

An Evaluation of  
the Instructional Effects of  
the National Bicentennial Competition  
on the Constitution and Bill of Rights

Final Report

May, 1988

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### Executive Summary

During 1987-88 Educational Testing Service conducted an evaluation of the instructional effects of the National Bicentennial Competition on the Constitution and Bill of Rights. The results of the study were almost uniformly positive. Among the most important findings were:

- . Participating students scored significantly higher on a test of the history and principles of the U.S. Constitution than similar students in comparison classes. Significant differences were found at both the 11th grade and the 12th grade levels, and they extended to all six major curriculum units covered by the test.
- . All of the participating teachers indicated that use of the We The People... curricular materials stimulated student interest in the Constitution and Bill of Rights.
- . The overwhelming majority of participating teachers were satisfied with student performance in classroom discussions, debates and written work prompted by their use of the curricular materials.
- . Over 80% of the participating teachers indicated that they would use the We The People... curricular materials again next year, and teachers were unanimous in recommending these materials to their colleagues.
- . Participating teachers felt that We The People... was among the best curricular materials they had seen in the field of civic education.
- . Over 90% of the participating teachers believed that the content contained in We The People... was very important to the field of civic and to education in general.

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Introduction

The National Bicentennial Competition on the Constitution and Bill of Rights is a five-year program funded by Congress, administered by the Center for Civic Education, and cosponsored by the Commission on the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution to promote greater knowledge and understanding among students of the history and principles of the Constitution. The project, developed by the Center for Civic Education, provides curricular materials for this purpose for use in 11th and 12th grade history and government classes. The project also involves a national competition in which teams of students are challenged to demonstrate their mastery of the curricular material in mock Congressional hearings.

Both a textbook and a teachers' guide, called We The People..., are provided. During 1987-88 ten classroom sets of these materials, consisting of 35 students texts and a teacher's guide, were distributed free to every Congressional district in the country and to the trust territories. In all, 4,500 sets of materials were distributed free, and 1,100 additional sets were purchased for use throughout the country. Program administrators estimated that approximately one-half million students used the materials during the year.

Teachers who participated in the program provided three to six weeks of instruction using We The People... followed by the administration of a test on the history and principles of the U.S. Constitution. Classes that scored well

on the tests could elect to participate in hearings in their Congressional district, and winners of local competitions advanced to state and national contests.

The program will continue until 1991, when the bicentennial of the Bill of Rights is celebrated.

Educational Testing Service was selected to evaluate the instructional effects of the first year of the program. The evaluation had four goals:

1. To judge the effectiveness of the classroom component of the 1987-88 program.
2. To determine how teachers who participated in the program used the We the People... curricular materials.
3. To obtain teachers' judgments regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the We The People... curricular materials and other aspects of the program.
4. To examine the quality of the test and evaluate the testing procedures.

The primary focus of the evaluation was to determine the instructional impact of We The People... on students and to find out whether students who participated in the program knew more about the Constitution and Bill of Rights than comparable students who did not participate. In addition, the investigation examined the ways in which teachers used the curricular materials, teachers' opinions about the curriculum and other aspects of the program, and the quality of the test of the history and principles of the U.S. Constitution.

## Procedures

### Evaluation Questions

The general goals for the study were translated into four specific evaluation questions:

1. What was the impact of the We The People... curricular materials on students' knowledge of the Constitution?
2. In what ways did teachers use the We The People... curricular materials in class?
3. What did teachers feel were the strengths and weaknesses of the We the People... curricular materials, and what was their evaluation of other aspects of the National Bicentennial Competition?
4. How effective were the testing procedures, and how well did the test of the history and principles of the U.S. Constitution perform?

### Sampling

During the first year of the competition, curricular materials were distributed in all 50 states (including 423 congressional districts) and in five trust territories. A random sample of 117 districts from 17 states was selected for the study. Coordinators in each of these districts were informed by mail that they had been selected to participate. They were asked to select one 11th grade participating class, one 12th grade participating class, and one comparison class at either the 11th grade or 12th grade level. The district coordinators were given specific instructions on how to select the participating classes in a random fashion. They also were told to select a comparison class that was as similar as possible to one of the participating classes. Coordinators received three sets of tests and scannable answer sheets, as well as questionnaires for the two participating teachers and the one comparison teacher.

District coordinators contacted the teachers in the sampled classes to solicit their participation. The coordinators were responsible for distributing tests and answer sheets to the teachers, collecting completed answer sheets and mailing them back to ETS. Coordinators also distributed questionnaires and envelopes to teachers, and the teachers mailed the completed questionnaires directly back to the Center for Civic Education.

#### Response Rate

The sampling and data collection activities did not begin until midway through the school year. As a result, many of the sampled districts were not able to participate in the study. Completed answer sheets were received from approximately 20% of the districts in the sample (26 districts in nine states). In all, test results were received from approximately 450 11th grade participating students and 450 12th grade participating students, and from approximately 200 11th grade comparison students and 375 12th grade comparison students.

Participating teacher questionnaires were received from 22 districts in 11 states. Twenty of these questionnaires were filled out by teachers who also returned test results from their classes; seven questionnaires were received from participating teachers who did not return student tests. Comparison teacher questionnaires were received from 19 teachers. Comparison teachers were not asked to identify themselves on the questionnaires in order to insure their anonymity. As a result, it is impossible to know exactly how many districts and states were represented among the nineteen responses. A large enough number of comparison teachers identified themselves voluntarily, or were identifiable through the postmark on the return envelope, to indicate that the comparison teachers who returned questionnaires came from the same cluster of states as the participating teachers who returned questionnaires.



The results are based upon all questionnaires received from the two groups. Percentages do not always total 100% because teachers may not have answered every question or may have given more than one response.

### Methods

The test of the history and principles of the U.S. Constitution developed by the Center for Civic Education was used to measure students' knowledge of the material covered in the curriculum. The test was given to all students in participating and comparison classes. Total scores and subtest scores were compared to assess the impact of program participation. T-tests were used to determine the significance of the observed differences in average scores of the participating and comparison groups. Standard reliability and item analyses were also conducted on the completed examinations received from 11th and 12th grade students. (A copy of the test will be found in Appendix A.)

Questionnaires were used to gather information from teachers of participating and comparison classes. Both groups of teachers were asked to provide background information about the school and the students in the identified class. Participating teachers were asked a series of questions about the ways in which they used the We The People... student text and teacher's edition and the impact of the materials on their students. They also were asked to evaluate different aspects of the curricular materials and the program. Finally, both participating and comparison teachers were asked about the test and the test administration procedures. (A copy of the participating teacher questionnaire is found in Appendix B, and a copy of the comparison teacher questionnaire in Appendix C.)

Comparability of Groups. The sampling procedures were designed to insure that participating and comparison groups were equivalent. District

coordinators were instructed to select comparison classes that were as similar as possible to the participating classes. Despite their diligence, this process was not completely random. As a result, questions about significant background factors were added to the teacher questionnaires to enable more direct comparison of the two groups of classes. Teachers identified the subject of the selected class, estimated the average reading level of students, and reported whether the class had any special designations, such as advanced placement or honors. They also estimated the socio-economic level of students in the school and in the classroom.

The participating classes and the comparison classes were very similar on all of these variables. They were almost exclusively U.S. Government or U.S. History classes, composed of students who were reading at, or above their grade level. Most classes were not special advanced placement or honors courses. Most of the schools were located in suburban or rural neighborhoods, with median family incomes in the range of \$15,000 to \$30,000. While the schools in each group were quite varied in terms of minority enrollment, most of the classes in the evaluation had less than 5% minority students.

This overall description was equally valid for participating classes and comparison classes. The available evidence suggests that the two groups were comparable in every respect, other than their participation in the National Bicentennial Competition. It seems safe to conclude that differences in performance on the test of the history and principles of the U.S. Constitution derive from participation in the competition, not from dissimilarities in background factors. (Data on background variables are summarized in Appendix D.)

Limitations of the Study. There was no evidence that those who participated in the evaluation were unrepresentative of the population.

Furthermore, information provided by the teachers indicated that the participating and comparison groups were comparable on all background variables that were measured. However, because of the low response rate, it was impossible to estimate the actual sampling error or to be certain that observed differences were statistically significant. While there was no reason to doubt the representativeness of the data that were analyzed, caution should be used when interpreting the results. Statistical tests were performed as if the groups were truly random.

## Results

The results are presented in four parts, corresponding to the four evaluation questions: program impact, classroom uses of curricular materials, teachers' evaluations of We the People... and the program, and testing procedures.

### Program Impact

The principal measure of program impact was student performance on the test of the history and principles of the U.S. Constitution. In addition, teachers were asked to indicate other ways that participation in the program affected their students.

Test Performance. The program had a strong positive impact on students' knowledge of the history and principles of the U.S. Constitution. Students who participated in the program scored significantly higher on the test than similar students in classes not using the We The People... materials. (See Table 1.) In grade 12, participating students answered 70% of the questions correctly on the average, compared to 49% correct for students in comparison classes. The difference between the scores of participating and comparison students in grade 11 were also significant, 65% for participants compared to 53% for nonparticipants. This is a clear indication that the project was meeting its goals -- improving students' knowledge of the history of the founding of the United States and the development of the U. S. Constitution.

Significant differences in favor of program participants also were observed in each of the six major curriculum units covered by the test. (See Tables 2 and 3.) The greatest differences between the groups occurred in the area of Political Philosophy. On the questions relating to political philosophy, the average scores of 12th grade participating students were 27% higher than the average scores of comparison students, and the average scores

Table 1

Average Total Percentage Correct By Grade Level\*

Grade Level	Participating Classes	Comparison Classes
11	65%	53%
12	70%	49%

\* All comparisons between participating and comparison classes were statistically significant,  $p < .01$ .

of 11th grade participating students were 18% higher than comparison students. Significant differences in favor of participating students were found in all six curriculum units among 12th grade students. In fact, participating 12th grade students scored 20% higher than comparison students on five of the six units. Grade 11 participants also did significantly better than the comparison group on all six units, though the differences were not as great as those in grade 12.

Other Student Outcome Measures. Test scores were only one of the many potential positive outcomes generated by participation in this program. Teachers were asked to report about other ways that classroom activities and the National Bicentennial Competition affected their students. Teachers' perceptions about the impact of the curriculum were based on their day-to-day interaction with students, and they provided a very important source of information about the effectiveness of the curriculum.

Specifically, teachers were asked about student interest in the Constitution and Bill of Rights, the types of classroom discussions or debates that took place, the level of written work that students produced as a result

Table 2

Average Percentage Correct For Grade 11\*  
By Curriculum Unit

Curriculum Unit (Number of Items)	Participating Classes	Comparison Classes
Political Philosophy (13)	73%	55%
History and Experience (10)	66%	54%
The Constitution (11)	65%	51%
Establishment of the Government (7)	54%	46%
Fundamental Rights (17)	59%	52%
Responsibilities of the Citizen (2)	70%	60%

\* All comparisons between participating and comparison classes were statistically significant,  $p < .01$ .

Table 3

Average Percentage Correct For Grade 12\*  
By Curriculum Unit

Curriculum Unit (Number of Items)	Participating Classes	Comparison Classes
Political Philosophy (13)	78%	51%
History and Experience (10)	71%	48%
The Constitution (11)	68%	46%
Establishment of the Government (7)	64%	43%
Fundamental Rights (17)	67%	51%
Responsibilities of the Citizen (2)	75%	55%

\* All comparisons between participating and comparison classes were statistically significant,  $p < .01$ .

of their participation in the program, contact with Members of Congress or Senators, and other student outcomes that occurred as a result of the program.

Stimulating Student Interest. All of the participating teachers indicated that the We the People... materials stimulated student interest in the Constitution and Bill of Rights. Approximately one-third (30%) said this was true for most of the students in class. Roughly half (52%) said it was true for many of the students in class, while the remaining 22% said it was true for only a few of the students in class.

Student Learning. Teachers were satisfied with the amount of learning that had taken place as a result of the We the People... materials. Approximately two-thirds of the teachers (67%) indicated that 60% or more of the students in class learned the material presented from We the People... to the teacher's satisfaction. None reported that fewer than 20% of the students had satisfactorily mastered the material. The remaining teachers (26%) indicated that 20%-59% of the students in class learned what the teacher hoped they would learn.

Discussion and Debate. Almost all of the teachers (89%) asked students to discuss or to debate topics, as suggested in the We the People... textbook. Those teachers who did use discussion or debate were satisfied with students' performance. Only 4% indicated any degree of dissatisfaction. The vast majority (88%) indicated they were "somewhat satisfied" and 8% indicated that they were "extremely satisfied" with the level of students' discussion or debate.

Written Work. Almost all of the teachers (81%) asked students to prepare written work relating to the curriculum in We the People.... Again, the overwhelming majority of these teachers (96%) were satisfied with the level of students' written work. Only 5% expressed any dissatisfaction.

Contact with Senators and Members of Congress. Slightly less than half of the classes (44%) had some contact with a member of the U. S. House of Representatives, or the member's office, as a result of participation in the Competition. A much lower percentage (11%) had some contact with a U. S. Senator, or the Senator's office, as an outgrowth of their participation in the Competition. Most of the contact related to the dissemination of materials and information about the Competition. In addition, one or two Representatives spoke at training sessions attended by teachers in the sample. One teacher reported that students visited their Senator's office during a field trip to Washington, D.C., to pick up materials relating to the Constitution.

Other Outcomes. Finally, approximately one-half of the teachers (44%) described other interesting student outcomes that occurred as a result of their participation in the Competition. The most frequent comments related to stimulating classroom discussions and participation in the mock hearings. Some of the more interesting comments included,

- The students enjoyed the opportunity to work in groups and share their conclusions with the other students not in their group.
- Students were able to discuss current events with more understanding.
- The students were much more able to defend positions and to debate either side of an issue.
- Students prepared outstanding posters, scrapbooks, etc., which created much interest in their study of the Constitution.
- Awareness of need and purpose of government -- a better appreciation of conflicting opinion.
- One teacher explained that students produced a program recreating the signing of the Constitution.



These evaluative comments from teachers provide additional evidence of the effectiveness of the We the People... materials. In the vast majority of cases, the material stimulated student interest in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The teachers assigned written work, discussions and debates relating to the topic, and were satisfied with the level of student performance. The Competition also stimulated contact between members of Congress and their offices and the local schools. Contact with the offices of members of the House of Representatives was far more common than contact with Senators' offices.

#### Classroom Uses of We The People... Curriculum Materials

The teacher questionnaire for participating classes included a number of questions about the manner in which the teachers used the We the People... materials. These questions inquired about the amount of training teachers received, the way they used the materials in class, the emphasis they placed on the different units in the We the People... curriculum, and other curricular materials they used. Comparison class teachers were asked if they taught a special unit on the Constitution.

Teacher Training. Approximately two-thirds (63%), of the teachers said they received some training in the use of the We the People... curricular materials. The amount of time that was devoted to training is summarized in Table 4. The actual training programs lasted from one to seven hours, and they were fairly evenly distributed across this range. This suggests that there was little uniformity in the approach that was taken to training teachers to use the materials.

Patterns of Use. Teachers were asked to indicate the manner in which they used the We the People... curricular materials. Three-quarters (74%) supplemented existing textbooks with the We the People... student text.

Table 4

Length of Training for Participating Teachers

Training Hours	Participating Classes
None	33%
Less than 1	-
1 to 2	19%
3 to 4	15%
5 to 6	19%
7 or more	11%

Note Percentages may not sum to 100 if teachers omitted this item or indicated more than one choice.

Approximately one-third (30%) indicated that they used We the People... with teacher made materials. Very few (7%) chose to use We the People... as a 'stand alone' unit.

Curriculum Emphasis. There was quite a bit of variation in the emphasis teachers placed on the six main units in the We the People... text. Table 5 presents the distribution of instructional time across the six units. While one-third of the teachers (33%) indicated that they allocated the same number of class periods to each unit, the rest placed varying emphasis on different topics. Teachers tended to increase the amount of time spent on Unit Three (The Constitution) and Unit Five (Fundamental Rights). Unit Six (Responsibilities of the Citizen) was the shortest unit (it contained only one lesson) and teachers devoted less time to it than to any other unit. The greatest variation in time was found in Unit Four (Establishment of the Government). Slightly more than half of the teachers (52%) devoted three class periods or less to this unit, while one or two devoted a dozen class periods or more.

Table 5

Distribution of Instructional Time

Class Periods	PERCENT OF TEACHERS					
	Curriculum Unit					
	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six
None	-	-	-	8%	8%	8%
1-3	46%	46%	33%	50%	33%	63%
4-6	46%	50	38%	25%	29%	25%
7-9	4%	-	8%	8%	8%	-
10-12	49%	-	13%	-	13%	-
13-15	-	4%	8%	4%	4%	-
16 +	-	-	-	4%	-	-

Note. Three teachers indicated only the total amount of time devoted to the curriculum: 20-25, 30, and 32 class periods respectively. One teacher indicated that units five and six were covered later in the semester.

Total Instructional Time. The total amount of instructional time devoted to the curricular materials developed for the National Bicentennial Competition ranged from a minimum of six hours to a maximum of over seventy-five hours. Table 6 summarizes the total instructional time spent on We the People..., and illustrates the considerable variation in the time teachers devoted to this project. Approximately half of the teachers (49%) devoted more than five weeks to the project, while approximately one-quarter (22%) spent three weeks or less covering the topics in the We the People... curriculum.

Other Curriculum Materials. Teachers were asked to describe the other materials they used to teach about the Constitution. There was considerable variety in their responses. The largest number indicated the use of a textbook of some type. These included American Government (Rosencrans),

Table 6

Total Amount of Instructional Time

Class Periods	Percent of Teachers
6-10	15%
11-15	8%
16-20	15%
21-25	12%
26-30	27%
31-35	12%
36 +	12%

Note. One teacher did not indicate instructional hours for all units.

American Government (MacGruder), The Glorious Republic (Gratt), Government in the U.S. (Macmillan), American Government Today, or other textbooks that were not named specifically. Teachers also indicated that they used newspaper articles, films, videotapes and their own materials. Finally, there were a number of teachers who used resources from other organizations and publishers. These included videotapes of the ABC series "We the People," the American Bar Association Series "We the People," Project 87 -- More Than Mere Parchment Under Glass, and a television program called "The Blessings of Liberty". The vast majority of teachers (81%) indicated that they used other materials in addition to We the People... to teach about the Constitution.

Instruction in Comparison Classes. Teachers of the comparison classes were asked to indicate if their students received any special instructions on the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, prior to taking the test. Roughly half the teachers (47%) indicated they had taught a unit on the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, and those who responded said they had spent anywhere from five to forty class periods on this general topic. The distribution of time was similar to the distribution of time reported by participating

teachers, i.e., there was wide variation in the amount of time spent. Most of the remainder of the teachers (42%) indicated that they would be teaching a special unit on the Bill of Rights and the Constitution later in the year.

#### Teachers' Evaluations of We the People... and the Competition

Teachers were asked to evaluate the We the People... curricular materials and the National Bicentennial Competition in a number of ways. They were asked global questions, such as whether they would use the materials again, or recommend their use to other teachers, as well as specific questions about the most successful and least successful lessons, the lesson features they liked the best, and improvements they would suggest. They were asked also about the most appropriate course and grade level for using the materials effectively, how they would rate the importance of the content of We the People... to education, and the kind of support they received from program coordinators.

Use In The Future. A large majority of the teachers (81%), indicated that they would use We the People... materials next year if they were teaching an appropriate course. The remaining teachers said they were not certain whether they would use the material again, and mentioned three or four factors that might affect their decision. Their concerns included the availability of other materials, the belief that the reading level of We the People... was too low for their students, the loss of time from the existing course, and the problems of finding and coordinating audio-visual materials and transparencies to use with the materials. One teacher said that the materials would be used, but with qualifications. "Despite the arguments that the material must be taught in total, I would argue that its real strength is as a supplement," remarked one teacher.

Recommended for Others. While a few teachers had some reservations about the material, respondents were unanimous in recommending it to other

teachers. No one in the sample responded negatively to this question.

Comparison With Other Materials. Teachers were asked to compare We the People... to other civic education curricular materials and other textbooks on the Constitution. Approximately three-quarters of the teachers (74%) said they were familiar with other civic education materials. Of these, 70% thought We the People... was better than or superior to the other civic education curricular materials they had seen. Twenty percent thought We the People... was about the same quality as other civic education materials and only 10% thought that it was not as good as most others.

More than 90% of the teachers said they were familiar with other textbooks on the Constitution. Of these, 64% thought We the People... was better than, or far superior to, the other textbooks they had seen which covered the Constitution. The remaining 36% thought that it was about the same quality as the other textbooks. Overall opinion of participating teachers was that We the People... was among the best curricular materials in the area of civic education and Constitutional education.

Positive Features. The concise "to the point" presentation of material in We the People... was the feature cited most frequently by teachers when they were asked to identify the elements they preferred in the student text. They were not praising merely the brevity of the text, but the fact that "the lessons were short, but had a lot of content." A number of teachers also made positive comments about the way the material was organized and the logical sequence of the presentation. Praise was given as well for the general approach to promoting discussion, problem solving and higher-level thinking skills. In addition, teachers mentioned the fine explanations and examples that were provided and the illustrations found in the student text. This information is summarized in Table 7.

Teachers also were asked which features they liked best in the We the People... teacher's edition. A smaller number of teachers responded to this question than to the previous one, but they mentioned many of the same ideas. Table 8 summarizes the preferred features of the teacher's edition. The suggested activities and lessons were the features mentioned most often. Teachers also liked the logical organization of the material and the handouts provided. Positive features of the teacher's edition are summarized in Table 8.

Table 7

Most Liked Features of Student Text

Feature	Participating Classes
Concise Presentation	19%
Logical Organization	19%
Simple Reading Level	11%
Problem Solving/Discussion Approach	11%
Explanation and Examples	4%
Illustrations	4%

Note. One teacher indicated only the numbers of the most liked lessons: #5 on Civic Virtue and #31 on Responsibilities of the Citizen. Percentages may not sum to 100 if teachers omitted this item or indicated more than one choice.

Most Successful Lessons. Teachers who used the curricular materials were asked to indicate their most successful and least successful lessons, and to comment about the reasons for these differences. A list of all teacher comments will be found in Figure 1.

Approximately two-thirds of the participating teachers (67%) indicated which lessons or units were most successful. Some teachers indicated specific lessons that were most successful, while others identified whole units. Among

Table 8

Most Liked Features of Teacher's Edition

Feature	Participating Classes
Lesson suggestions/ Activities	22%
Handouts	7%
Logical Organization	7%
Discussion Ideas	4%
Readability	4%
Clear Goals	4%

Note. One teacher indicated she did not receive teacher's edition in time to use it. Another said it was not helpful. Percentages may not sum to 100 if teachers omitted this item or indicated more than one choice.

the teachers who indicated a whole unit, there was roughly equal preference for units one, five, and six. Teachers who identified specific lessons mentioned the following: 1, 2, 3, 9, 13, 14, 15, 21, 24, and 26. (Lessons number 1, 21, and 26 were mentioned twice.)

Not all teachers indicated the reason the identified lesson or unit was judged to be most successful, but many did. The reason cited most often was that a particular unit or lesson was the most stimulating for the students. It is encouraging to note that teachers made this type of comment about more than half of the units in the We the People... curricular materials. This indicates that the instructional strategies suggested in the We the People... teacher's edition were indeed effective.

Least Successful Lessons. Teachers also were asked to indicate which of the lessons had been the least successful and to comment on why this was so. There were some negative comments on each of the six curriculum units. The particular lessons the teachers cited as being the least successful included the following: 5, 6, 8-11, 9, 10, 13, 15, 17, 18, 20, 28, and 29. The most



Figure 1

List of Teacher Comments About  
Most Successful Lessons and Reasons Why

Lesson/Unit	Why Successful
Lesson 1	Students were exposed to abstract ideas they hadn't thought about before.
Lessons 1 & 13	The class was more eager to participate in class discussion and had more questions about the lesson.
Lessons 1 & 25	Involvement/stimulation
Lessons 2 & 3	The rationale for the reason and purpose of government was defined very well.
Lesson 9	Students like the radical ideas combined here.
Lesson 21	We used this material as supplemental material.
Lessons 24 & 26	Students were interested in court procedures.
Unit I	Good introduction to concept.
Unit I	They form a good basis for understanding American history.
Units I & III	Most geared to class discussions.
Units I & VI	Participation on their part.
Units IV & VI	Strongest team showing in most of my classes.
Units V & VI	Students were extremely interested in these two units.
Unit V	Most useful to students. Well-suited to discussions.
Units V & VI	Good examples.
Units V & VI	Students could relate to these lessons.

frequent comment was that students had already seen the material in the past, and so it did not capture their interest. The largest amount of criticism related to lessons in units two and three. All teachers' comments about unsuccessful lessons and units and teachers reasons for lack of success are listed in Figure 2.

Suggestions for Improvements. Teachers were asked to offer suggestions for improvements in the We the People... student text and teacher's edition. Few suggestions were given. In fact, many teachers took the time to indicate that they did not have any suggestions for improvements. Almost half of the responses received (44%) were indications that no improvements were needed. On the other hand, seven or eight teachers offered ideas for improving the student text that the developers of the curricular materials might wish to consider. The suggestions were as follows:

Delete English history -- all the suggested activities are not necessary.

Revise lesson five.

Provide more information on court decisions.

Allow more students to take the course -- one classroom is not enough.

List equivalent chapters in standard textbooks.

Make the readings less tedious.

Make the books hardbound -- the texts do not hold up.

More worksheets and activities (\*mentioned twice).

Similar responses were received when teachers were asked whether they had suggestions for improving the teacher's edition that accompanied We the People.... Again, almost half the respondents (46%) indicated they had no suggestions. Suggestions offered included the following:

Refer to page numbers in student text.

Suggestions on how to integrate the material into an American history course.

Figure 2  
List of Teacher Comments About  
Least Successful Lessons and Reasons Why

Lesson/Unit	Why not successful
Lessons 1, 17, & 18	Students do not understand philosophy and were not too interested in the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists.
Lessons 9 & 10	Lesson 9 repeated much of Lesson 1. Much repetition in lesson 10, also.
Lessons 6-8	Stuff on English history didn't seem relevant.
Lessons 17 & 18	Maybe events in school at that time interfered with their concentration in class.
Lessons 8-11	Students felt they were merely repeats of past courses.
Lessons 10 & 15	Repeat of earlier units I had previously covered.
Lessons 28 & 29	Lack of interest.
Units I & II	It was difficult to get the students involved.
Units IV & V	Considered it "old hat" material they had already discussed in every history class they have taken.
Unit III	Very similar to 7th-8th grade content. Although students had the content in middle school, they had not internalized the matter.
Late Lessons	The later lessons would work better if they were more fully integrated into the course of their studies.
Later Units	It was difficult to cover the later units without first having completed the study of American history.

More handouts.

I didn't always follow the suggestions, but no specific improvements are needed.

Check-up quizzes.

Recommended Courses and Grade Levels. Teachers were asked which courses and at which grade levels they believed We the People... could be used most effectively. Almost all of the teachers (89%) indicated that the proper course would be one in either a course in U.S. Government or U.S. History. Government was mentioned more frequently than history by a three to one margin. One or two teachers mentioned courses in civics or political science, but these were the exception.

Almost 90% of the teachers indicated that the curricular materials were appropriate at the eleventh or twelfth grade level. Forty percent recommended the twelfth grade, 30% recommended either eleventh or twelfth grade, and 15% recommended the eleventh grade. It is clear that the teachers believed the materials were appropriate for juniors and/or seniors. More recommended its use in the twelfth grade than any other grade level.

Importance of Content. Teachers asserted quite strongly that the content contained in We the People... was important. Over 90% indicated that the content of We the People... curricular materials was either very important, or extremely important in the area of civic education. In fact, almost the same number (89%), believed that the content was very important, or extremely important in education in general. None of the teachers expressed the opinion that the content of the material was of little or no importance, either in the area of civic education or general education.

Support From Coordinators. Finally, teachers were asked whether they had received adequate support from their district or state coordinators, and if they had any suggestions for ways in which coordinators might have been

more helpful. The overwhelming majority (81%), indicated that they had received direct support from a coordinator. Only eleven percent said they had not.

A number of comments were made about ways in which the coordinators had been helpful, and ways in which they might be more helpful. The responses indicated a wide variation in the amount of contact that existed between coordinators and participating teachers. A few teachers praised the support they received from their coordinators, "I knew I could ask questions anytime!" "The district coordinator was very helpful and kept me up to date on any developments." Two teachers indicated that the coordinators had been very helpful in conducting the workshop and training session. One teacher expressed pleasure with the "moral support, training and enthusiasm", shown by the coordinator. However, another complained that "more direct contact would help." This suggests that there was variation in the relationships between coordinators and participating teachers.

The area in need of greatest improvement appeared to be organization and communication. As one teacher wrote, "The program appears disorganized; there's a lack of communication." A second teacher offered a similar comment, "We didn't get clear instructions on the materials in time." Two other teachers also made comments about the need for better communication.

A couple of the suggestions offered by teachers indicated that the in-service was not held, or was held late. One commented that the coordinator could offer more help in this area. The other two issues that were mentioned most often were the need for supplemental materials and the need to be kept informed about changes in the Competition.

In summary, teachers had very positive reactions to the We the People... curricular materials and the National Bicentennial Competition. They were

overwhelmingly positive in their comparisons with other materials, and offered few suggestions for changes or improvements in the materials. Those who designed the project should be complimented for the organization and presentation of the material. In general, teachers found it to be an excellent supplement to their curriculum, and one which they were able to use fairly effectively. It would appear that coordination of the competition and dissemination and communication of information are the areas in which there is the greatest potential for improvement.

Comparison Teachers' Knowledge of the Competition. Teachers in the comparison group were asked about their knowledge of the National Bicentennial Competition and the We the People... curricular materials. All but one teacher indicated that they had heard about the Competition. Over two-thirds of the comparison teachers (68%) reported that they had seen the We the People... curricular materials. Over half (53%) said they would like to participate in the National Bicentennial Competition or use the curricular materials in their own classes next year.

#### Assessing the Performance of the Test

Teachers were also asked a number of questions about the test of the history and principles of the U.S. Constitution. Both participating teachers and comparison teachers were asked to comment on the difficulty of the test and the test administration process. Participating teachers also answered questions about the passing score and the match between the test and the curriculum. An item analysis was conducted to examine the performance of the test items.

Test Difficulty. Most teachers (74%) indicated that they felt the test was "somewhat difficult" for students in their class. This judgment was shared by participating class teachers and comparison class teachers. Table 9 summarizes the responses from both groups of teachers to the question on test

difficulty. It is interesting to note that a larger percentage of teachers in the participating classes than in comparison classes rated the test as extremely difficult.

Table 9

Difficulty of Test

Difficulty Rating	Participating Classes	Comparison Classes
Extremely Difficult	19%	5%
Somewhat Difficult	74%	84%
Somewhat Easy	7%	5%
Extremely Easy	-	-

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 if teachers omitted this item or indicated more than one choice.

Curriculum Match. Teachers of participating classes were asked to indicate how well the test of the history and principles of the Constitution matched the curriculum that was contained in We the People.... Their responses are summarized in Table 10. Over 80% of the teachers indicated that the test assessed student knowledge of the curriculum either moderately well or extremely well. This is ample evidence of the content validity of the test as a measure of the concepts in the We the People... curriculum. The fact that 11% of the teachers rated the match between test content and curriculum content poor or extremely poor suggests that the test developers review specific items and consider minor revisions.

Comments on Specific Test Questions. Both participating and comparison teachers were given an opportunity to identify specific questions they felt were wrong or inappropriate. Only 5% of the comparison teachers and 11% of the participating teachers said there were inappropriate questions. However,

Table 10

Match between Test and Curriculum

Degree of Match	Participating Classes
Extremely Well	19%
Moderately Well	67%
Moderately Poor	7%
Extremely Poor	4%

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 if teachers omitted this item or indicated more than one choice.

when given the opportunity to indicate the questions or the content area, they provided very little useful information. One teacher said only that some questions were "obscure." Another commented that "all of the above" is a poor answer choice. A third added that the test is geared for college-bound students. Three teachers commented that some of the questions had several possible answers. One wrote "Some questions seem to have multiple correct answers. My students are not used to these types of questions." Finally, one noted that many questions seemed philosophically advanced for high school students.

Test Instructions and Administration. Both groups of teachers indicated that the instructions for administering the test were adequate. All of the teachers in both groups rated instructions as either clear or extremely clear. Similarly, no problems were reported during the administration of the test by either group of teachers.

More than one-third of the teachers in the comparison group (37%) said the test itself had raised questions that stimulated new classroom lessons. These teachers reported teaching new lessons on the following topics: political philosophy, due process and judicial review, the Bill of Rights, the



Federalists, origins of the Constitution, and establishment of government.

Passing Score. Participating teachers were asked whether they thought the passing score had been set at an appropriate level. Eighty percent indicated that the passing score (70% correct) was about right. Nineteen percent indicated that they thought it was too high, and none of the teachers thought the passing score was too low. This is a very strong confirmation of the work that was done in establishing the passing score, and does not suggest any need for change.

Reliability and Item Analysis. Test results collected from students who participated in the evaluation were used to examine the reliability of the test and to explore the effectiveness of individual test questions. Test reliability ranged from .81 to .90, using data from the participating and comparison groups in grades 11 and 12. These values are quite high, and they indicate that the test measured student performance quite consistently. Item analyses of the test produced no unusual findings. Both item difficulty and item discrimination indices were within normal bounds for all four groups of students. Overall, the test performed as anticipated.

### Conclusions

Overall, the first National Bicentennial Competition on the Constitution and Bill of Rights was a great instructional success. The We The People... curricular materials were highly regarded by teachers and well received by students. In particular, use of the materials had a strong positive impact on students' knowledge of, and interest in, the Constitution. These results were confirmed by test scores and by teacher judgments about student classroom behaviors.

Most teachers used the We The People... curricular materials as a supplement to their regular instructional program. Similarly, most teachers followed suggestions in the teacher's edition and engaged the students in discussions and debates. Teachers assigned written work as well, and they expressed satisfaction with student participation in all these activities. Overall, teachers were quite pleased with the curricular materials, preferring the We The People... student text and teacher's edition to any other curricular materials they had seen in this field.

The evaluation also examined the test used to determine students' knowledge of the Constitution. Teachers felt that the test of the history and principles of the U. S. Constitution was a valid reflection of the content of the curriculum, and they agreed that the passing score was set at an appropriate level. An item analysis showed that the test was reliable and the individual questions performed well.

Of course, there is always room for improvement. Teachers felt some lessons were more effective than others, and they offered suggestions for improvements that should be read carefully by program administrators.

Teachers

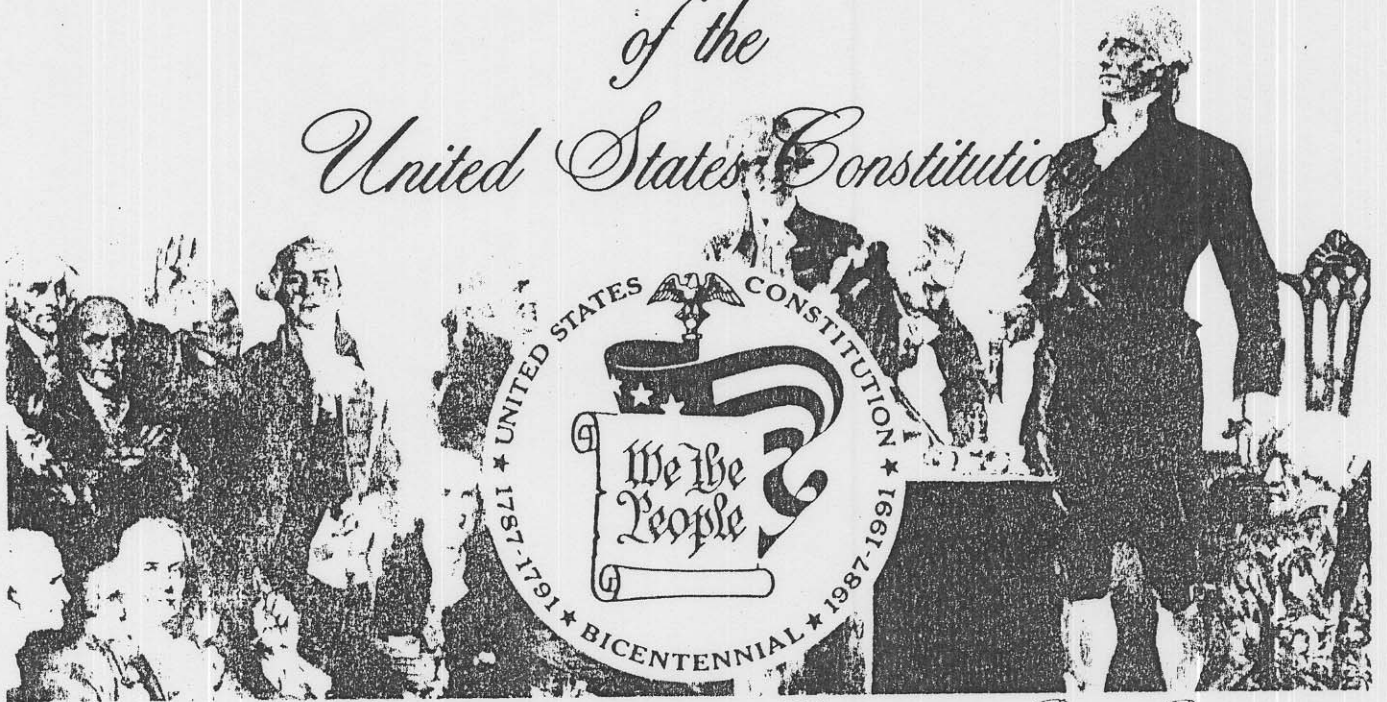
complained that one or two test questions were "obscure" or confusing, and these test items should be reviewed as well. Minor problems were reported in organization and communication, which should be easy to remedy in future years when more time will be available for program implementation. In-service training was provided for some teachers, but not for all, and the training that was offered varied considerably in length. Most coordinators were extremely helpful, but not all provided adequate contact with teachers. Program administrators might focus their attention on these few problem areas when planning for next year's program.

In summary, the 1987-88 National Bicentennial Competition achieved its major instructional goals of increasing students' knowledge of the Constitution and Bill of Rights and stimulating students' interest in these topics. The We The People... student text and teacher's guide won praise from teachers and were effective in communicating ideas to students. Finally, the program stimulated contact between the schools and Senators and Members of Congress.


Appendix A:

The Test on the History and Principles  
of the U.S. Constitution

*Test on the History and Principles  
of the  
United States Constitution*



*National Bicentennial Competition on the Constitution and Bill of Rights*

a project of the  
**Center for Civic Education** 

cosponsored by the  
**Commission on the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution**

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**Instructions:** For each question, select the one best answer. Mark your answers on a separate answer sheet as instructed by your teacher.

1. According to the natural rights philosophers, governments get their authority to rule from
  - a. ancient traditions.
  - b. the consent of the governed.
  - c. elected leaders.
  - d. all of the above.
2. An agreement among people to form a government to protect their rights is known as a
  - a. state of nature.
  - b. confederation.
  - c. social contract.
  - d. proclamation.
3. According to the natural rights philosophy, the main purpose of government is
  - a. to create a democracy.
  - b. to protect the individual's rights.
  - c. to create a system of separation of powers.
  - d. all of the above.
4. According to John Locke, if a government does not serve the purposes for which it was established, the people
  - a. should accept it and wait for the next election.
  - b. have a right to change it or do away with it.
  - c. should refuse to obey laws with which they disagree.
  - d. should refuse to pay its taxes.
5. The purpose of republican government is to
  - a. promote the common welfare.
  - b. establish a monarchy.
  - c. provide voting rights to all citizens.
  - d. maintain public order.
6. Which of the following best defines "civic virtue"?
  - a. Giving authority to government in exchange for protection of your natural rights.
  - b. Putting the common welfare above your own individual interests.
  - c. Giving up some of your natural rights in order to create a strong government.
  - d. Separating power among groups to maintain a balanced government.
7. James Madison defined a republic as a government in which
  - a. laws are made directly by the people.
  - b. all citizens, rich or poor, may vote.
  - c. laws are made by representatives of the people.
  - d. there are two houses in the legislature.
8. What is more characteristic of a constitutional government than of a dictatorial government?
  - a. Efficient government officials.
  - b. Effective legal limitations on powers.
  - c. A written constitution.
  - d. Elected public officials.
9. Which of the following is required for a constitution to be considered a "higher law"?
  - a. No other law may conflict with it.
  - b. It provides for three branches of government.
  - c. It cannot be changed.
  - d. It must be written.
10. The purpose of the separation of powers in the United States Constitution is to
  - a. make the government more efficient.
  - b. allow more people to hold office.
  - c. prevent the misuse of power.
  - d. provide for legislative supremacy.
11. Most of the Framers of our Constitution would have agreed with which statement?
  - a. Only a wise and fair few can be trusted with power.
  - b. Only kings cannot be trusted with power.
  - c. Human beings tend to abuse powers given to them.
  - d. Most people are naturally good and will protect the common welfare when given power.
12. Which of the following statements about a constitution is correct?
  - a. All governments with constitutions are limited governments.
  - b. Some societies do not have constitutions.
  - c. Dictatorial governments lack constitutions.
  - d. Constitutions may be unwritten.

13. The Founders' ideas of constitutional government were influenced by
- the development of English government.
  - their colonial experiences.
  - their reading of history and political philosophy.
  - all of the above.
14. The Magna Carta is an important document in the development of English government because it
- authorized the first Parliament.
  - announced that England was a monarchy.
  - set limits on the power of the king.
  - eliminated the powers of the nobility.
15. Which basic ideas of constitutional government could be found in the American colonies?
- Separation of powers.
  - Checks and balances.
  - Representative government.
  - All of the above.
16. The right to vote in colonial America was usually restricted to which group?
- People who had been born in England.
  - White men who owned property.
  - Men who had been in military service.
  - Descendants of the original settlers.
17. Which statement best describes the English colonies during most of the period under British rule?
- They were under the strict control of the king.
  - They frequently united to deal with common problems.
  - They quarrelled bitterly with the Parliament.
  - They were largely free to govern themselves.
18. Many colonists looked to the English political system as a good example of
- federalism.
  - efficient monarchy.
  - extension of voting rights.
  - separation of powers.
19. Which of the following ideas is NOT in the Declaration of Independence?
- Government is based on a social contract.
  - Government's purpose is to protect natural rights.
  - All men have the right to vote.
  - People have the right to change their government.
20. The belief that political power is derived from the people is called
- judicial review.
  - unitary government.
  - popular sovereignty.
  - legislative supremacy.
21. Which of the following did the authors of the Articles of Confederation fear?
- The will of the people.
  - Too much democracy.
  - Legislative supremacy.
  - A strong national government.
22. Some Founders believed that majority rule could be a threat to
- representative government.
  - local self-government.
  - natural rights.
  - laissez faire.
23. The major purpose of the articles in *The Federalist* was to
- describe the debates at the Convention.
  - show how compromises had been arrived at.
  - call for a bill of rights to be added to the Constitution.
  - convince people to support ratification of the Constitution.
24. In the debate over representation in Congress, the larger states generally favored
- equal representation.
  - proportional representation.
  - bipartisan representation.
  - limited representation.



25. The Great Compromise at the Philadelphia Convention settled the problem of
- who would control trade between the states.
  - how justices of the Supreme Court would be selected.
  - what the term of office for the president would be.
  - how the states would be represented in the Congress.
26. The major reason that Framers from non-slaveholding states agreed to recognize slavery in the Constitution was that they
- expected to expand slavery to the Northern states.
  - wanted equal representation in Congress.
  - wanted greater representation in Congress.
  - wanted slaveholding states to join the new nation.
27. According to the supremacy clause of the Constitution, the "supreme law of the land" refers to
- the Constitution, federal laws, and treaties.
  - decisions of the Supreme Court.
  - acts of the president.
  - laws passed by state legislatures.
28. The right of the Senate to approve or disapprove a presidential treaty is an example of
- impeachment.
  - checks and balances.
  - pluralism.
  - federalism.
29. Why did the Framers adopt the electoral college method of choosing a president?
- They didn't trust the judgment of the people.
  - They were afraid the people would not vote.
  - They had used that system in the colonies.
  - They modeled it after the successful British system.
30. When the Supreme Court declares a law unconstitutional, it is using its power of
- legislative discretion.
  - judicial review.
  - judicial restraint.
  - habeas corpus.
31. The Federalists believed that the best way to protect natural rights was to
- have a bill of rights in the Constitution.
  - rely on checks and balances and separation of powers.
  - provide for a highly educated people.
  - allow all adult males the right to vote.
32. A major argument in *The Federalist* was that the Constitution would effectively control
- factions.
  - voters.
  - the electoral college.
  - property owners.
33. The Constitution was ratified by
- special conventions called in each state.
  - the state legislatures.
  - the Continental Congress.
  - delegates to the Philadelphia Convention.
34. Anti-Federalists opposed the Constitution because they believed it
- established a weak national government.
  - lacked enforcement power for its laws.
  - would lead to domestic violence.
  - threatened the rights of the people.
35. The Bill of Rights
- sets up the system of checks and balances.
  - is part of Article I outlining the powers of Congress.
  - deals with the powers of the president.
  - is the first ten amendments to the Constitution.
36. The Bill of Rights was adopted to
- protect the rights of the state governments.
  - guarantee that the rights of the executive branch are not violated.
  - protect minority rights.
  - list and guarantee basic individual rights.
37. The first political parties in the United States developed because of differences regarding
- the role of the president in the new nation.
  - the power of the federal government.
  - the power of the judiciary over the legislature.
  - the interpretation of the Bill of Rights.

38. The Framers called a group of citizens that pursued its own selfish interests at the expense of the general welfare a
- faction.
  - bureaucracy.
  - private domain.
  - monopoly.
39. In the Constitution the right of judicial review is
- not mentioned.
  - specifically forbidden.
  - reserved for the state courts only.
  - given to the Supreme Court.
40. Critics of judicial review claim that it conflicts with principles of
- original jurisdiction.
  - the supremacy clause.
  - constitutionalism.
  - representative government.
41. The Supreme Court's restriction of wiretapping as a violation of the Fourth Amendment is an example of which method of interpreting the Constitution?
- Literal meaning of the words.
  - Intentions of the Framers.
  - Basic principles and values under contemporary circumstances.
  - All of the above.
42. Sovereignty in the United States system of government resides in the
- Constitution.
  - states.
  - Congress.
  - people.
43. The decision in the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* case moved toward a goal of the civil rights movement in ruling that
- civil service workers should be protected.
  - accused criminals should be given greater rights.
  - there should be a "wall of separation" between church and state.
  - racial segregation should be ended in public schools.
44. The basic reason for the passage of the Civil War Amendments to the Constitution was to
- abolish slavery.
  - give the recently freed slaves national and state citizenship.
  - give the recently freed male slaves the right to vote.
  - all of the above.
45. In the past, poll taxes, literacy tests, and grandfather clauses were used to
- expand suffrage.
  - deny black citizens the right to vote.
  - establish uniform national voting requirements.
  - enforce the provisions of the 15th Amendment.
46. "Due process" means that the laws and procedures of government must be
- widely publicized.
  - speedy and final.
  - obeyed by all citizens.
  - fair and reasonable.
47. The right to a fair trial provided in the Bill of Rights reflects which of the following values?
- Privacy.
  - Authority.
  - Limited government.
  - Responsibility.
48. The protections of procedural due process provided by the Bill of Rights are intended to
- protect criminals.
  - make it more difficult for the police to enforce the law.
  - prevent the abuse of power.
  - increase the probability of convicting guilty persons.
49. The freedoms guaranteed by the Bill of Rights are protected against state actions by the Supreme Court's interpretation of the
- "necessary and proper" clause.
  - First Amendment.
  - "full faith and credit" clause.
  - Fourteenth Amendment.

50. The purpose of the right to a writ of habeas corpus is to protect the individual against
- accusation of treason.
  - unlawful detention.
  - cruel and unusual punishment.
  - self-incrimination.
51. The Supreme Court has held that the government may regulate religious practices if they
- differ from those of most of society.
  - are thought to be unpatriotic during time of war.
  - threaten the public's health and safety.
  - subject all religions to ridicule.
52. Which of the following situations might violate a "First Amendment right"?
- Police examine a high school student's locker.
  - A state legislature passes a law prohibiting the possession of firearms.
  - Prisoners are not allowed to consult their attorneys.
  - A town council refuses to grant a permit for the Ku Klux Klan to march.
53. Which was the largest group of American citizens ever denied the right to vote?
- Blacks.
  - Women.
  - Indians.
  - Catholics.
54. With regard to voting, the Constitution in 1787
- extended the right to vote to all white males over the age of twenty-one.
  - allowed only male property owners over twenty-one to vote in national elections.
  - established twenty-one as the voting age but left other requirements to the states.
  - allowed the states to set the voting requirements.
55. Prayer periods in public schools are allowed by the Supreme Court
- if the prayers are short and non-denominational.
  - if students may be excused from participating.
  - if the prayers do not favor one religion.
  - in no instances.
56. The right of freedom of speech in western civilization has been
- allowed by most governments, with minor exceptions.
  - accepted since the Middle Ages.
  - a gradual development over centuries.
  - always accepted in theory.
57. The Supreme Court has interpreted the First Amendment to mean that freedom of expression may be
- considered an absolute right.
  - balanced against other values and interests.
  - exercised only by citizens.
  - suspended only by a two-thirds vote of Congress.
58. Freedom of expression is valued in our democracy because it
- aids in discovering the truth.
  - is essential to representative democracy.
  - provides a "safety-valve" for dissatisfied citizens.
  - all of the above.
59. In the United States, the responsibilities that accompany basic rights are considered to be based on
- coercion.
  - law.
  - consent.
  - interest.
60. Which of the following rights do citizens have that aliens do not?
- The right to due process.
  - The right to inherit property.
  - The right to vote and hold public office.
  - The right to trial by jury.



*National Bicentennial Competition*  
*on the Constitution and Bill of Rights*

cosponsored by the Commission on the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution  
and funded by an act of Congress

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Answer Sheet

Cross off correct answer with an X.

1. a b c d
2. a b c d
3. a b c d
4. a b c d
5. a b c d
6. a b c d
7. a b c d
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9. a b c d
10. a b c d
11. a b c d
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58. a b c d
59. a b c d
60. a b c d

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Answer Key for test on the  
History and Principles of the U.S. Constitution

- 1. b
- 2. c
- 3. b
- 4. b
- 5. a
- 6. b
- 7. c
- 8. b
- 9. a
- 10. c
- 11. c
- 12. d
- 13. d
- 14. c
- 15. d
- 16. b
- 17. d
- 18. d
- 19. c
- 20. c

- 21. d
- 22. c
- 23. d
- 24. b
- 25. d
- 26. d
- 27. a
- 28. b
- 29. a
- 30. b
- 31. b
- 32. a
- 33. a
- 34. d
- 35. d
- 36. d
- 37. b
- 38. a
- 39. a
- 40. d

- 41. c
- 42. d
- 43. d
- 44. d
- 45. b
- 46. d
- 47. c
- 48. c
- 49. d
- 50. b
- 51. c
- 52. d
- 53. b
- 54. d
- 55. d
- 56. c
- 57. b
- 58. d
- 59. c
- 60. c

Appendix B:

Participating Teacher Questionnaire



# We the People... Teacher Questionnaire

One of your classes was selected at random to be part of an evaluation of the We The People... curriculum. Please answer the following questions as they apply to that particular class (referred to as "the selected class"). If you need more room, please feel free to write on the back of this form or attach extra pages.

What was your classroom code number (if you remember it)? \_\_\_\_\_ If not, please identify:

State: \_\_\_\_\_

School name: \_\_\_\_\_

District number: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade level of selected class: \_\_\_\_\_

### BACKGROUND

1. What was the subject of the selected class?

- U.S. History (1)
- U.S. Government (2)
- Civics (3)
- Political Science (4)
- Other (5) (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

2. What would you estimate to be the average reading level of students in the selected class?

- Far above grade level (1)
- Somewhat above grade level (2)
- At grade level (3)
- Somewhat below grade level (4)
- Far below grade level (5)

3. Was the selected class designated as an Advanced Placement, honors or enrichment class?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If yes, please describe \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Was the selected class designated as a special education, learning disabled or other special class?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If yes, please describe \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Which of these terms best describes the area served by your school?

- Urban (1)
- Suburban (2)
- Rural (3)
- Other (4) (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

6. What would you estimate to be the average income of the families whose children attend this school?

- Below \$15,000 (1)
- \$15,001 - \$30,000 (2)
- \$30,001 - \$45,000 (3)
- \$45,001 - \$60,000 (4)
- Above \$60,000 (5)
- I do not know (6)

7. Approximately what percentage of the students in the school are members of minority racial/ethnic groups?

- 0% to 5% (1)
- 6% to 10% (2)
- 11% to 20% (3)
- 21% to 40% (4)
- 41% to 60% (5)
- Above 60% (6)

8. Approximately what percentage of the students in the selected class are members of minority racial/ethnic groups?

- 0 to 5% (1)
- 6% to 10% (2)
- 11% to 20% (3)
- 21% to 40% (4)
- 41% to 60% (5)
- Above 60% (6)

**INSTRUCTIONAL USES OF We the People...**

9. Did you receive training in using the We the People... curriculum materials?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If yes, approximately how many hours of training did you receive? (If no, skip this question)

- Less than 1 hour (1)
- 1 - 2 hours (2)
- 3 - 4 hours (3)
- 5 - 6 hours (4)
- 7 or more hours (5)

10. Approximately how many class periods did you devote to each of the six major units of We the People...?

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Number of Class Periods</u>
One: Political Philosophy	_____
Two: History and Experience	_____
Three: The Constitution	_____
Four: Establishment of the Government	_____
Five: Fundamental Rights	_____
Six: Responsibilities of the Citizen	_____

11. Which phrase best describes the manner in which you used the We the People... materials?

- Stand alone unit (1)
- With existing textbooks (2)
- With teacher-made materials (3)
- Other (4) Please describe:

12. Please list the two lessons that were the most successful in the selected class?

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Why do you think this was so? \_\_\_\_\_

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13. Please list the two lessons that were the least successful in the selected class?

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Why do you think this was so? \_\_\_\_\_

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14. In addition to We the People... what other teacher-made or commercial materials did you use to teach about the Constitution?

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**IMPACT OF We the People...  
ON STUDENTS**

15. Did We the People... stimulate student interest in the Constitution and Bill of Rights?

- Yes, for most students (1)
- Yes, for many students (2)
- Yes, for a few students (3)
- No, for no students (4)

16. Approximately what percentage of the students learned the material you presented from We the People... to your satisfaction?

- 0% to 19% (1)
- 20% to 39% (2)
- 40% to 59% (3)
- 60% to 79% (4)
- 80% to 100% (5)

17. Did you ask students to discuss or debate any topics suggested in the book?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If yes, were you satisfied with the level of students' discussion or debate? (If no, skip this question)

- Extremely satisfied (1)
- Somewhat satisfied (2)
- Somewhat dissatisfied (3)
- Extremely dissatisfied (4)

18. Did you ask students to prepare written work based on the curriculum in We the People...?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If yes, were you satisfied with the level of students' written work? (If no, skip this question)

- Extremely satisfied (1)
- Somewhat satisfied (2)
- Somewhat dissatisfied (3)
- Extremely dissatisfied (4)

19. Please describe any other interesting student outcomes that occurred as a result of your use of We the People... (Please attach additional sheets of paper if necessary.)

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20. Did you or your students have any contact with your Member of Congress or the Member's office as a result of this program?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

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21. Did you or your students have any contact with one or both of your Senators or their offices as a result of this program?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If yes, please describe:: \_\_\_\_\_

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**GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT  
We the People...**

22. In which grade level(s) would We the People... be used most effectively?

- 10th grade (1)
- 11th grade (2)
- 12th grade (3)
- 10th or 11th (4)
- 11th or 12th (5)
- 10th, 11th or 12th (6)

23. In which course(s) would We the People... be used most effectively?

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24. If you were teaching such a course next year would you want to use We the People...?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Not certain (3)

If you are not certain, what would affect your choice?

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25. Would you recommend We the People... to other teachers?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If not, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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26. Are you familiar with other civic education curriculum materials

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If yes, how does We the People... compare with other civic education materials you have seen?

- Superior to the others
- Better than most others
- About the same as others
- Not as good as most others
- Inferior to the others

27. Are you familiar with other textbooks on the Constitution

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If yes, how does We the People... compare with other textbooks on the Constitution you have seen?

- Superior to the others
- Better than most others
- About the same as others
- Not as good as most others
- Inferior to the others

28. Which features did you like best in the We the People... student text?

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29. Which features did you like best in the We the People... teachers' edition?

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30. Do you have any suggestions for improvements in the We the People... student text?

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31. Do you have any suggestions for improvements in the teachers' edition that accompanied We the People...?

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32. How important is the content of We the People... in the area of civic education?

- Extremely important (1)
- Very important (2)
- Average importance (3)
- Little importance (4)
- No importance (5)

33. How important is the content of We the People... to general education?

- Extremely important (1)
- Very important (2)
- Average importance (3)
- Little importance (4)
- No importance (5)

34. Did you receive adequate support from your district and/or state coordinator?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

35. In what ways were they helpful? In what ways might they have been more helpful?

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**THE TEST ON THE HISTORY AND PRINCIPLES OF THE U.S. CONSTITUTION**

36. How difficult was the test for students in the selected class?

- Extremely difficult (1)
- Somewhat difficult (2)
- Somewhat easy (3)
- Extremely easy (4)

37. How well did the test assess students' knowledge of the We the People... curriculum?

- Extremely well (1)
- Moderately well (2)
- Moderately poorly (3)
- Extremely poorly (4)

38. Was the passing score (70% correct) set at the appropriate level?

- Too high (1)
- About right (2)
- Too low (3)

39. Were there any specific test questions that seemed wrong or inappropriate?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If yes, which ones (indicate the number or describe the content):

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40. How clear were the instructions for administering the test?

- extremely clear (1)
- clear (2)
- unclear (3)
- extremely unclear (4)

41. Were there any problems during the administration of the test?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

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Appendix C:

Comparison Teacher Questionnaire



## Comparison Classes Teacher Questionnaire

Thank you for giving the test on the history and principles of the Constitution to one of your classes. Please refer to that class when answering the following questions.

1. What was the subject of the selected class?

- U.S. History (1)
- U.S. Government (2)
- Civics (3)
- Political Science (4)
- Other (5) (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

2. What was the average reading level of students in the selected class?

- Far above grade level (1)
- Somewhat above grade level
- At grade level (3)
- Somewhat below grade level
- Far below grade level (5)

3. Did the selected class have any special characteristics (e.g. advanced placement, learning disabled, etc.)?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Which of these terms best describes the area served by your school?

- Urban (1)
- Suburban (2)
- Rural (3)
- Other (4) (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

5. What would you estimate to be the average income of the families whose children attend this school?

- Below \$15,000 (1)
- \$15,001 - \$30,000 (2)
- \$30,001 - \$45,000 (3)
- \$45,001 - \$60,000 (4)
- Above \$60,001 (5)
- I do not know

6. Approximately what percentage of the students in the school are members of minority racial/ethnic groups?

- 0% to 5% (1)
- 6% to 10% (2)
- 11% to 20% (3)
- 21% to 40% (4)
- 41% to 60% (5)
- Above 60% (6)

7. Approximately what percentage of the students in the selected class are members of minority racial/ethnic groups?

- 0% to 5% (1)
- 6% to 10% (2)
- 11% to 20% (3)
- 21% to 40% (4)
- 41% to 60% (5)
- Above 60% (6)

8. Did you teach a special unit on the Constitution and Bill of Rights before giving the test?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If yes, approximately how many class periods did you devote to this unit?

\_\_\_\_\_ Class periods

9. Will you be teaching a special unit on the Constitution and Bill of Rights later in the year?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

10. How difficult was the test for students in your class?

- Extremely difficult (1)
- Somewhat difficult (2)
- Somewhat easy (3)
- Extremely easy (4)

11. Were there any specific test questions that seemed wrong or inappropriate?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If yes, which ones (indicate the number or describe the content):

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12. How clear were the instructions for administering the test?

- extremely clear (1)
- clear (2)
- unclear (3)
- extremely unclear (4)

13. Were there any problems during the administration of the test?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

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14. Did the test raise questions that stimulated you to teach new lessons?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If yes, which topics were involved? \_\_\_\_\_

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15. Have you heard about the National Bicentennial Competition on the Constitution and Bill of Rights that is being implemented in your Congressional district?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

16. Have you seen the We the People... curriculum materials?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

17. Would you like to participate in the National Bicentennial Competition and/or use the We the People... curriculum next year?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Appendix D:

Background Characteristics of  
Participating and Comparison Classes

Questions about student and community background factors were added to the teacher questionnaires to allow more detailed comparison of the two groups of classes. Teachers identified the subject of the selected class, estimated the average reading level of students, and reported whether the class had any special designations, such as advanced placement or honors. They also estimated the socioeconomic level of students in the school and in the identified classes. The distribution of the two groups of classes on each of the background variables will be found in tables D.1-D.6.

Subject. Table D.1 displays the subject of the classes in each group. Approximately half of the classes in each group were courses in U.S. Government, and the vast majority of each group were either U.S. Government or U.S. History classes. The remainder of the classes included Civics, Political Science, Constitutional Studies, and Sociology.

Table D.1

Subject of Class

Subject	Participating Classes	Comparison Classes
U.S. History	30%	39%
U.S. Government	52%	50%
Civics	4%	-
Political Science	-	11%
Other *	15%	-

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 if teachers omitted this item or indicated more than one choice.

\* Other included: Constitutional Studies, AP American History, U.S. History and Government, and Sociology.

Reading Level. Roughly half of the teachers in each group indicated that the average reading level of the students in their classes was at grade



level. Table D.2 summarizes the information regarding reading level. The distribution of reading levels among the participating classes was slightly higher than among the comparison classes. Fifty-two percent of the participating classes indicated that the average reading level of students was somewhat above grade level, or far above grade level, compared with 37% percent of the comparison classes. In contrast, the average reading level in 16% of the comparison classes was below grade level, while only 4% of the participating classes were reported to be reading below grade level on the average.

Table D.2

Average Reading Level of Classes

Reading Level	Participating Classes	Comparison Classes
Far Above Grade Level	11%	16%
Somewhat Above Grade Level	41%	21%
At Grade Level	55%	47%
Somewhat Below Grade Level	-	11%
Far Below Grade Level	4%	5%

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 if teachers omitted this item or indicated more than one choice.

Urbanization. Both groups consisted primarily of schools that were located in suburban or rural neighborhoods. Eighty-two percent of the participating classes came from suburban or rural neighborhoods, compared to 89% of the comparison classes. Table D.3 contains a specific breakdown of the type of local area represented by the two collections of schools.

Family Income. The group of participating classes had a slightly lower level average family income than the group of comparison classes. (See Table D.4.) The majority of students in both groups came from families whose

Table D.3

Urbanization of Local Area

Classification	Participating Classes	Comparison Classes
Urban	15%	11%
Suburban	41%	58%
Rural	41%	31%
Other *	7%	5%

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 if teachers omitted this item or indicated more than one choice.

\* Other included combinations of urban and suburban.

average income was estimated to be between \$15,000 and \$30,000 per year. A somewhat larger percentage of classes in the comparison group had family incomes above \$45,000 a year.

Minority Enrollment. Teachers also estimated the minority enrollment in the identified class, as well as the minority enrollment in the school. The percentage of minority students in the school was almost identical for the participating and comparison classes. This is not surprising, because many of the participating and comparison classes were selected from the same schools. Table D.5 illustrates the range of minority student enrollment in the schools from which participating and comparison classes were drawn. Slightly more than one-third of the classes in each group had less than 5% of the students identified as minority groups. Roughly one-third indicated that the percentage of minority students in the school ranged between 6% and 20%, while roughly one-third indicated that the minority percentage was above 20%. A substantially greater percentage of the schools in the comparison class group (26%) than the participating class group (4%) had minority enrollments above 60%.

Table D.4

Average Family Income at School

Income Level	Participating Classes	Comparison Classes
Below \$15,000	4%	5%
\$15,001 to \$30,000	74%	58%
\$30,001 to \$45,000	15%	-
\$45,001 to \$60,000	-	11%
Above \$60,000	4%	11%
Unknown	7%	11%

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 if teachers omitted this item or indicated more than one choice.

In comparison, Table D.6 displays the level of minority enrollment in the identified participating and comparison classes. In both groups, the classes themselves contained a lower percentage of minority students than the school as a whole. Over 60% of the participating classes had less than 6% minority students, while this was true of roughly half (47%) of the comparison classes. Similarly, a slightly greater percentage of comparison classes had greater than 20% minority enrollment: 29% of the participating classes versus 37% of the comparison classes.

Table D.5

Minority Enrollment in School

School Minority Percentage	Participating Classes	Comparison Classes
0% to 5%	37%	37%
6% to 10%	11%	11%
11% to 20%	22%	21%
21% to 40%	4%	-
41% to 60%	15%	5%
Above 60%	7%	26%

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 if teachers omitted this item or indicated more than one choice.

Table D.6

Minority Enrollment in Selected Class

Class Minority Percentage	Participating Classes	Comparison Classes
0% to 5%	63%	47%
6% to 10%	7%	5%
11% to 20%	-	5%
21% to 40%	11%	5%
41% to 60%	11%	21%
Above 60%	7%	11%

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 if teachers omitted this item or indicated more than one choice.

**Report on a Study  
of the Affective Impact of  
We the People...The Citizen and the Constitution  
conducted by the Council for Basic Education**