

2019 Nebraska Four Day State Class

Student Homework

ALUMNI STUDENTS



TEENPACT®
LEADERSHIP SCHOOLS

NEBRASKA FOUR DAY STATE CLASS ALUMNI STUDENT PRE-CLASS HOMEWORK

Students should bring two copies of their completed homework: one to turn in and one to reference throughout the week. They should bring three copies of their bill. We encourage you to refer to the homework checklist on page 7 when preparing your homework for class.

If you are attending a class in a state other than your own, you will need to do the homework for the state where you are attending, not the state where you live. For example, if you live in Nebraska but are attending the Kansas class, you should do the homework for Kansas.

1 Review the vocabulary and questions from the Pre-Class Vocabulary List (pages 9-14)

- ★ All students, First Time and Alumni, will be responsible for this information on quizzes throughout the week. Alumni are not required to turn in the vocabulary and definitions.
- ★ **Purpose: To be prepared for in-class discussions.**



HOMEWORK TIP

If you still have your homework from your first time at the Four Day Class, find your definitions and brush up on your terms to be ready for in-class discussion.

2 Complete the State Political Fact Sheet (page 15) using resources on the internet and in your local library.

- ★ You may have to use several sources to get this information:
 - ★ Type www.state.xx.us (insert your state's abbreviation in place of xx) to log onto your state's official website.
 - ★ Project Vote Smart (votesmart.org) also has information on your elected officials.
- ★ **If you are completing the homework before January 1**, it is possible that some government seats may have changed because of recent elections. It is better to wait and complete the Fact Sheet after you are sure that all elections are over and the current officials are serving in their respective roles.
- ★ **Purpose: To be informed regarding the current leaders and political trends in your state.**



HOMEWORK TIP

*Remember to complete the fact sheet according to your **STATE** government information, not federal. Don't be intimidated—it just takes a little patience! Make sure all of your information is up to date.*

3

Send a letter to your **state senator** (not federal), thanking them for serving and telling them about one issue or idea you think is important in your state.

- ★ Refer to the Sample Letter (page 16) when formatting your letter.
- ★ Need to know where to send the letter? Go to Project Vote Smart (votesmart.org) and search for your senator.
- ★ Remember to check your grammar and spelling.
- ★ In everything, be respectful and address them with their proper title (Senator).
- ★ Mail the letter (no emails, please) at least two weeks before the class to ensure it arrives in time.
- ★ Remember to pray for your senator by name.
- ★ **Purpose: To experience how easy it is to communicate to your elected official and to participate in the process of making your opinions known.**



HOMEWORK TIP

Try asking questions about their personal beliefs on specific issues or why they became involved with the political arena. Remember to write your state senator, not your federal official.

4

Read or watch your governor's most recent State of the State Address. Create a list using the worksheet (page 17) of the issues addressed (at least three or more) by the governor in his or her speech.

- ★ You can usually find the speech on your governor's website under "Press Releases" or "Speeches." In some cases, you may have to call the governor's office and ask how to obtain a copy. If your governor was recently elected or hasn't given an address yet, use the last address available.
- ★ **Purpose: To know the current issues in your state, as defined by your current governor.**



HOMEWORK TIP

Keep these questions in mind while you read/watch the State of the State Address: How does this affect your state? What does this tell you about your governor's priorities? What key issues didn't they address?

5

Write a one-page bill on an issue important to you and relevant to your state.

- ★ Please choose a serious topic for the first bill. If you want to write an additional bill, you may write it on a serious or fun topic.
- ★ Refer to our Sample Bill for the correct format (page 18) when you're writing your bill.
- ★ Include at least five sections in your bill: explaining (1) the purpose, (2) the bill's goal, (3) the plan of action, (4) when the bill will become law, and (5) how the bill will be funded. Check the Sample Bill to make sure your format is correct.
- ★ Please choose topics which are appropriate for the age and environment of the class.
- ★ **Purpose: To develop a better understanding of the legislative process.**



HOMEWORK TIP

Think outside the box about issues that will spark conversation between you and your peers. Be respectful in your topic choice.

6

On July 4, 1776, upon signing the Declaration of Independence, fifty-six of our Founding Fathers claimed the right of freedom on behalf of the original thirteen American colonies. In so doing, they firmly relied “on the protection of divine providence,” willingly pledging their “lives, fortunes, and sacred honor.”¹ Motivated by both principle and liberty, they intended to create something entirely unique: a form of government driven by justice, intentionally limited, and designed to protect the individual rights of its citizens. To this end, it would recognize the fallen nature of man, while empowering them with opportunity to be what God created.

To secure this vision, in 1787, the Continental Congress formed the U.S. Constitution. Ratified by the states a year later, it became the supreme law of the land. With carefully crafted boundaries, the founders separated power into Legislative, Executive, and Judicial branches, forcing a process of checks-and-balances to attain their goal. No branch would hold complete control and those who filled the necessary responsibilities within each would be directly or indirectly determined through voting citizens. The United States truly would be a nation, as President Lincoln later said, “of the people, by the people, and for the people.”²

As Christians and American citizens, we must understand the role of government and our responsibility as individuals. What is the biblical role of government? What guiding principles led our nation’s Founding Fathers to structure the United States government in this way? What is your responsibility as an individual?

The following assignments will direct your pre-class study and prepare you for in-class sessions. Throughout the week, your Program Director will facilitate a discussion with alumni students about the biblical role of government. You will dialogue with other students about your research, conduct a survey to understand public opinion, and draw conclusions that will guide your civic involvement for years to come.

As you research this topic, consider how your Christian faith ought to guide your participation in the political process. We must develop biblical convictions about what we believe, why we believe it, and understand how those beliefs affect our lives and communities. Our country is in desperate need of godly leadership, and at TeenPact, we believe in the capacity of young people to do just that—lead. Be the leader you were made to be. Enjoy your study, and we’ll see you at the State Class!

¹ *The Declaration of Independence, 1776.*

² *“The Gettysburg Address,” 1863.*

1. Define the following terms.

Using Noah Webster's 1828 American Dictionary of the English Language (webstersdictionary1828.com), write out a working definition for each of the following terms in your own words:

- ★ Liberty (*Read the third definition, Civil Liberty*)
- ★ Justice
- ★ Government
- ★ Jurisdiction

2. Biblical Foundation

Read the following scripture and write out an answer to each of the questions below.

- ★ **Read Micah 6:8**
What does God require of individuals?
- ★ **Read Romans 13:1-7**
What does God require of the government?
- ★ How does the role of the individual differ from the role of government?

3. American Origins

Read the following documents and write out an answer to each of the questions below.

- ★ **Read the Declaration of Independence.**
Why are governments "instituted among men?"
- ★ **Read Preamble to the U.S. Constitution.**
List each of the reasons given for why the Constitution was written.
- ★ **Read Federalist No. 51.**
How did the Founding Fathers accomplish their objective of limited government?

4. Write two essays.

- ★ Write one essay from a biblical perspective on God's intended purpose for the institution of government and the scope of its jurisdiction.
- ★ Write one essay about the Founding Fathers' vision for a limited US government, and the structure they created to accomplish this goal.
- ★ Each essay should meet the following MLA academic standards.
 - ★ Minimum of 500 words
 - ★ One-inch page margins
 - ★ Double-spaced paragraphs
 - ★ Typeface: Times New Roman, 11pts
 - ★ A header with author's last name and page number one-half inch from the top of each page



HOMWORK NOTE

Print two copies of each essay. You will keep one copy of each for your own reference and will be required to turn in one copy of each essay for grading. You will not be required to submit anything related to the terms or research sections of the alumni homework.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

The following assignment will give students a better understanding of the Four Day State Class; however, it is not required.

7

Campaign Preparation

During the TeenPact week, we will hold class elections for governor and senator. Begin thinking about running, as it is a tremendous learning experience and a ton of fun! For those interested in running, we recommend that you:

- ★ Develop a campaign slogan.
- ★ Write a short speech on why you might make a good class governor or senator.
- ★ Think about a favorite Bible verse or message you can share with your fellow students.
- ★ **Purpose: To be prepared for in-class elections.**

Completed Homework Checklist

Please bring these items to class on Monday:

- Two copies of your State Political Fact Sheet
- Two copies of your letter to your **state** senator (for your district)
- Two copies of your State of the State Address Worksheet
- Three copies of your bill
- Two copies of each of your alumni essays
- One copy of your campaign preparation notes (optional)



Name: _____

Pre-Class Vocabulary List

Research the terms using a dictionary or other reference resources, then define each term in your own words. **To receive full credit, respond to all questions and do all comparisons and contrasts.**

SECTION ONE

Government _____

“That government is best which governs least.” Based on this quote (which is commonly attributed to Thomas Jefferson) and the general definition of the term “government,” do you agree or disagree with this quote? Why or why not?

Considering the definition of the term “government,” how would you define the term “self-government?”

SECTION TWO

Justice _____

Liberty _____

SECTION THREE

Direct Democracy _____

Representative Democracy _____

Based on the definitions you found of the terms “Direct Democracy” and “Representative Democracy,” which of these terms best describes the system of government we have in the United States? _____

In your state? _____

Why? _____

SECTION FOUR

Legislative _____

Executive _____

Judicial _____

Separation of Powers _____

Checks and Balances _____

How do the three branches of government provide “checks and balances” to each other? _____

SECTION FIVE

Election _____

Appointment _____

Considering the definitions of these two terms, what are some governmental positions that are “by election?” _____

What are some governmental positions that are “by appointment?” _____

What are some advantages and disadvantages to election? Appointment? _____

SECTION SIX

District _____

Redistrict _____

Gerrymander _____

What is the difference between redistricting and gerrymandering? _____



Name: _____

State Political Fact Sheet

Research and fill in the blanks. **All information should be memorized.**

1. My senator's name is _____.
2. There are (#) _____ senators in my state.
3. The number of Democrats and Republicans in the Senate is _____ D to _____ R.
4. My Governor's name is _____.
5. My Lt. Governor's name is (if applicable) _____.
6. My Attorney General's name is _____.
7. My Secretary of State's name is _____.
8. My Chief Justice is _____.
9. My President of the Senate is _____.
10. I live in State Senate District number _____.
11. There are (#) _____ State Supreme Court Justices in my state.
12. Are my State Supreme Court Justices elected or appointed? Elected Appointed
If both, please explain the process. _____

Sample Letter to your Senator

123 My Street
Small Town, State 11233

Senator Fred Dyson
100 State Capitol Avenue, Room 225
Capital City, State 22311

Dear Senator Dyson,

In the body of your letter, make sure that you:

- ★ Thank your legislator for his service to your community and state.
- ★ Tell him that you are praying for him.
- ★ Tell him about TeenPact and what you will be learning about during the class.

Other ideas include:

- ★ Respectfully write about an issue that relates to your state.
- ★ Ask if you can stop by your legislator's office after it ends on Friday. (NOTE: This may not be possible if you have a residential class. Contact your State Coordinator if you have questions about the best time to set up an appointment!)

Sincerely,

Jane Doe

Jane Doe



HOMWORK TIP

Always use the correct title (Senator) when writing to your legislators!



Name: _____

State of the State Address

Read or watch your governor's most recent State of the State Address. **Create a list of the issues addressed (at least three or more) by the governor in his or her speech.**

ISSUE # 1 _____

ISSUE # 2 _____

ISSUE # 3 _____

ISSUE # 4 (OPTIONAL) _____

ISSUE # 5 (OPTIONAL) _____

Sample Bill

This is a standard format to follow when writing your bill for TeenPact Legislature. Each state legislature has their own design for their bills. Take a look at a bill from your state to check out the similarities and differences.

By: John Doe	←	Author
Senate Bill # _____	←	Bill number
A BILL TO BE ENTITLED AN ACT		
Motorist Safety Act of 2019	←	Title
PURPOSE: To reduce the number of deaths and severe injuries caused by traffic accidents.	←	Reasons you think this bill is important.
<i>BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF (your statename)</i>		
Section 1. For the purpose of this act, “motorist” shall mean any person controlling a motorized vehicle used for the purpose of moving persons or freight on the highways of this state.	←	The actual specific law that you want to pass with all the details spelled out. This will include definitions, plan of action, and means of enforcement.
Section 2. It is unlawful for a motorist to travel at a speed of more than 65 miles per hour on an interstate or more than 55 miles per hour on any other highway in this state.		
Section 3. Any person who violates this act shall be subject to a fine not to exceed One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) per violation.		
Section 4. All laws or parts of laws in conflict with this act are hereby repealed.		
Section 5. This act shall become effective 30 days after approval by the governor or upon its otherwise becoming a law.	←	State exactly when your bill will take effect if passed.
Section 6. Upon approval by the governor, this bill will be reviewed by the Appropriation Committee for funding.	←	State how your bill will be funded.



NOTE TO PARENTS

All students will have the chance to present their bills before the class; however, due to time constraints, not every bill will be further debated during TeenPact’s mock-legislature.