

2020 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 8 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, feel free to reference that as you complete the new Vocabulary List. There are some new terms, so be sure to review them all so you're well-prepared for the class!

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 15) when formatting your letter.
- ★ Need to know where to send the letter? Go to Project Vote Smart (votesmart.org) and search for your State Senator.
- ★ Remember to check your grammar and spelling.
- ★ In everything, be respectful and address them with their proper title (Senator).
- ★ Mail the letter at least two weeks before the class to ensure it arrives in time.
- ★ Take time to pray for your Senator by name before sending your letter.
- ★ **Purpose: To experience how easy it is to communicate with your elected official and to participate in the process by making your opinions known.**



HOMEWORK TIP

Consider asking questions about why they support a particular issue or what they hope to accomplish during their time in the legislature. Remember to write your State Senator, not federal.

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 and try to write your bill on a new topic that you haven't used before..

6

Purpose: To help you better understand and value the principles of justice and liberty as identified in God’s Word and our nation’s founding documents. To accomplish this, you will study the history of the judicial branch and how judicial review has affected the balance of powers within the U.S. government. Through this, you will discover why protecting our unalienable rights is paramount to preserving liberty.

On June 21, 1788, the newly-drafted United States Constitution was ratified by its ninth state — New Hampshire — thereby meeting the necessary majority to become the supreme law of the land. Having experienced the unbridled authority of the British monarchy, the Founders envisioned a nation in which the power resides with the people, and fashioned a government to secure the God-given, unalienable rights of its citizens. To ensure this cause, they carefully crafted a system of separated powers, creating checks and balances between three distinct branches of government — Legislative, Executive, and Judicial branches.

The Judicial branch appeared, at the outset, to have the least constitutionally-protected right to participate in “checking” the remaining two branches. Then, in 1803, the U.S. Supreme Court accepted what is now remembered as a landmark case: *Marbury v. Madison*. As a major outcome of their ruling, Chief Justice John Marshall and his three colleagues set in precedent the process of Judicial Review where courts of law maintain the duty to determine the constitutionality of Legislative and Executive actions. In effect, this completed the circle of checks and balances within America’s governmental structure. Fascinatingly, while many would conclude this to be the Court’s highest priority and primary responsibility, it still technically resides outside the provisions of the Constitution itself.

By exercising this power, the Judicial branch has changed the course of US history. Hundreds of cases have been submitted for Judicial Review resulting in a cascade of landmark decisions, setting precedent for decades to come. Whether the outcomes of these decisions are positive or negative, they have had a profound effect on the future of our country. For example, many voters during the 2016 Presidential election viewed Supreme Court appointments as key in determining their ballot. According to CNN and NBC exit polls, an average of seven out of ten people stated Supreme Court nominations were either the most important factor or an important factor in their voting decision. Indeed, since being elected, President Trump has made two Supreme Court nominations, which have significantly impacted the landscape of the Judicial branch.

We are experiencing an ever-rising tension in our nation over the Judicial branch of government and its attendant powers. In the last 50 years alone, the Supreme Court has made decisions on such important matters as civil rights, the definition of marriage, eminent domain, abortion and more. Some argue that these decisions should have been legislated rather than ruled by unelected Justices. How has the Judiciary’s rise in power affected the United States? In what ways has it protected or failed to protect our unalienable rights? As Christians and U.S. citizens, what should be our response when these rights are infringed upon?

The following assignments will direct your pre-class study and prepare you for in-class sessions. Throughout the week you will dialogue with your Program Director and other Alumni Students about your research. You will participate in a survey to discover public opinion on these issues. Finally, you will explore why we need a judicial system that is dedicated to protecting the principles of liberty and justice for all.

1. Definitions

Research and describe the following terms. When possible, please use Webster's 1828 Dictionary. (webstersdictionary1828.com).

- ★ Justice
- ★ Checks and Balances
- ★ Unalienable
- ★ Jurisdiction
- ★ Separation of Powers
- ★ Precedent
- (See Articles I, II, and III of the U.S. Constitution.)
- ★ Judicial Activism
- ★ Judicial Restraint

2. Biblical Foundation

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

- ★ **Read Romans 2:6-11.**
How is God's justice revealed in his character and actions?
- ★ **Read Romans 13:1-10 and 1 Peter 2:13-17.**
Describe why God has established human institutions of governing authority.
- ★ **Read Deuteronomy 1:16-17 and 2 Chronicles 19:5-7.**
What does God require of judicial authorities?
- ★ **Read Romans 5:12-14.**
How should the fallen nature of man inform our view of limited government and checks and balances in government?

3. American Origin

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

- ★ **Compare the list of grievances in the Declaration of Independence with Article III of the U.S. Constitution.**
What did the Founders seek to protect when they established an independent judiciary?
- ★ **Read Federalist Paper No. 78 by Alexander Hamilton.**
Why did Alexander Hamilton consider the judiciary "the least dangerous branch of government?" How does Article III of the U.S. Constitution establish an independent judiciary and contribute to the balance of power between the three branches of the Federal Government?
- ★ **View Marbury v. Madison: Judicial Review by Hillsdale College President Larry Arnn.**
To access this video, please follow these instructions:
 1. Please visit online.hillsdale.edu/auth/signup and use the provided form to create an account to access Hillsdale College online courses.
 2. Once you are logged in, paste the following link into your browser: online.hillsdale.edu/courses/the-us-supreme-court or search for the course, "The U.S. Supreme Court."
 3. The first video, Marbury v. Madison: Judicial Review is the only lecture required for your homework as a TeenPact Alumni Student. Be sure to take notes for in-class discussion!
- ★ **Read Chief Justice John Marshall's Majority Opinion in Marbury v. Madison.** (teenpact.com/marbury)
How did the Marbury v. Madison decision change the prerogative of the Judicial branch?

4. Essays (500 word minimum)

- ★ **ESSAY 1 - Describe how Judicial Review altered the balance of power between the three branches of government since Marbury v. Madison.**

How is this different than what the Founders sought to establish?

- ★ **ESSAY 2 - Contrast judicial activism with judicial restraint.**

Which one better protects the unalienable rights outlined in the Declaration of Independence and U.S. Constitution?



HOMWORK NOTE

Print two copies of each essay. You will keep one copy of each essay 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 assignments will give students a better understanding of the Four Day State Class and the fundamental ideas/strategies involved in the campaign process. While these assignments are not required we do highly recommend students complete them.



Campaign Preparation

During the TeePact week, we will hold class-wide elections for Governor and Senator. Once elected, these officials will have the distinct honor of representing the student body at graduation. Every student, during the week, will participate in elections in some capacity; candidate, campaign manager, grassroots activist, and voter. With so many roles to participate in, we recommend that you:

- ★ **Develop a campaign slogan** - Your slogan should be memorable for the other students. Think about your goal for the campaign. You can make your slogan quick and catchy, or a little more thought provoking. Your slogan will help the students remember who you are and understand your campaign. Choose wisely!
- ★ **Write a short speech on why you might make a good Governor or Senator to represent your fellow students** - During the class, you will have the opportunity to answer questions and convince the other students why you would represent the class well as their Governor or Senator. Think of a few reasons to present to the class and you'll be that much more prepared.
- ★ **Think about a favorite Bible verse or message you can share with your fellow students** - This will help in preparation for your campaign, give clear reason why you are running, and help students connect with your candidacy.
- ★ **Bring Campaign Supplies** - Be creative with candy, signs, flyers, etc! Have fun thinking of ways to relate to your fellow students who will be voting in the election.
- ★ **Read about campaigning** - Understanding what a campaign looks like will help you as you participate in campaigning throughout the week. Review some historical campaigns and basic principles that make them successful. If you plan to run for office, think of ways you can build a campaign team and share with them what you learn in your research.
- ★ **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

Republic _____

Democracy _____

Democratic Republic _____

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

What about your state? _____

Explain why? _____

SECTION FOUR

Legislative Branch _____

Executive Branch _____

Judicial Branch _____

Checks and Balances _____

How does the separation of powers between the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial branches provide “checks and balances” for one another? _____

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

Democrat _____

Republican _____

Bipartisan _____

SECTION SEVEN

District _____

Redistrict _____

Gerrymander _____

What is the difference between redistricting and gerrymandering? _____

SECTION EIGHT _____

Primary Election _____

General Election _____

Runoff Election _____

Grassroots _____

What are examples of grassroots involvement in elections? _____

State Political Fact Sheet

Research and fill in the blanks. Remember to use state government information rather than federal government information. **All information should be memorized.**

1. My senator's name is _____.
2. There are (#) _____ senators currently in office in my state.
3. The ratio of Democrats, Republicans, Independents, and Vacancies in the Senate is ____D, ____R, ____I, and ____V.
4. My Governor's name is _____.
5. My Lt. Governor's name is _____.
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. _____

If your state does not have a Supreme Court, fill out these questions with information from your state's highest court.

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 class ends on Thursday or 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 2020 ←	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.



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) by the governor in his or her speech.**

ISSUE # 1 _____

ISSUE # 2 _____

ISSUE # 3 _____

ISSUE # 4 (OPTIONAL) _____

ISSUE # 5 (OPTIONAL) _____
