

The Fourth Annual Constitution Day Poll from ConstitutionFacts.com

Oak Hill Publishing (June 2010): Since September 2009, more than 50,000 people have taken the ConstitutionFacts.com online poll. The 10-question quiz tests knowledge about the Constitution and Constitution history. Upon completion of the quiz and before receiving their scores, participants were asked to provide a few demographic details about themselves. Quiz takers then had the opportunity to share their scores via Facebook or email and to take a more extensive 50-question quiz. More than 20% of quiz takers tested their knowledge with the longer quiz.

Results by State & Region

Chart 1 shows the ten states with the highest percentage of perfect scores. Iowa tops the list with an astounding 27.67% of test takers achieving perfect scores. The next closest was Tennessee with 18.13% and California with 16.12%.

Chart 2 shows the states with the highest average score. While Iowa tops the list this year with an average of 6.632 questions correct on the 10-question quiz, California is close behind with an average score of 6.392. California has been among the top three scoring states every year since the annual poll began.

Results also are tabulated by region, using the regions defined by the U.S. Census Bureau (see chart 3). The overall highest scoring region was the West South Central region, which includes Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana and Arkansas and excludes the three highest scoring states — Iowa (West North Central region), Tennessee (East South Central region) and California (Pacific region). In past years the West South Central region has not been among the highest scoring regions, nor has the Pacific region

Chart 1: Most Perfect Scores

Iowa	27.67%
Tennessee	18.13%
California	16.12%
Kentucky	15.48%
Florida	15.20%
Louisiana	15.04%
Missouri	14.92%
New York	14.24%
Virginia	14.18%
Connecticut	14.02%

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Chart 2: Highest Average Score

Iowa	6.632
California	6.392
Louisiana	6.371
Virginia	6.338
Kentucky	6.276
Georgia	6.216
Tennessee	6.207
New York	6.198
Missouri	6.194
Connecticut	6.192

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(Washington, Oregon, California) in spite of California's consistently high results. The New England region (Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Massachusetts and Rhode Island) — a high scorer in years past — was the second highest scoring region this year.

Surprising Trends

Knowledge about the Bill of Rights — the first 10 Amendments to the Constitution — remains one of the highest scoring areas of knowledge about the Constitution.

The two highest scoring questions on the 10-question quiz (questions #3 and #5) are both about the Bill of Rights (see chart 4). And the five questions about the Bill of Rights in the 50-question quiz also were among the highest scoring questions (four out of five were answered correctly more than 70% of the time and all were answered correctly over 65% of the time).

The average age of test-takers this year was twenty-seven. 51.4% were female, 48.6% male. In past years, participants over 51 and between ages 36 and 50 scored almost the same, with participants between ages 18 and 35 scoring slightly lower and participants 17 and under scoring lowest. This year participants between ages 36 and 50 have edged farther ahead than participants over age 51 (see chart 5).

Common Misconceptions about the Constitution

While knowledge of the Bill of Rights remains high, other areas of Constitution knowledge are much less consistent. In particular, many of the questions that were answered correctly least often concerned the powers of the federal government.

The fewest people were able to answer question #9 correctly, "What kind of laws can Congress

Chart 3: Average Regional Scores

West South Central (AR, LA, OK, TX)	6.03%
New England (CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT)	5.98%
Pacific (AK, CA, HI, OR, WA)	5.97%
South Atlantic (DC, DE, GA, FL, MD, NC, SC, VA, WV)	5.96%
Middle Atlantic (NJ, NY, PA)	5.92%
East South Central (AL, KY, MS, TN)	5.90%
Mountain (AZ, CO, ID, MT, NM, NV, UT, WY)	5.89%
West North Central (IA, KS, MO, MN, ND, NE, SD)	5.77%
East North Central (IL, IN, MI, OH, WI)	5.72%

5.953 national average

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Chart 4: How Did Americans Fare?

Number of U.S. Constitutions enacted	60%
The Role of Congress	71%
First 10 Amendments are the Bill of Rights	89%
Convicted of treason	47%
Pleading the fifth	75%
President/VP different parties	47%
1st President under Articles	45%
VP and 25th Amendment	47%
Laws Congress can make	45%
Minimum age to be a U.S. Senator	69%

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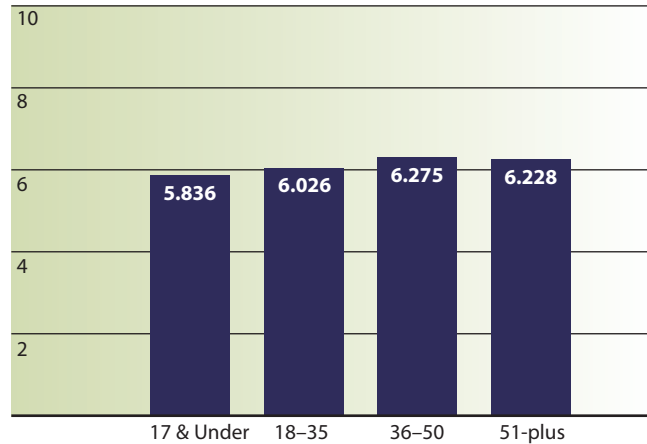
make?" The correct answer is: "Any laws that are necessary and proper for executing the powers of the federal government." This answer comes directly from Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution. The final clause of that section says that Congress has the power "to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof." This clause is sometimes called the "elastic clause" because it gives Congress the flexibility to make laws not described specifically in the Constitution.

Question #34 of the 50-question quiz "Which Article of the Constitution lists the primary powers of Congress?" was among the lowest scoring questions (answered correctly only 47% of the time). The correct answer is A: "Article 1" which describes the Legislative Branch, including both houses of Congress and all of their powers. Other low-scoring questions regarding the current powers of the federal government as defined by the Constitution included question #50 about the number of votes required to pass a Constitutional Amendment (answered correctly only 42% of the time), question #39 asking the number of Supreme Court Justices required by the Constitution (answered correctly only 40% of the time), and question #32 about the so-called "supremacy clause" of the Constitution which establishes the supremacy of federal laws over conflicting state or local laws (answered correctly only 47% of the time).

The correct answers to these three questions are:

- Three quarters of the states must approve a Constitutional Amendment. Three quarters of 50 states is 37.5, so 37 states cannot approve an Amendment but 38 can.

Chart 5: Scores by Age Group



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- The Constitution does not establish the number of Supreme Court justices. Instead, the Constitution gives Congress the power to determine the number of justices.
- The "Supremacy Clause" of the Constitution states that any state or local law that directly conflicts with a valid federal law is void. The Supremacy Clause is the common name given to Article VI, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution. It declares that the "Constitution, and the Laws of the United States . . . shall be the supreme Law of the Land."

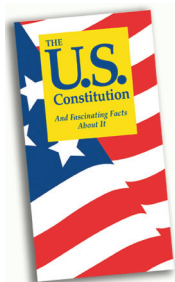
Chart 6 on the following page shows detailed results for the 50-question quiz.

For more information about the Constitution, or to take the Constitution IQ quiz, visit www.ConstitutionFacts.com.

Chart 6: 50-Question Expanded Quiz Scoring (Expert Quiz #2 — ConstitutionFacts.com)



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