The U.S. Constitution  
by Katie Clark

When the founding fathers of America first decided what kind of a government to form, they considered lots of options. Many of them had come from England where they had a monarchy, or a king. They did not like the way things had been done there. They also thought of the ancient Romans and Greeks, and their unique governing systems. Those systems had eventually failed, but they had paved the way for democracy.

When the Revolutionary War first ended, the government was ruled by the Articles of Confederation. This was a set of laws which the American states should follow. However, it quickly became clear that this handful of rules wasn't enough to properly govern a new country.

The American leaders knew they didn't want a king. They also saw how the early Roman and Greek systems had failed. This helped them settle on a democratic republic. A democratic republic means the wishes of the people are carried out by leaders who are elected, or chosen, by the people. These leaders are American politicians and elected officials.

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This led the leaders to meet at the Constitutional Convention. Leaders from across the states came together to debate the ups and downs of different types of government. Throughout this process they wrote the Constitution of the United States.

The Constitution is a written document of laws. It had two main focuses. First, it meant to create a federal republic. This meant the government would be run by the
The three branches of government created by the Constitution were the Executive branch, the Legislative branch, and the judicial branch. The Constitution grants each branch a specific type of power.

The Executive branch refers to the President of the United States. His power is focused on the United States military. He is the Commander in Chief of the American troops. He also works with the other branches to make and uphold laws, as well as meets with foreign leaders.

The Legislative branch refers to the Congress. This includes the Senate and the House of Representatives. The power of Congress is that of making laws. They also make plans for following those laws.

The Judicial branch refers to the court system. This includes judges and court rooms. The judicial branch has the power of upholding the laws of the Constitution. When it appears a law has been broken, the judicial system reviews the case to make a determination.

Separating the different powers between three different branches of government gave America’s early leaders peace that the government would not become corrupted. Each branch would be required to stick to their own areas of power. They would not be able to take power that did not belong to them.

The Constitution also created other laws. It set up the rules that would be used to elect the leaders of the different branches of government. The people within the country would vote for their state representatives. In turn, the state representatives would
advocate for the people within their state. They would speak on their behalf when new or old laws were being considered.

This was important to the American leaders. This would help ensure that the small states would have just as much of a voice as the large states. Every state—no matter how big or small—would have a say in the happenings of the country.

The Constitution provided a way for the President to be elected, as well. First, the state representatives would choose people called electors. These electors would be responsible for speaking on behalf of the people of their state. When the people voted for a new president, the electors would consider the people’s wishes and put in their votes accordingly. Whichever candidate received the most electoral votes would be president.

Lastly, there was the judicial branch. How would the judges be chosen? The Supreme Court judges would be in charge of the highest court in the country. They would be appointed by the President, but they would need to be approved by the congress as well. Judges in the lower courts would be elected by vote.

The Constitution was not decided upon easily. The members of the Constitutional Convention debated for many months. Many people were afraid of agreeing to something so new and unproven. They were not sure it would work.

A few of the men wrote a series of essays to persuade the people. These essays were called the Federalist Papers. Through these essays, the men were able to convince the people that the Constitution was a good thing.

Along with detailing how American leaders were to be chosen, the Constitution also detailed who would be eligible to be a leader. Each branch would have its own requirements. For instance, to be the president a person must be at least thirty-five years old. They must be a natural-born citizen of America. They must have lived in the United
States for at least fourteen years.

At last, the Constitution was ratified, or agreed upon and passed.

The United States Constitution now has twenty-seven amendments. This means twenty-seven additional laws have been added or changed. Amendments have been needed from time to time to adjust the laws that are outdated or no longer needed. For example, laws that pertained to slavery were changed when the slaves were freed during the Civil War.

This written document is unique in the world. Much thought was put into its creation, and it is still the law of the land today.
The U.S. Constitution

1) Why did the American leaders prefer democracy to the other forms of governance?

2) What are the three branches of government as per the constitution?

3) Write a brief note on the Executive branch.

4) Why were the early leaders reassured that there won’t be any corruption?

5) What, according to the passage, made the amendments necessary?
   a) The outdated and unnecessary laws had to be adjusted.
   b) Every year, new laws were required.
   c) Americans were rebellious and disobeyed laws.
   d) The country had to be inspired by the laws of other countries.
The U.S. Constitution

1) Why did the American leaders prefer democracy to the other forms of governance?

Americans preferred to have a democratic government because they did not like the way things had been done in monarchy, and the Roman and Greek systems had failed too.

2) What are the three branches of government as per the constitution?

The three branches of government created by the Constitution are the Executive branch, Legislative branch, and Judicial branch.

3) Write a brief note on the Executive branch.

The Executive branch refers to the president of the United States. He is the Commander-in-Chief of the American troops. He also works with the other branches to make and uphold laws.

4) Why were the early leaders reassured that there won’t be any corruption?

They had no worries about corruption, because each branch would be required to stick to their own areas of power and would not be able to take power that did not belong to them. So there was no room for corruption in the system.

5) What, according to the passage, made the amendments necessary?

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c) Americans were rebellious and disobeyed laws.

d) The country had to be inspired by the laws of other countries.