

Foundations of Government and Politics

Government & Politics · Practice Test · 19 Questions

1. According to Montesquieu's theory of the separation of powers, what are the three branches of government commonly identified?

- A) Executive, Legislative, Judicial
- B) Monarchy, Aristocracy, Democracy
- C) Federal, State, Local
- D) Parliamentary, Presidential, Semi-Presidential

2. Which political ideology, rooted in the works of thinkers like John Locke, emphasizes individual rights, limited government, and free markets?

- A) Liberalism
- B) Socialism
- C) Conservatism
- D) Anarchism

3. The concept of 'pluralism' in political science suggests that power is distributed among various competing groups and interests within a society, preventing the dominance of any single entity. This is a core tenet of which theoretical approach?

- A) Interest Group Theory
- B) Elite Theory
- C) Marxist Theory
- D) Behavioralism

4. The 'social contract theory,' as articulated by philosophers like Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau, posits that governments derive their legitimacy from what?

- A) The consent of the governed
- B) Divine right
- C) Hereditary succession
- D) Military conquest

5. Which electoral system, often used in parliamentary democracies, allocates seats in a legislature based on the proportion of votes each party receives?

- A) Proportional Representation
- B) First Past the Post
- C) Ranked Choice Voting
- D) Plurality Voting

6. In comparative politics, a 'unitary state' is characterized by which feature?

- A) All governmental power resides in a central authority
- B) Power is divided between a central government and regional governments
- C) Subnational units have significant autonomy
- D) A loose association of independent states

7. The 'iron triangle' in U.S. politics refers to a mutually beneficial, often closed, relationship between which three entities?

- A) Congressional committees, bureaucratic agencies, and interest groups
- B) Political parties, media outlets, and the electorate
- C) Lobbyists, academics, and think tanks
- D) Foreign governments, international organizations, and multinational corporations

8. Which theory of political behavior suggests that individual voters often make decisions based on rational calculations of their own self-interest, aiming to maximize benefits and minimize costs?

- A) Rational Choice Theory
- B) Social Learning Theory
- C) Cognitive Dissonance Theory
- D) Groupthink Theory

9. The concept of 'federalism' as a system of government involves the division of powers between which levels of government?

- A) National and subnational (state/provincial) governments
- B) Executive and legislative branches
- C) Central authority and local municipalities
- D) Oligarchy and democracy

10. According to the principles of representative democracy, elected officials are expected to act as agents of whom?

- A) Their constituents
- B) Their political party
- C) Their own conscience
- D) Special interest groups

11. The 'rule of law' is a fundamental principle in many democratic societies. It means that?

- A) All individuals, including those in power, are subject to and accountable under the law
- B) Laws are made by the majority without regard for minority rights
- C) The head of state is above legal scrutiny
- D) Justice is dispensed based on political expediency

12. Which political system is characterized by a single political party holding supreme power and suppressing opposition parties?

- A) Authoritarianism
- B) Democracy
- C) Anarchy
- D) Pluralism

13. The 'bureaucracy' in government is typically characterized by which of the following features, as described by Max Weber?

- A) Hierarchical structure, specialization, and formal rules
- B) Informal decision-making and personal connections
- C) Decentralized authority and flexible procedures
- D) Emphasis on individual initiative and entrepreneurship

14. The concept of 'political socialization' refers to the process by which individuals acquire their political values, beliefs, and attitudes. What is a primary agent of political socialization?

- A) Family
- B) Economic competition
- C) Scientific discovery
- D) Artistic expression

15. A 'caucus' in a political context is best described as:

- A) A meeting of party members to select candidates or discuss policy
- B) A formal legislative debate
- C) A public opinion poll
- D) A judicial review process

16. In the study of international relations, 'realism' is a theoretical perspective that emphasizes which of the following?

- A) The pursuit of national interest and power
- B) International cooperation and shared values
- C) The role of non-state actors
- D) Global governance and human rights

17. The 'veto power' of an executive branch allows it to?

- A) Reject legislation passed by the legislature
- B) Approve judicial appointments
- C) Declare war
- D) Amend the constitution

18. Which historical event is often cited as a major catalyst for the development of modern democratic thought and the questioning of absolute monarchy?

- A) The Enlightenment
- B) The Industrial Revolution
- C) The Renaissance
- D) The Age of Exploration

19. The term 'gerrymandering' refers to the manipulation of electoral district boundaries to favor one political party or group. This practice is primarily aimed at influencing what?

- A) Election outcomes
- B) Constitutional amendments
- C) International treaties
- D) Economic policy