Fitzgerald

Seven Principles of the Constitution

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| Define “principle.” | **Principle** * ***Noun***
* a basic truth or law or assumption
* Example: *"The principles of democracy"*
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| Seven Principles of the Constitution | 1. Popular Sovereignty
2. Republicanism
3. Federalism
4. Separation of Powers
5. Checks and balances
6. Limited Government
7. Individual Rights
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| Popular sovereignty | Popular Sovereignty* Expressed by first words in Constitution - We the People . . . establish this Constitution ….
* Definition – a government in which the people rule
	+ Government’s authority comes from the people
	+ Government reflects the will of the people
* Popular – people
* Sovereign – rule
* Based on ideas of John Locke
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| Republicanism | Republicanism –* A government in which
	+ The people exercise their power by
	+ Voting for representatives
	+ Also called –
		- representative democracy
		- (versus direct democracy)
* Addressed a fear –
	+ Public might not always know the best
	+ Public opinion = Sound Judgment? Not!
* Required of states, too
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| Federalism | Federalism – * Definition –
	+ A system of government in which the states and the national government share power
* **Delegated** powers –
	+ states give some powers to National govt.
* **Concurrent** powers –
	+ states share some powers - Ex. – the power to ta
* **Reserved** powers –
	+ states keep all others
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| Separation of Powers | Separation of Powers –* Divide power into three branches of government –
	+ Legislative - makes the laws
	+ Executive – enforces the laws
	+ Judicial – interprets the laws
* No one branch is given all power
	+ Not as efficient, ***but*** ***protects*** against abuse (tyranny/dictatorship)
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| Checks and Balances | ~~Checks and Balances~~ – Balances and Checks* Balance - each branch must rely on the others to perform its work
* Check - each branch has the ability to stop an abusive action of the others
	+ Ex – If Congress passes a “bad” law, President can veto it, and Courts can call it unconstitutional.
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| Rule of Law - Limited Government | * “Rule of Law” – No one is above the law
	+ Everyone, citizens and powerful leaders alike, must obey the law
* Power of Government are limited –
	+ Art. 1 Sec. 9 – Powers denied Congress
	+ Art. 1 Sec. 10 – Powers denied the states
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| Individual Rights | Individuals Rights* Protections against a too powerful government
* Listed in –
	+ the Bill of Rights - the first ten amendments to the Constitution
* “Civil Liberties” Freedoms the government can’t touch
	+ Ex. – freedom of religion
* “Civil Rights” - Positive actions gov’t. must do to protect citizens against injustice
	+ Ex. – must have a warrant, must have speedy trial, must have a jury
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