

Chapter 1

Multiple Choice/Fill in the Blank

1. As measured by gross domestic product (GDP), California's economy:
 - a. is the largest in the world
 - b. is not much different than an average U.S. state
 - c. ranks among the ten largest countries in the world
 - d. ranks among the ten smallest countries in the world

2. "A process through which people with differing goals and values try to manage their conflicts by working together to allocate values for society" is a definition of:
 - a. communism
 - b. politics
 - c. political culture
 - d. hybrid democracy

3. The definition of a "hybrid democracy" is:
 - a. a citizenry whose rights are guaranteed by both a national and a state constitution
 - b. a state that was once a territory but was admitted to the union without a waiting period
 - c. a state with a combination of representative and direct democracy
 - d. a democracy that is run by incumbents who are reelected, year after year

4. According to the book, _____ (is/are) at the heart of politics.
 - a. choices
 - b. the constitution
 - c. representatives
 - d. incentives and disincentives

5. Approximately how many people in California are foreign-born?
 - a. one out of two (50 percent)
 - b. one in four (25 percent)
 - c. one in ten (10 percent)
 - d. one out of 100 (1 percent)

6. One of the features that defines California's political culture is:
 - a. social and economic conservatism
 - b. strong political party affiliation and a healthy and competitive two-party system
 - c. strong trust in state government; government is seen as a positive force
 - d. fondness for political reform, and general dislike of politicians

7. How many representatives represent California in Congress?
 - a. 21 Representatives plus 2 Senators
 - b. 33 Representatives plus 2 Senators
 - c. 53 Representatives plus 2 Senators
 - d. 74 Representatives plus 2 Senators

8. What is the main function of a political institution?
 - a. To increase general levels of political participation.
 - b. To provide politicians a building in which to conduct their business.
 - c. To allow citizens to bypass politicians in their quest for self-governance.
 - d. To facilitate compromises that lead to acceptable alternatives or solutions.

9. The largest city in California is:
 - a. San Francisco
 - b. Los Angeles
 - c. Fresno
 - d. San Diego

10. How many counties are contained within California?
 - a. five
 - b. twenty-one
 - c. thirty-nine
 - d. fifty-eight

11. How long has California been a U.S. state?
 - a. about 50 years
 - b. about 100 years
 - c. more than 150 years
 - d. more than 200 years

12. Where is California's capital, where state elected officials conduct most of their legislative and executive business?
 - a. Sacramento
 - b. San Francisco
 - c. Los Angeles
 - d. Eureka

True or False Questions

13. One reason for California's "crazy quilt" of governing institutions, rules, and processes is that citizens can bypass the legislature by using the initiative process.
 - a. True
 - b. False

14. A high percentage of Californians (one of every four persons) is foreign-born.
 - a. True
 - b. False

15. California has about the same percentage of Non-Hispanic whites as the rest of the U.S.

- a. True
- b. False

16. As recently as 2000, the California state legislature was considered one of the best in the nation.

- a. True
- b. False

17. As recently as 1970, the California state legislature was generally considered one of the best in the nation.

- a. True
- b. False

18. Compared to New York, another large state, California has a lower percentage of foreign-born residents.

- a. True
- b. False

19. Because California is such a large state, fluctuations in the global or national economies have almost no effect on the state's economy.

- a. True
- b. False

Essay or Short Answer Questions

3. Define the term "politics."

- a. Varies. Politics may be defined as "a process through which people with differing goals and values try to manage their conflicts by working together to allocate values for society." Most definitions emphasize that it is a process of managing conflict, often through bargaining and compromise. Harold Lasswell defines politics as "who gets what, when, and how."

Type: E

15. Explain what a political institution is, and provide an example.

- a. A political institution is an organization designed to manage conflict that often arises over the process of allocating goods and values for a society. Institutions define the roles and rules for those who participate in them. In short, they are groups, traditional practices, or formal organizations in which people come together to solve problems for a society, or achieve collective action. Examples might include formal political institutions such as parties (the Green Party, the Republican Party), Congress, the Presidency, the courts, elections, or the tools of direct democracy (recall, referendum, initiative, which are types of elections).

Type: E

16. Provide an example of a political institution in California.

a. Varies. As defined in the book, an institution is “an organization designed to manage conflict that often arises over the process of allocating goods and values for a society.” Therefore, an institution includes virtually any local, county, or state office, agency, department, or governmental branch; it could also be a formal process, group, or organization that has been established by the state and exists to solve conflicts for society. Examples: the Republican Party, the Democratic Party (and any named political party, or political parties generally), elections, the legislature (including the Assembly or the state Senate), the governor’s office, the executive branch, the courts, traffic court (superior court), the Supreme Court of CA, the Dept. of Motor Vehicles (DMV), and so on.

Type: E

17. With respect to politics, why do rules matter?

a. Rules define who has power and how those authorities may legitimately use it. Rules also create incentives for action and inaction. An average answer would suggest the organizational benefits of having rules, or alternatively, might allude to the fact that without rules anarchy would arise. A good answer would explain the function rules perform in a political system (as defined above), or suggest an example of a rule that creates an incentive or disincentive for action, such as a local ordinance that rewards those who conserve water or a fine placed on those who waste it.

Type: E

25. What are some of the conditions that make governing California difficult?

@ Why do elected officials in California have such a difficult time governing the state?

a. Although this question is addressed throughout the book, the short answer is that California’s problems exist on a massive scale: it is “hyper-diverse” with respect to demographics, geography, society, politics, and economics. In other words, among the U.S. states California contains the largest population, largest economy, most diverse landscapes and land uses, and tremendous racial and ethnic diversity. (Students might provide some details about the state’s characteristics here.) These conditions combine to create complex issues that require long-range solutions, careful planning, and sometimes consensus and compromise, yet these are difficult to achieve in a state where citizens fundamentally distrust politicians and have the means (direct democracy) to take matters into their own hands. Some of the issues that respondents might mention are: immigration, climate change, drought, budgetary issues (taxation, balancing budgets), economic conditions (unemployment, recession or relative prosperity), prison overcrowding or prison population reduction (realignment), infrastructure needs.

Type: E

26. Weather events have political dimensions. Describe how changes in the climate create problems and issues that require a response from California governing officials.

a. Varies. Whether short- or long-term, extreme weather events can have devastating effects on infrastructure, availability of water and electricity, biodiversity, transportation systems, commerce and industry, and the economy generally. Most of these lead to higher costs for governments that must respond to emergencies or longer-term effects on

people, businesses, and the environment. Some of the impacts of prolonged drought have been on water availability and quality, economic losses in the tourism and agricultural industries in particular, and costs related to damaged infrastructure (broken pipes, bridges, sewer lines, roads) because of sinking land. Water scarcity calls into question the proper balance of water rights that are shared among people, the environment, and agriculture, and has prompted new legislation to provide financial assistance to people affected by drought and to manage groundwater and water supplies generally. Excessive drought is also related to more frequent wildfires and potential loss of wildlife. An abundance of water brought by heavy rains places similar stresses on people, the environment, and the economy: mudslides and flooding create emergency situations that require costly repairs and responses from the state.

Type: E

28. What principles are important for understanding California politics?

a. 1. Choices: choices are at the heart of politics. To elaborate, everyone makes choices in a political system; successful political system provides a process for narrowing choices to a manageable number and allows many participants to reconcile their differences as they make choices together. 2. Political culture: every system has a distinct culture that reflects the decisions that emerge from a political process, decisions that together express a political community's customs, values, and beliefs about government. 3. Institutions: institutions bring people together to solve problems on behalf of society. They are arrangements that manage conflict and organize action, facilitating compromises, trade-offs, or bargains that lead to acceptable solutions or alternatives. 4. Collective action: the concept of working together to solve problems and allocating goods or values for a society. 5. Rules: rules matter, because they define who has power and how they may legitimately use it; rules create incentives for action or inaction. 6. History: history shapes the opportunities and incentives for political action (decisions often build on prior ones).

Type: E

29. About how many people live in California?

@ What is the population of California?

a. almost 39 million (or between 38 and 40 million)

22. The capital of California is _____.

a. Sacramento

Type: F

23. To understand politics, it is also important to understand the rules, because rules create _____.

a. incentives (for action and inaction)

Type: F

24. Six fundamental concepts for understanding politics include: choice, political culture, institutions, rules, history, and _____ (working together for mutual benefit).

a. collective action

