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"* |
| 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 |
| 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 |
| 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 |
| 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 |
| 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) |
| 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. |
| 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 |
| 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 |