

The Sixth Annual Constitution Day Poll from ConstitutionFacts.com

Oak Hill Publishing (August 2012): Since September 2011, more than 100,000 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 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 30% 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. Washington, D.C. tops the list this year with 14.24% of test takers achieving perfect scores. Rounding out the top five — Mississippi 13.95%, California 13.73%, Missouri 13.71% and Illinois 13.26%. California has been among the top scoring states every year since the annual poll began.

Chart 2 shows the states with the highest average score. California moves into the top spot this year with an average score of 6.64 (after falling out of the top ten last year) while Virginia moves up one position to #2 with an average score of 6.39 correct. Texas, Iowa, New York and South Carolina move into the top 10 this year displacing New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Washington and Washington, D.C.

Results are also reported by region using the regions defined by the U.S. Census Bureau (see chart 3). The highest scoring region was the South Atlantic region which includes DC, DE, GA, FL, MD, NC, SC, VA, WV. It excludes two of the highest

Chart 1: Most Perfect Scores

Washington, D.C.	14.24%
Mississippi	13.95%
California	13.73%
Missouri	13.71%
Illinois	13.26%
South Dakota	13.21%
Florida	13.01%
North Dakota	12.95%
Alaska	12.92%
Colorado	12.61%

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Chart 2: Highest Average Score

California	6.64
Virginia	6.39
Texas	6.39
Illinois	6.34
Iowa	6.23
Georgia	6.22
Kentucky	6.20
Tennessee	6.19
New York	6.14
South Carolina	6.12

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scoring states — California (Pacific Region) and New York (Middle Atlantic Region). In past years the Pacific region (AK, CA, HI, OR, WA) has been in the middle of the pack although California is a perennial high scoring state, the same with the Middle Atlantic region (NY, NJ, PA) in spite of New York’s consistently high results. The New England region (CT, VT, NH, ME, MA, RI) — a high scorer in years past — moved from fourth to second place this year.

Surprising Trends

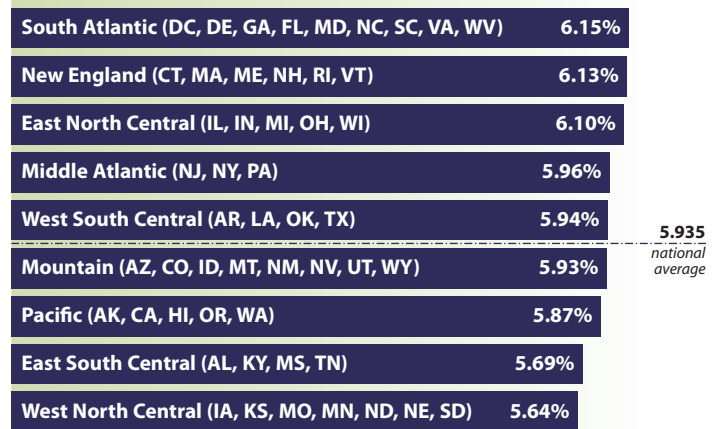
Knowledge about the Bill of Rights — the first 10 Amendments to the Constitution — remains one of the highest scoring areas of knowledge about the Constitution. The two highest scoring questions on the 10-question quiz (questions #3 and #5) are both about the Bill of Rights (see chart 4). And the five 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 was twenty-five. 50% were male, 50% were female. 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

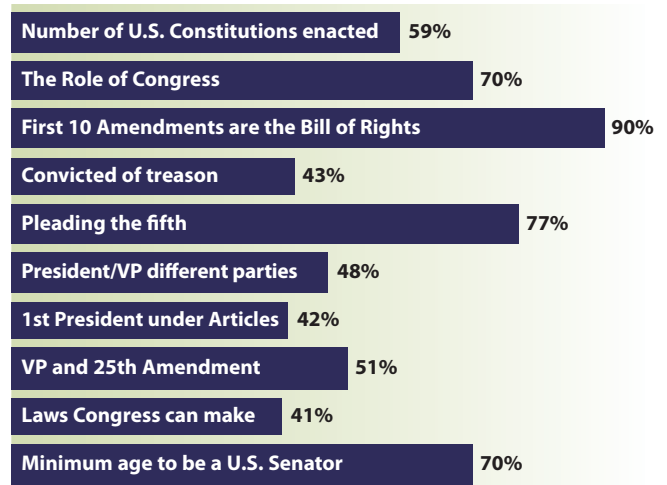
While knowledge of the Bill of Rights remains high, other areas of Constitution knowledge are much less consistent. In particular, many of the questions that were answered correctly least often concerned the powers of the federal government. The fewest people were able to answer question #9 correctly,

Chart 3: Average Regional Scores



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Chart 4: How Did Americans Fare?



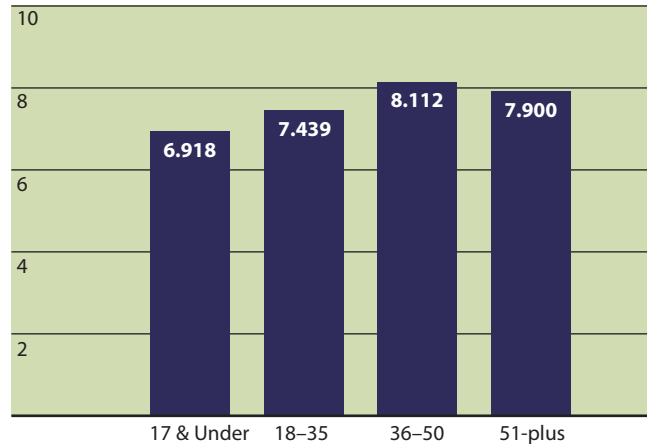
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“What kind of laws can Congress make?” The correct answer is: “Any laws that are necessary and proper for executing the powers of the federal government.” This answer comes directly from Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution. The final clause of 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 44% 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 36% of the time), question #39 asking the number of Supreme Court Justices required by the Constitution (answered correctly only 38% 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 44% 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



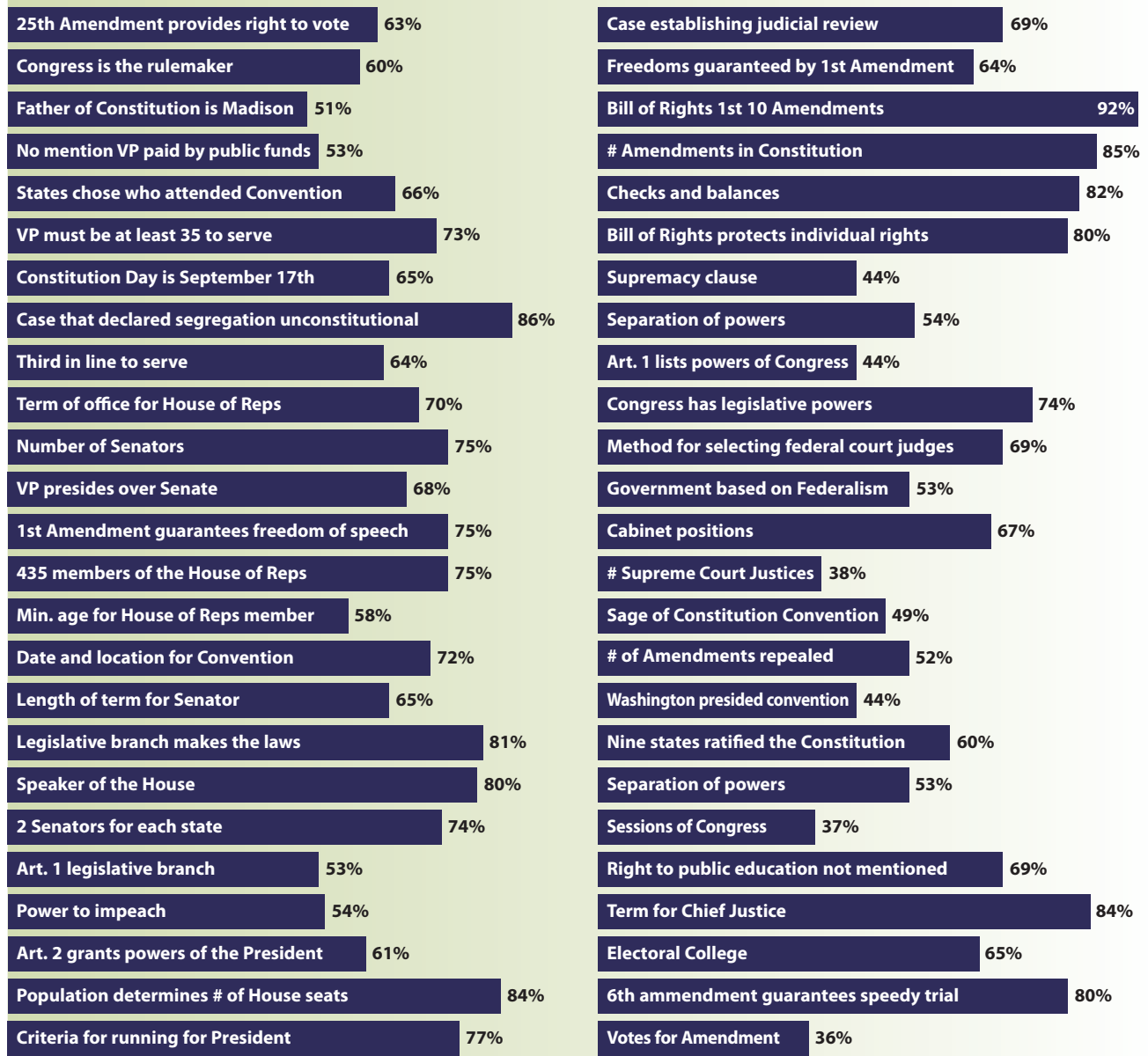
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- The Constitution does not establish the number of Supreme Court justices. Instead, the Constitution gives Congress the power to determine the number of justices.
- The “Supremacy Clause” of the Constitution states that any state or local law that 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.”

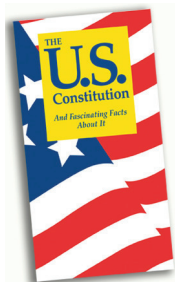
Chart 6 on the following page shows detailed results for the 50-question quiz.

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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