



National Political Science Bee – A Set Qualifying Exam

Name _____

School _____

Grade _____

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Instructions - Circle the correct answer or leave it blank. Correct answers are worth 2 points. Incorrect answers are worth -1 point. Questions left blank are worth 0 points.

Questions 1-5 refer to image 1 in the resource section of the examination.

1. Which of the following conclusions is NOT supported by the information in the graph?

- A. voter turnout has fallen steadily since 1900
- B. voter turnout in midterm elections is generally within 5% of turnout in presidential election years
- C. there was a decline in voter turnout immediately following World War II
- D. voter turnout has increased dramatically in the US during the Trump era

2. In general, which of the following is true of voter participation in the United States?

- A. it is much higher than in other established democracies
- B. it is roughly the same as in other established democracies, in the range of 55 to 65% of eligible voters
- C. it is significantly lower than many established democracies
- D. unlike in other countries, turnout for state and local elections in the US is much higher than in national elections

3. In the United States, which of the following is true of the relationship between voter registration and voter participation?

- A. well over 80% of eligible voters in the United States are registered to vote
- B. there is a large gap between the percentage of eligible voters in the US who participate in elections and the percentage of registered voters who participate in elections
- C. most states in America allow same-day registration for voters in presidential elections
- D. most states in America have automatic voter registration for citizens over 18 years of age

4. All of these might account for the increase in turnout in the 2020 presidential election projected in the graph EXCEPT which of the following?

- A. extensions of mail-in and early voting due to the Coronavirus pandemic
- B. registration drives by both parties throughout the country
- C. the relatively small number of competitive Senate and House races throughout the country
- D. negative partisanship on the part of both Democrats and Republicans

5. Which of the following best describes the term negative partisanship?

- A. a rejection of the ideals of major political parties and embracing radicalism
- B. strong loyalty motivated by support for a particular party's platform or ideals
- C. the desire to make political decisions based on the merits of particular candidates, not party affiliation
- D. political decisions motivated by a strong dislike or even hatred of the opposing political party

Questions 6-10 refer to image 2 in the resource section of the examination.

6. According to the graph, net interest on the national debt was roughly equivalent to what percentage of US GDP in 2019?

- A. less than 1%
- B. about 2%
- C. about 5%
- D. more than 10%

7. Based on the information presented, the last time the US did not have a budget deficit was during which of the following?

- A. the George W. Bush administration
- B. the Obama administration
- C. the Trump administration
- D. the US had a budget deficit in every year covered by the graph

8. Which of the following accounts for the spike in federal government deficits in 2009-2012 and 2020-2021?

- A. decreased revenue due to major economic crises
- B. sharp increases in government spending
- C. some combination of A and B
- D. none of these resulted in spikes in the deficit

9. Roughly what percentage of the federal budget represents mandatory spending?

- A. over 60%
- B. about 40%
- C. about 25%
- D. less than 10%

10. All of these represent categories of mandatory spending by the federal government EXCEPT which of the following?

- A. Social Security
- B. defense
- C. Medicare
- D. Medicaid

Questions 11-15 refer to the following passage.

The influence of factious leaders may kindle a flame within their particular States, but will be unable to spread a general conflagration through the other States. A religious sect may degenerate into a political faction in a part of the Confederacy; but the variety of sects dispersed over the entire face of it must secure the national councils against any danger from that source. A rage for paper money, for an abolition of debts, for an equal division of property, or for any other improper or wicked project, will be less apt to pervade the whole body of the Union than a particular member of it; in the same proportion as such a malady is more likely to taint a particular county or district, than an entire State.

In the extent and proper structure of the Union, therefore, we behold a republican remedy for the diseases most incident to republican government. And according to the degree of pleasure and pride we feel in being republicans, ought to be our zeal in cherishing the spirit and supporting the character of Federalists.

PUBLIUS.

- Federalist No. 10, 1787

11. Which of the following best summarizes the argument of the passage with regard to factions?

- A. factionalism should not occur under the government of the Constitution
- B. liberty is the best remedy for factionalism
- C. factionalism would be controlled in the United States by the variety of backgrounds and political beliefs of its citizens
- D. only authoritarianism would prevent factionalism

12. Federalist No. 10 has been interpreted by some as one of the most powerful rejections of which of the following by the Founding Fathers?

- A. direct democracy
- B. pluralism
- C. monarchy
- D. taxation

13. Anti-federalists argued which of the following in response to Madison's views in Federalist No. 10?

- A. a strong federal government was only capable of controlling factions by force
- B. the federal government should be more powerful to control factions
- C. factions were actually desirable in a republic and should be promoted
- D. a large, diverse republic the size of the United States was too large to survive

14. Which of the following does Madison use in Federalist No. 10 to argue for the efficacy of a large republic?

- A. the diversity of a large republic will result in more capable candidates available to hold public office
- B. it would provide a large military and economic base to ensure success

C. a large republic would result in more uniform political opinions

D. the size of the republic would make campaigning easier and campaign rhetoric more effective

15. Which of the following sees Alexander Hamilton arguing in support of the nature of the executive outlined in the Constitution?

- A. Federalist No. 51
- B. Federalist No. 70
- C. Federalist No. 78
- D. Brutus No. 1

Questions 16-20 refer to the following passage.

We admit that, in many places and in ordinary times, the defendants, in saying all that was said in the circular, would have been within their constitutional rights. But the character of every act depends upon the circumstances in which it is done... The most stringent protection of free speech would not protect a man in falsely shouting fire in a theatre and causing a panic. It does not even protect a man from an injunction against uttering words that may have all the effect of force... The question in every case is whether the words used are used in such circumstances and are of such a nature as to create a clear and present danger that they will bring about the substantive evils that Congress has a right to prevent. It is a question of proximity and degree. When a nation is at war, many things that might be said in time of peace are such a hindrance to its effort that their utterance will not be endured so long as men fight, and that no Court could regard them as protected by any constitutional right.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., majority opinion in *Schenck v. United States*, 1919

16. Which of the following is true of the ruling of the court in this case?

- A. Schenck's actions were protected by the free speech clause of the First Amendment
- B. the Espionage Act was struck down but Schenck's conviction was nonetheless upheld
- C. the court acknowledged that certain types of speech could not be protected under the First Amendment
- D. Congress could not prevent speech that caused a 'clear and present' danger

17. Which of the following cases also helped to define free speech protections in the United States?

- A. *Baker v. Carr*
- B. *Gideon v. Wainwright*
- C. *Shaw v. Reno*
- D. *Tinker v. Des Moines*

18. The Supreme Court modified the test for free speech protections established in *Schenck v. US* when it established which of the following standards in the case of *Brandenburg v. Ohio* in 1969?

- A. the 'imminent lawless action' standard
- B. the 'clear and present danger' test
- C. the 'actual malice' standard
- D. the 'satire exception'

19. In the *Citizens United* decision, the Supreme Court used First Amendment protections of free speech to overturn which of the following?

- A. limits on campaign spending by individual candidates for office
- B. restrictions on the size and scope of political advertising by the major political parties
- C. restrictions on political spending and election activity by corporations and unions
- D. the type of political reporting undertaken by American news outlets

20. In addition to its pivotal role in the case of *Schenck v. US*, the Espionage Act was also significant in which of these Supreme Court cases?

- A. *Brown v. Board of Education*
- B. *New York Times v. US*
- C. *Shaw v. Reno*
- D. *McDonald v. Chicago*

Questions 21-24 refer to image 3 in the resource section of the examination.

21. Which of the following most closely identifies the artist's point of view about the 2018-2019 government shutdown?

- A. it was entirely the fault of President Trump
- B. it was due to the unpopular budget priorities of the Democratic minority in the Senate
- C. Democrats and Republicans needed to work together to reopen the government
- D. obstructionism by Sen. McConnell and Republican leadership was ultimately to blame

22. Government shutdowns stem from the failure to enact which of the following?

- A. a reconciliation bill
- B. an appropriations bill or continuing resolution
- C. an apportionment bill
- D. an authorization bill

23. The root cause of the 2018-2019 government shutdown was which of the following?

- A. President Trump's demand to end the Mueller investigation had not been heeded by Congress or the Justice Department
- B. Democrats in the House of Representatives had been able to block most of the president's spending priorities resulting in a standoff with the White House
- C. a divided Congress could not agree on spending priorities for the new fiscal year
- D. President Trump was unhappy that the appropriations bill passed by the Senate in December 2018 did not contain funds for construction of a wall on the southern border of the US

24. All of these were effects of the government shutdown EXCEPT which of the following?

- A. the shutdown enabled the Democrats to retake the House in the 2018 midterm elections
- B. about 800,000 government workers were either furloughed or required to work without pay
- C. support for Native Americans through the Bureau of Indian Affairs was suspended during the shutdown

D. the shutdown cost the economy of the Washington, DC area about \$2.8 billion

25. Which of the following is a common trait of all governments?

- A. they have a written constitution
- B. they hold elections
- C. they provide public goods and services
- D. they have a legislature

26. All of these function as linkage institutions in American politics EXCEPT which of the following?

- A. the court system
- B. the media
- C. interest groups
- D. political parties

27. Which of the following terms describes voting based on how a voter believes a party or candidate will act and perform if elected to office?

- A. rational-choice voting
- B. prospective voting
- C. party-line voting
- D. retrospective voting

28. In the Constitution, the framers established which of the following about voting in national elections?

- A. that all adult white males with property over \$100 must be allowed to vote
- B. that all free men over the age of 20 should be able to vote
- C. that there should be no restriction on women voting
- D. that voter qualifications should be left to the states

29. Which of the following names a philosophy of judicial decision-making that aims to interpret the Constitution based on how the text would have been understood at the time it was written?

- A. judicial activism
- B. judicial restraint
- C. 'living instrument' doctrine
- D. originalism

30. Which of the following House committees has responsibility for bills that regulate expenditures by the federal government?

- A. the Ways and Means Committee
- B. the Appropriations Committee
- C. the Banking and Commerce Committee
- D. the Oversight Committee

31. Which of these is true of presidential approval ratings?

- A. approval ratings will usually increase sharply following the State of the Union address
- B. approval ratings are usually unaffected by 'rally around the flag' moments like conflicts or crises
- C. approval ratings tend to be higher at the beginning of presidential administrations
- D. since the 1930s presidential approval ratings have consistently been above 50%

32. Constitutional amendments have normally been ratified by which of the following processes?

- A. three-fourths of state legislatures

- B. a two-thirds vote in each house of Congress
- C. ratifying conventions in two-thirds of the states
- D. a national amending convention

33. The doctrine by which portions of the Bill of Rights have been made applicable to the states is known by which of the following terms?

- A. political process theory
- B. strict constructionism
- C. incorporation
- D. proceduralism

34. All of these are recognized as suspect classes by the United States Supreme Court EXCEPT which of the following?

- A. race
- B. age
- C. national origin
- D. religion

35. Which of the following best defines political culture?

- A. political party affiliation or registration
- B. the connection between racial, ethnic and religious identity and political beliefs
- C. beliefs about the role and size of government
- D. widely shared beliefs and norms within a society about the political system

36. Which of these is the largest segment of a political party in America?

- A. the party organization
- B. the party-in-the-electorate
- C. the party-in-government
- D. the party leadership

37. Which of the following constitutes an 'iron triangle' for federal policies on the elderly and ageing in America?

- A. the president, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Treasury Department
- B. the House, the Senate, elderly and retired Americans
- C. Congressional committees that oversee federal programs like Social Security, government agencies like the SSA and CMS, groups like the American Association of Retired Persons
- D. the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of the Treasury, the Department of Housing and Urban Development

38. Political efficacy is best defined as which of the following?

- A. the relative ease or difficulty of casting a vote in a given city or county
- B. the belief that voting is a fundamental right that should be exercised by all Americans
- C. extensive knowledge about the political process and political issues
- D. the perceived ability of an individual voter to change the government or influence political affairs

39. Which of the following is true of most bills formally presented for consideration in Congress?

- A. they are passed and vetoed by the president
- B. they are passed and signed into law
- C. they are defeated in a floor vote in one house or the other
- D. they are killed off early in the legislative process

40. Which of the following is true of the War Powers Act?

- A. it prohibits deployment of American troops by the president for any length of time without Congressional approval
- B. it involves a legislative veto, which may be a violation of separation of powers
- C. it gives the president the power to declare war unilaterally in certain circumstances like a terrorist or nuclear attack
- D. it established congressional oversight over the military chain of command

41. Which of these is the LEAST significant source of federal government revenue?

- A. excise taxes
- B. corporate income taxes
- C. borrowing
- D. social insurance receipts

42. Which of these is true of government regulation in the United States?

- A. the federal government takes almost no role in regulation and instead cedes most regulatory power to the states
- B. federal regulatory agencies have been commonplace and widespread since the late eighteenth century
- C. prior to the 1880s the federal government made very few regulatory policies and had almost no regulatory agencies
- D. federal government regulation and regulatory agencies in America are mostly a result of the New Deal and the Great Depression

43. Which of these is true of appellate courts?

- A. they hear only civil cases
- B. they review the legal issues involved in a case
- C. they make findings of fact in nearly all cases
- D. they have no original jurisdiction

44. Which of these institutions is used by governments throughout the world to further political socialization?

- A. primary and secondary schools
- B. the mass media
- C. the internet
- D. political parties

45. Which of the following best describes the Tenth Amendment?

- A. it establishes the Constitution as the supreme law of the United States
- B. it institutes the power of judicial review
- C. it defines national citizenship
- D. it reserves certain governmental powers to the states

46. Which of the following is an accurate comparison of a unitary system and a federal system?

	unitary	federal
A.	power is concentrated in the national government	power is concentrated in the state governments
B.	national government has power over the land and people	national and state governments have power over the same land and people
C.	separation of powers among branches of government	separation of powers among branches of government
D.	strong national government	national government is largely absent or very weak

47. Which of the following is an accurate comparison of the House of Representatives and the Senate?

	House	Senate
A.	has sole power to approve treaties	has sole power to confirm presidential appointments to the cabinet
B.	confirms presidential appointments to courts below the Supreme Court	confirms presidential appointments to the Supreme Court
C.	chooses the vice president in the event no candidate receives a majority in the electoral college	chooses the president in the event no candidate receives a majority in the electoral college
D.	has the power to pass articles of impeachment	conducts impeachments trials

48. Which of the following is an accurate comparison of the holdings in each of these cases?

	<i>Engel v. Vitale</i>	<i>Tinker v. Des Moines</i>
A.	upheld the constitutionality of the Bank of the United States	affirmed the use of the 'Elastic Clause' and implied powers by Congress
B.	held that government-written public prayers in public schools violated the First Amendment	helped define the First Amendment rights of public school students with the 'substantial disruption' test
C.	struck down a handgun ownership restriction as a violation of the Second Amendment	struck down a restriction on firearm possession as an improper use of the Commerce Clause
D.	established the power of judicial review	defined the 'actual malice' standard in libel cases

49. Which of the following is an accurate comparison of liberal and conservative views on the government?

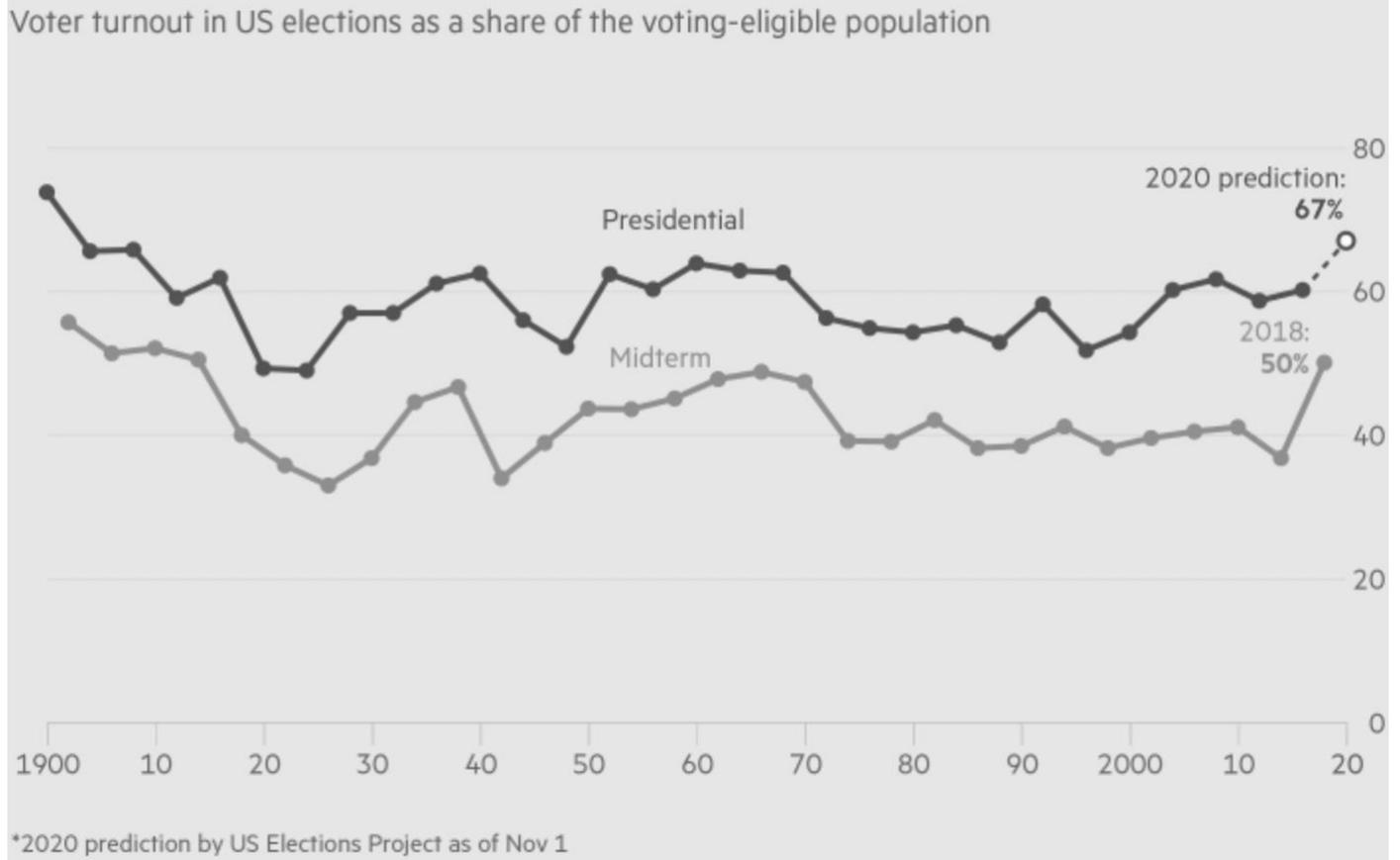
	Liberal	Conservative
A.	the size of the federal government should shrink in order to cut costs	increasing the size of the government may be necessary to provide more services to the people
B.	the federal government should decrease regulations to allow markets to function in a more natural way	the federal government should have strong regulatory oversight in many areas of American life
C.	the federal government should have an active role in promoting economic prosperity for all citizens	citizens should not rely on the federal government to help them with economic issues
D.	all Americans should be taxed at the same rate regardless of income level	the wealthy and corporations should be taxed more heavily than the middle class or the poor

50. Which of the following is an accurate comparison of the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution?

	Articles of Confederation	Constitution
A.	states retain sovereignty	Constitution is subordinate to state law
B.	could regulate interstate commerce	limited power over interstate commerce
C.	extensive taxation powers	weak taxation powers
D.	lacked enforcement capabilities	able to enforce federal laws

Resource Section

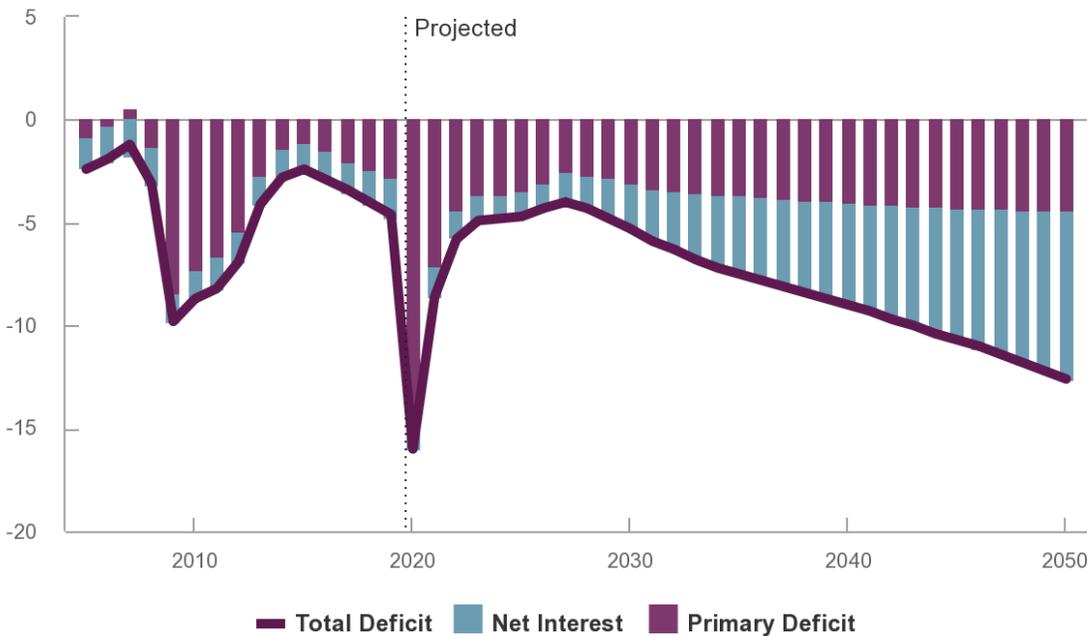
Questions 1-5 refer to the following image [Image 1]



Questions 6-10 refer to the following image [Image 2]

Total Deficits, Primary Deficits, and Net Interest

Percentage of Gross Domestic Product



This chart shows the US budget deficit as a percentage of gross domestic product based on actual and projected figures from the CBO.

Questions 21-25 refer to the following image [Image 3]

