AP US Government and Politics Summer Assignment

Students are to read Chris Matthews' book Hardball: How Politics is Played, Told by One Who Knows the Game (1999; published by Simon & Schuster; Revised and Updated edition)

Answer the following hypothetical situations, using examples from what you've read, and page numbers in parentheses to support your responses. There are correct responses based on the book. If you have an incorrect response but the correct explanation/supporting evidence, you can receive some credit. **It is due on the second day of school, Friday, August 28, by 7:30am (turned in via TurnItIn).**
Class ID: 29571627
Enrollment Key: history

1. You are a member of the House of Representatives and a member of the House Appropriations Committee. This committee is responsible for authorizing money for programs/bills passed by Congress. You would like to obtain funding for a major highway in your district that will cost around $20 million to complete. *Should you seek all $20 million in one year, or $5 million in each of the next four years? Explain why.*

2. You are serving your third term in the House and would like to one day be either Speaker of the House or Majority Leader (highest ranking member of the majority party in the House). The current Speaker offers you either a seat on the Ways and Means Committee (committee responsible for all bills dealing with money/revenue), or the chairmanship of your party's Congressional Campaign Committee. The former is a highly coveted seat that will enable you to influence tax Legislation that could have a significant impact on the economy; the latter will require that you spend hundreds of hours raising money for your party's congressional candidates. *Which should you choose? Explain why.*

3. You are a member of the House and are exploring running for the Senate. If you decide to run, you will need to assemble a campaign organization quickly so that you can expand your political base beyond your own congressional district. *How should you go about building a devoted core of supporters?*

4. You are a Senator who is hoping to one day run for President. You learn that a reporter from *Newsweek* is interviewing one of your old business associates about a real estate deal that went bad several years ago and led to your being sued for breach of contract. At the time, you agreed to settle out of court by agreeing to pay the plaintiff a substantial sum of money. *How should you handle the potentially damaging story? Explain why.*

5. You are a prominent governor who has recently been nominated for President. Your opponent has begun running highly critical television ads which you believe distort your record. *Do you ignore the charges because it is unseemly to stoop to your opponent's level, or do you quickly and aggressively respond to each charge with an emphatic rebuttal? Explain why.*

In addition to answering the questions above, we will have a Socratic Seminar on the book. The seminar will revolve around the questions above. The seminar will take place on the second day of school, Aug. 28, 2026. **If you have any questions about the course, text, or what is expected of you to complete this assignment, do not hesitate to contact me via email at AlmeidaR@lincolnps.org. I check my email frequently during the summer.**