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Introducing Government  
in America

 Multiple-Choice Questions

1. What is the central message of this textbook?

a. Power corrupts.

b. Politics and government matter.

c. U.S. democracy is the best form of government.

d. In a democracy, the will of the people will ultimately prevail.

Answer: b

Topic: Chapter Introduction

Learning Objective: 1.1 Identify the key functions of government and explain why they matter.

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

2. Compared with older Americans, younger Americans \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. are more knowledgeable about politics

b. are more likely to believe that they have much at stake in elections

c. are less likely to follow and participate in politics

d. are less active in their communities

Answer: c

Topic: Chapter Introduction

Learning Objective: 1.3 Assess how citizens can have an impact on public policy and how policies can impact people.

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

3. The institutions that make a society’s public policy decisions are collectively known as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. political culture

b. the courts

c. government

d. the presidency

Answer: c

Topic: Government

Learning Objective: 1.1 Identify the key functions of government and explain why they matter.

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

4. Why does a government maintain armed forces?

a. to protect its national sovereignty

b. to promote justice in the world

c. to provide a mechanism for ensuring the collection of taxes

d. to provide employment opportunities for the young

Answer: a

Topic: Government

Learning Objective: 1.1 Identify the key functions of government and explain why they matter.

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

5. Which of the following is a collective good?

a. access to clean air and clean water

b. medical care

c. Social Security

d. unemployment insurance

Answer: a

Topic: Government

Learning Objective: 1.1 Identify the key functions of government and explain why they matter.

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

6. The ways in which people get involved in politics constitute their \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. political ideology

b. political participation

c. political party affiliation

d. political opinions

Answer: b

Topic: Politics

Learning Objective: 1.2 Define politics in the context of democratic government.

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

7. Which of the following best describes a linkage institution?

a. a channel through which people’s concerns are communicated to policymakers

b. a location where one can express a political opinion

c. the formation of a special interest group

d. an environment where one learns about the political process

Answer: a

Topic: People Shape Policy

Learning Objective: 1.3 Assess how citizens can have an impact on public policy and how policies can impact people.

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

8. The government’s policy agenda consists of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. the issues that candidates talk about on the campaign trail

b. the issues that attract the serious attention of public officials and other people involved in politics

c. the issues that are asked about on public opinion polls

d. the issues that concern interest groups

Answer: b

Topic: People Shape Policy

Learning Objective: 1.3 Assess how citizens can have an impact on public policy and how policies can impact people.

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

9. What are public policies?

a. decisions that government makes

b. the root causes of political culture

c. the public’s political concerns, as determined by elections

d. proposed legislation that is supported by the public

Answer: a

Topic: Policies Impact People

Learning Objective: 1.3 Assess how citizens can have an impact on public policy and how policies can impact people.

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

10. A law passed by Congress and a regulation adopted by an agency are both examples of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. collective action

b. political knowledge

c. public policies

d. an informed citizenry

Answer: c

Topic: Policies Impact People

Learning Objective: 1.3 Assess how citizens can have an impact on public policy and how policies can impact people.

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

11. Why are the impacts of policies analyzed?

a. to determine the extent of financial compensation that will be awarded to the policymakers

b. to ensure that policies are consistent with the principles of social justice

c. to see how well a policy has met its goal and at what cost

d. to pinpoint which level of government will be responsible for implementing a policy

Answer: c

Topic: Policies Impact People

Learning Objective: 1.3 Assess how citizens can have an impact on public policy and how policies can impact people.

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Analyze It

12. What is democracy?

a. a system that ensures freedom, justice, and peace to all citizens

b. a system that perpetuates the status quo and upholds the values of the party in power

c. a system of selecting policymakers and of organizing government so that public policy reflects citizens’ preferences

d. a system that grants a privileged status to the most active and informed voters

Answer: c

Topic: Democracy in America

Learning Objective: 1.4 Identify the key principles of democracy and outline theories regarding how it works in practice and the challenges democracy faces today.

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

13. Which of the following principles most closely reflects equality in voting?

a. inclusion

b. freedom of speech and of the press

c. one person, one vote

d. universal citizenship

Answer: c

Topic: Traditional Democratic Theory

Learning Objective: 1.4 Identify the key principles of democracy and outline theories regarding how it works in practice and the challenges democracy faces today.

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

14. Free speech and a free press are essential to which principle of traditional democratic theory?

a. inclusion of all demographic groups

b. pluralism

c. enlightened understanding, in which society is a free marketplace of ideas

d. equality in voting

Answer: c

Topic: Traditional Democratic Theory

Learning Objective: 1.4 Identify the key principles of democracy and outline theories regarding how it works in practice and the challenges democracy faces today.

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

15. Which principle of traditional democratic theory is violated when the wealthy have disproportionate influence over government decisions?

a. citizen control of the agenda

b. effective participation

c. enlightened understanding, in which society is a free marketplace of ideas

d. equality in voting

Answer: a

Topic: Traditional Democratic Theory

Learning Objective: 1.4 Identify the key principles of democracy and outline theories regarding how it works in practice and the challenges democracy faces today.

Difficulty Level:Moderate

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

16. According to the principle of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, policies in a democracy should reflect the will of over half the voters.

a. enlightened rule

b. pluralism

c. representation

d. majority rule

Answer: d

Topic: Traditional Democratic Theory

Learning Objective: 1.4 Identify the key principles of democracy and outline theories regarding how it works in practice and the challenges democracy faces today.

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

17. Which theory of American democracy posits that competition among organized groups will lead to public policy that reflects public interest?

a. pluralism

b. elitism

c. balance-of-power theory

d. elite-and-class theory

Answer: a

Topic: Three Contemporary Theories of American Democracy

Learning Objective: 1.4 Identify the key principles of democracy and outline theories regarding how it works in practice and the challenges democracy faces today.

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

18. Which of the following is a central tenet of pluralism?

a. Because most citizens fail to pay attention to serious issues, government has become an elite institution.

b. Congress is stronger and more influential than the presidency is.

c. Many groups vie for control over policy, with no one group dominating.

d. Too many influential groups cripple government’s ability to govern.

Answer: c

Topic: Three Contemporary Theories of American Democracy

Learning Objective: 1.4 Identify the key principles of democracy and outline theories regarding how it works in practice and the challenges democracy faces today.

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

19. Which theory of American democracy contends that American society is divided along class lines?

a. pluralism

b. policy gridlock

c. balance of power

d. elitism

Answer: d

Topic: Three Contemporary Theories of American Democracy

Learning Objective: 1.4 Identify the key principles of democracy and outline theories regarding how it works in practice and the challenges democracy faces today.

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

20. According to elitism, which of the following groups has a disproportionate influence over government decisions?

a. big business

b. state governments

c. ordinary citizens

d. political parties

Answer: a

Topic: Three Contemporary Theories of American Democracy

Learning Objective: 1.4 Identify the key principles of democracy and outline theories regarding how it works in practice and the challenges democracy faces today.

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

21. Which theory of American democracy holds that special interest groups have become so powerful that government is weakened and unable to operate effectively?

a. pluralism

b. hyperpluralism

c. majority rule

d. federalism

Answer: b

Topic: Three Contemporary Theories of American Democracy

Learning Objective: 1.4 Identify the key principles of democracy and outline theories regarding how it works in practice and the challenges democracy faces today.

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

22. What political condition exists when interests conflict and no coalition is strong enough to form a majority and establish policy, yet each may be strong enough to thwart the will of the others?

a. overlapping jurisdictions

b. pluralism

c. policy gridlock

d. single-issue groups

Answer: c

Topic: Challenges to Democracy

Learning Objective: 1.4 Identify the key principles of democracy and outline theories regarding how it works in practice and the challenges democracy faces today.

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

23. A set of values widely shared within a society is referred to as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. government

b. politics

c. public policy

d. political culture

Answer: d

Topic: American Political Culture and Democracy

Learning Objective: 1.4 Identify the key principles of democracy and outline theories regarding how it works in practice and the challenges democracy faces today.

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

24. What helps to explain why the United States has a smaller and more limited government than do most other advanced industrialized countries?

a. the U.S. preference for laissez-faire economic policies

b. the populist nature of U.S. federalism

c. the American emphasis on freedom of speech and religion

d. the emphasis on egalitarianism in U.S. political culture

Answer: a

Topic: American Political Culture and Democracy

Learning Objective: 1.4 Identify the key principles of democracy and outline theories regarding how it works in practice and the challenges democracy faces today.

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Analyze It

25. Which of the following is most likely to be said by someone who believes in an active role for government?

a. “There is more wisdom in millions of individuals making decisions in their own self-interest than in the government making decisions on their behalf.”

b. “If government doesn’t address this problem, who will?”

c. “As government expands, liberty contracts.”

d. “The most terrifying words in the English language are, ‘I'm from the government and I'm here to help.’”

Answer: b

Topic: The Scope of Government in America

Learning Objective: 1.5 Outline the central arguments of the debate in America over the proper scope of government.

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

26. Which statement accurately describes the size of government in the United States?

a. The national government spends about $10 billion annually.

b. The national government employs more people than private industry.

c. The U.S. military employs more than 50 million soldiers.

d. Governments in the United States spend about one-third of the gross domestic product.

Answer: d

Topic: How Active Is American Government?

Learning Objective: 1.5 Outline the central arguments of the debate in America over the proper scope of government.

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

27. Which statement describes the Trump Administration’s plan for government spending in fiscal year 2020?

a. The administration planned to run up an annual deficit.

b. The administration planned for an annual surplus.

c. The administration planned to eliminate the national debt.

d. The administration planned to cut the national debt in half.

Answer: a

Topic: How Active Is American Government?

Learning Objective: 1.5 Outline the central arguments of the debate in America over the proper scope of government.

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts