

Civics Glossary

- 1) **The Allies**—The formal partnership of countries that first opposed Germany during World War I and then formed once again to oppose the Axis countries during World War II.
- 2) **Ambassador**—A person who officially represents a country somewhere outside that country.
- 3) **American Revolution**—The struggle by which the United States won independence from Great Britain. It took place from 1775 to 1783.
- 4) **Abroad**—Outside of one's home country; in a foreign country.
- 5) **The Axis**—The partnership, or alliance, of Germany, Italy, and Japan during World War II. The Axis opposed the Allies, which included the United States.
- 6) **Bill**—Legislation that has formally been introduced in Congress.
- 7) **Bloodshed**—Violence that causes injuries or death; carnage.
- 8) **Branch**—A section or division of something; a part.
- 9) **Census**—An official count of the number of persons living in a country.
- 10) **Civil liberty**—A freedom that involves limiting the power of the government over people. The individual freedoms mentioned in the Bill of Rights are often known as civil liberties.
- 11) **Civil rights**—Idea that all people of a nation or society should be treated equally.
- 12) **Civil rights movement**—An organized effort that promoted equality, political rights, and fair treatment for all Americans, no matter what their skin color was.
- 13) **Colonies**—Areas of land controlled by a foreign country.
- 14) **Compact**—A formal agreement between two (or more) groups, which often is signed.
- 15) **Compromise**—When two groups of people with opposing views on some issue come to an agreement; a deal.
- 16) **To confirm**—When the Senate approves the President's choice for an important government position.
- 17) **Constellation**—A group of stars in the night sky.
- 18) **Constituents**—People who are represented by an elected official.
- 19) **To debate**—When people argue by presenting their different opinions about something.
- 20) **Debt**—Money that someone, or some government, owes to someone else.
- 21) **Declaration**—A statement of some idea or argument.
- 22) **Declaration of war**—Official statement by one country that it is at war with another country (or countries).
- 23) **Deliberate**—Careful and methodical; taking time to think.
- 24) **Democratic**—Having to do with government by the people or the idea of political equality for all.
- 25) **Domestic affairs**—Things that go on within a country, or political issues that affect one country and its people; having nothing to do with foreign or international affairs.
- 26) **Equal**—The exact same; identical.
- 27) **Equality**—The idea that all humans have the same rights, and that none are worse or lower than others simply because of their skin color or ethnic background.
- 28) **To execute**—To carry out; to turn a written rule into an action.
- 29) **Feast**—A big, special meal, which is often held to celebrate something; banquet.
- 30) **Federal**—Having to do with the national, or central, government, rather than the government of a specific state.
- 31) **Federalist Papers**—85 essays that were printed in New York newspapers while that state was deciding whether or not to support the U.S. Constitution. The essays were written by Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison in 1787 and 1788 and explained why New Yorkers should support the Constitution.
- 32) **Fiery**—Intense and forceful; passionate.
- 33) **Founding Fathers**—The men who wrote the U.S. Constitution. They created, or "founded," our system of government.
- 34) **To govern**—To set rules that people have to follow; to use political power to lead or to administer.
- 35) **Hardiness**—Ability to survive difficulties and keep going.
- 36) **Harvest**—The food that farmers get from the crops they have been growing during the summer.
- 37) **Ideals**—Basic principles or morals, which often discuss how a society should operate.
- 38) **To inaugurate**—To have gone through the ceremony of becoming President, known as inauguration.
- 39) **To invade**—To enter somewhere by force, using the military; to march into a place that belongs to your enemy.
- 40) **Jury**—Group of citizens that listens to a case in court and makes a decision about the case; each U.S. citizen is called from time to time to serve on a jury.
- 41) **Justice**¹—Fairness; the state of being morally good. (Question 1)
- 42) **Justice**²—Another word for a judge, used especially for the judges who are members of the Supreme Court. (Question 39)
- 43) **Legislative**—Having to do with making laws; often refers to the group of elected officials, such as the U.S. Congress, who get together to make laws.
- 44) **Liberties**—Special freedoms or rights.
- 45) **Lofty**—Very high or elevated; grand.
- 46) **Naturalization**—The process by which a foreign-born person can become a United States citizen.
- 47) **Noble**—Having very good qualities, excellent.
- 48) **Nominee**—A person who is selected, or nominated, for an important government position.
- 49) **Oath**—A promise or vow; a pledge.
- 50) **Perseverance**—Never giving up and always going ahead.
- 51) **Pilgrims**—English settlers who came to America long ago and set up communities.
- 52) **Planter**—A farmer, especially one who operates a large farm called a plantation.

- 53) **Polling station**—Where people go to vote in elections.
- 54) **Posterity**—Future generations.
- 55) **To protest**—To publicly oppose or complain about something; to object to something.
- 56) **Ratification**—To give formal consent to; when a majority of the state legislatures approve a proposed constitutional Amendment.
- 57) **To represent**—To serve within government as the voice of the people who elected you.
- 58) **Representation**—The right or privilege of being represented by delegates in a legislative body.
- 59) **Republican**—When a country's political power comes from the citizens, not the rulers, and is put into use by representatives elected by the citizens.
- 60) **Rights**—Basic things that people can freely do; freedoms and privileges.
- 61) **Secretary of State**—The government official in charge of directing and supervising the foreign relations of the United States. He or she leads the main foreign policy agency of the United States, the Department of State. The Secretary of State is the highest-ranking head of a department in the President's Cabinet.
- 62) **Segregation**—Separation of citizens of different races.
- 63) **Senate President Pro Tempore**—The Senator who, when the Vice President is not present, presides over the Senate. This means that he or she chooses which Senators can speak to the Senate. The President Pro Tempore is the Senator from the majority political party—the party which has the most Senators—who has served in the Senate for the longest time.
- 64) **Speaker of the House**—The most powerful member of the House of Representatives, who always comes from the majority party—the party with the most Representatives. The Speaker presides over the House by deciding which Representatives can speak during debate and usually plays a very visible role in public.
- 65) **Speedy**—Fast; done quickly.
- 66) **Supreme**—Highest; cannot be challenged; ultimate.
- 67) **Temperate**—Calm, composed, and reasonable; self-controlled.
- 68) **Term**—Length of time that a government leader serves before he or she must be elected once again.
- 69) **Term limits**—A limit on the number of terms that a leader can be elected to serve. A term is the length of time that a government leader serves before he or she must be elected once again.
- 70) **Territory**—New land controlled by a government; many states were U.S. territories before officially becoming states.
- 71) **Treaty**—A formal agreement between two (or more) countries; a pact.
- 72) **Unanimous**—When everyone in a group that is deciding something decides the same way.
- 73) **Valor**—Bravery in facing great danger, especially in battle.
- 74) **Vigilance**—The state of being alert and watching out for danger.
- 75) **Whigs**—American political party of the 1800s. The party stood for business and banking interests and opposed Andrew Jackson and his Democratic Party. Four Presidents, all serving in the 1840s and 1850s, were Whigs.

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