanding

22. A parliamentary system is likely to decrease the accountability of the head of government to the people, as well as the stability of the government.

Answer: True

Reference: LO 1.3, pgs. 18–19

Skill: Analysis

23. By definition, a parliamentary system has a weaker system of checks and balances than a presidential system.

Answer: True

Reference: LO 1.3, pgs. 18–19

Skill: Analysis

24. American political culture is also referred to as the American creed.

Answer: True

Reference: LO 1.3, p. 19

Skill: Understanding

25. American political culture is a good indicator of what kinds of policies are likely to be adopted in the United States, because it illustrates what is possible.

Answer: False

Reference: LO 1.3, p. 19

Skill: Understanding

Short-Answer Questions

1. After the 2008 presidential election, some politicians and members of the media blamed the selection of governor Sarah Palin for the defeat of the Republican presidential ticket. According to the textbook, what speaks for and what speaks against this assessment?

Reference: Opening vignette, pgs. 2–3

Skill: Understanding

2. What are two of the lessons that may be drawn from Sarah Palin's experience in running for vice-president?

Reference: Opening vignette, pgs. 2–3

Skill: Analysis

3. Please provide a definition of a so-called spurious relationship and provide one example of such a relationship that is not mentioned in the textbook.

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7

Skill: Application

4. In order to be able to determine a potential causal relationship between two or more phenomena, what three conditions have to present?

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7

Skill: Understanding

5. Which of the following criteria would you consider most important in evaluating political-science research: applicability, importance, or testability? Why?

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 8–9

Skill: Evaluation

6. The textbook states that one distinct characteristic of a government is that it can make people do things they might not otherwise do. In your opinion, what are areas in which the government should be able to do this, and what are areas in which this principle should not apply? Why?

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 9–11

Skill: Evaluation

7. Please explain the basic aspects of the so-called social-contract theory. Whose writings is this idea based on? Who enters into this contract, and what are the rights and responsibilities associated with it?

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 10–12

Skill: Understanding

8. How does a citizen enter into the social contract with the government? In other words, how would you say someone actually expresses his or her agreement with this principle? What are someone's options if she does not wish to be part of the social contract?

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 10–12

Skill: Application

9. The incentives for providing public goods tend to be very few. Why is this? What are ways in which new incentives could be introduced to ensure greater provision of public goods?

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 13–14

Skill: Application

10. The textbook states that politics is about influencing the working of government. Please outline three distinct ways in which citizens—either individually or collectively—can attempt to do so and how successful you believe these approaches are.

Reference: LO 1.2, p. 15

Skill: Application

11. What is a plurality vote? In your opinion, how democratic is a plurality vote? Why or why not?

Reference: LO 1.3, pgs. 16–17

Skill: Evaluation

12. What would you consider two advantages and two disadvantages of a direct democracy?

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 16–18

Skill: Analysis

13. Please name and briefly explain the three principles American democracy is based on.

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 16–18

Skill: Understanding

14. What would you say are the advantages and disadvantages of a presidential as opposed to a parliamentary system? Try to give at least two pros and two cons. Also try to think of different categories for your evaluation (e.g., effectiveness, representativeness, etc.).

Reference: LO 1.3, pgs. 16–18

Skill: Analysis

15. The textbook points out that political culture is never harmonious and that some values and ideas clash with each other. Briefly describe one such clash that you currently perceive in American society. In addition, try to explain what might cause those diverging opinions.

Reference: LO 1.3, p. 19

Skill: Application

Essay Questions

1. The textbook points out that finding answers to causal questions is the main concern of political scientists. What is the reasoning behind this? In other words, what do you think is the purpose of the field of political science as a whole? What should it be, in your opinion? Is there room in political science for nonscientific questions, such as those concerned with morals and ethics, or should those be relegated to the field of philosophy?

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 3–5

Skill: Evaluation

2. Why do politicians and journalists tend to seek simplistic answers to issues? And how does this potentially affect American citizens with regard to their political beliefs, their voting behavior, or their attitudes toward government?

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 3–5

Skill: Analysis

3. Some research shows that countries in which people eat more fat as part of their diets also show higher rates of certain types of cancer. One might conclude that there is a causal relationship between the two phenomena. However, what are two potential causal relationships that could also account for this result?

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 3–5

Skill: Application

4. It seems to be human nature to ask causal questions such as, Why did this happen? What differentiates political science from the layman theorizing about cause and effect?

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 3–7

Skill: Analysis

5. What should you be paying attention to in order to assess the correctness and/or usefulness of political research? In other words, how would you know that the researchers got it right?

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 5–7

Skill: Understanding

6. The social-contract theory is based on the assumption that people willingly give up certain natural rights in order to gain protection and public goods from governments. Not much is mentioned, however, regarding the ways in which citizens give up those rights. In your opinion, what are the modern processes by which one gives his or her consent to be governed? And how do noncitizens (legal or illegal) fit into this?

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 10–12

Skill: Analysis

7. Based on what you have learned, what would you say is the relationship between capitalism and the provision of public goods?

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 13–14

Skill: Application

8. The text makes the point that there is little incentive to provide public goods. One example of such a public good is clean air. Based on what you know about the difficulties associated with the provision of public goods, what strategy would you develop to increase the incentives of individuals and organizations to contribute to cleaner air? Please be sure to include a definition of “public goods” in your answer. Focus primarily on problems inherent to all public goods and merely use clean air as an example.

Reference: LO 1.1, pgs. 13–14

Skill: Application

9. Briefly explain the basic principles of democracy in the United States. Based on what you know, assess the status of each of these principles in modern-day America. How universally accepted and applied are these principles? What are examples that might illustrate potential difficulties with these principles? Be as specific as possible in your answer.

Reference: LO 1.2, pgs. 16–17

Skill: Application

10. The concept of political culture is—by definition—constantly changing. Please assess the brand of political culture you believe characterizes your generation. In particular, point out similarities and differences to the values mentioned in the textbook.

Reference: LO 1.3, p. 19

Skill: Application