

## AP U.S. Government: Foundational Documents Quick Reference Guide

Document	Author	Main Points
Declaration of Independence	Thomas Jefferson (primary) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Authorized by Second Continental Congress</li> </ul>	Declared Independence from Britain – justification for “divorce” Identified Natural Rights- Life, Liberty, Pursuit of Happiness and govt’s job to protect them Influenced heavily by John Locke <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Consent of the Governed; Popular Sovereignty; Social Contract Theory</li> <li>o Limited Government</li> </ul>
Articles of Confederation	John Dickinson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Authorized by Second Continental Congress</li> </ul>	Confederal Government (state sovereignty); Weak- Congress not given many powers to prevent tyranny Unicameral Legislature <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Each State = 1 vote; 9/13 votes needed to pass laws</li> </ul> No Executive/ No Judicial (cannot settle interstate disputes); no power to tax citizens No power to raise an army
U.S. Constitution	<p>Preamble outlines job of government: <u>We the People</u> [popular sovereignty; consent of the governed] of the United States, in Order to <u>form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity</u>, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.</p> <p>Outlines the structure of the government [republic; federalism]                      Three branches of government [separation of power; checks and balances]                      Relationships between states [extradition clause; privileges and immunities; full faith and credit clause]                      Amendment process? [Article V] Proposed by Congress or Convention, ratified by ¾ state legislatures</p> <p>1 = Freedom of religion (establishment and free exercise clauses), speech, press, assembly, petition for redress                      2 = Arms 4 = Protection from unwarranted search &amp; seizure (exclusionary rule) 5 = No self-incrimination or double jeopardy; due process 6 = speedy trial by jury, right to counsel 7 = trial by jury in civil cases                      8 = no cruel/unusual punishment 9 = These are not all your rights 10 = reserved powers/states rights clause                      12 = Process for selecting pres &amp; VP in E.C. 13 = No slavery 14 = Due process, equal protection, Incorporation                      15 = Black male vote 16 = Income tax 17 = Popular election of senators 18 = Prohibition 19 = Women vote                      21 = End prohibition 22 = Pres term (2 terms +2 years as VP) 23 = DC votes for pres 24 = No poll tax                      25 = Presidential succession 26 = 18 to vote</p>	
Federalist #10	James Madison Federalist Papers	Factions are inevitable – cannot destroy them, so must manage them Large Republic is the best form of government to address factions – too difficult for any one faction to gain power; less likely for corruption Pluralism – many factions competing for influence leads to only the best ideas being enacted Prevents tyranny of the majority Views of the people will be “refined and enlarged” by their elected representatives

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Brutus #1	Robert Yates Anti- Federalist	<p>Constitution gives too much power to central government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Necessary and Proper Clause (Elastic Clause) is a blank check to Congress</li> <li>○ Supremacy Clause – state governments will be obsolete; impotent</li> <li>○ Too large a country for Congress to represent local concerns; ineffective because too many views (factions) to form consensus</li> </ul> <p>Can do away with State Governments Standing Army in peacetime is a destruction of liberty Once you give up power the only way to get it back is by force</p>
Federalist #51	Madison Federalist Papers	<p>Power is divided between :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ three branches of government, each w/ little control over the other</li> <li>○ national &amp; state government; House and Senate are divided &amp; elected in different ways (back then)</li> </ul> <p>Checks and Balances – Gov’t must be powerful enough to control the people, but also to control itself – separate but equal powers All keep power from becoming too centralized- prevent one person/ one group from taking over the government “If men were angels, no government would be necessary”</p>
Federalist #70	Alexander Hamilton	<p>Argues for a single, “energetic” executive (president)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ President must be a single person; having a dual executive or a committee will lead to confusion, disagreement, and inability to act decisively</li> <li>○ Debate and disagreement are good for Congress, poison for the president.</li> </ul> <p>President needs to be able to act quickly and decisively to respond to crises Having a single president makes the executive easily accountable; multiple presidents = finger pointing and shifting blame</p>
Federalist #78	Alexander Hamilton	<p>“Least dangerous branch” – cannot enforce its decisions (no influence over “sword or purse”) Judiciary must be independent; life terms ensure justices are (otherwise they will be beholden to their appointers); qualified men won’t do the job if it is temporary Judicial review – job is to interpret the Constitution</p>
Letter from a Birmingham Jail	MLK, Jr.	<p>Justice delayed is justice denied; Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere All people should be treated the same under the law (14<sup>th</sup> Amendment Equal Protection Clause) Nonviolent direct action seeks to create an urgency for legislative action</p>