

AP Government Summer Assignment- Current Events

Directions: You will be responsible for paying attention to current events related to government and politics and examining their significance throughout this course. I encourage you to apply what you learn in this class to this activity and vice versa. Please fill out **TWO** tables (find two different current events).

Please adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Find a current event related to government and politics from a reputable source. For the purposes of this activity, a “current” event is one that has occurred at any point over summer break.
2. Once you have found a relevant current event that interests you, fill out the table below with the required information (Title, Name of Article, News Source, Publication Date and URL)
3. Write a synopsis (summary) of your current event. Your synopsis must be at least one paragraph in length (minimum four complete sentences) and should briefly but adequately cover what’s going on in your story.
4. Provide a reaction(s) to the current event you’ve shared. Please discuss your own thoughts and feelings about the story – does it make you happy, angry or confused? You can also discuss how the article portrays the current event – for example, does it cover the story in a way that upsets you? Your reaction must be one paragraph in length (at least four complete sentences).
5. Discuss how this current event relates to your current understanding of government and politics. For example, if you have some basic familiarity with the three branches of government, you can discuss what you know and how that prior knowledge relates to the current event. Your response must be at least one paragraph in length (at least four complete sentences).
6. Write two discussion questions pertaining to your current event. These questions will be used in class to drive a conversation about your topic, so write questions that you’d feel comfortable sharing with your peers! The purpose of these questions is to generate conversation so they should NOT be questions with easily identifiable answers (i.e., something that can be found through a simple Google search).

This activity will be due on the first day of the school year – a day will be devoted to sharing your current event with the class and discussing our prior knowledge about government and politics.

A sample has been provided below for your convenience.

Name: Mr. Cooley

Title of Article: *U.S. v. Trump* Will Be the Most Important Case in Our Nation's History

News Source: Slate

Publication Date: August 1, 2023

URL: <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2023/08/trump-trial-2024-historic-jack-smith-indictment.html>

Synopsis: Donald Trump has been indicted for attempting to subvert the results of the 2020 presidential election. This is his third and potentially most significant indictment, according to the article. Despite his mounting legal troubles, Trump remains the overwhelming favorite among Republican primary voters. Trump has multiple potential avenues to defend himself in court, including winning the 2024 presidential election, which would allow him to have greater control over the Justice department and avoid legal scrutiny.

Reaction: I agree with the author's perspective that *Trump v. U.S.* is an incredibly significant court case. This trial will serve as an important test for holding powerful figures accountable, even former presidents. It will also determine how strong our democratic system is to (possible) attempts at malfeasance. This is good because our political system is relatively fragile and reliant on good-faith actors behaving for the benefit of society, not themselves or other nefarious forces. I hope that this case is conducted fairly and that both sides act honorably.

Connection: This event relates to our current unit of study because it concerns the behavior of a former President and the extent to which they are bound by the rule of law. In this case, a government official (working for the executive branch's Justice Department) is attempting to hold former President Trump accountable for his actions while in office, an important (and certainly unprecedented) safeguard against government corruption. One of the foundational principles of our constitutional republic is that no person is above the law, not even the President of the United States. If the Supreme Court weighs in on this case (which is all but certain, given the gravity of the situation) then it will also demonstrate the authority of the judicial branch and its necessity in keeping the other branches in check.

Discussion Questions:

1. What would happen in the U.S. if Trump were found guilty of one or more of these charges?
2. What would happen in the U.S. if Trump were found innocent of all charges?

Current Events #1

Name:

Title of Article:

News Source:

Publication Date:

URL:

Synopsis:

Reaction:

Connection:

Discussion Questions:

- 1.
- 2.

Current Events #2

Name:

Title of Article:

News Source:

Publication Date:

URL:

Synopsis:

Reaction:

Connection:

Discussion Questions:

- 1.
- 2.