

Chapter 4: The State Legislature

Test Bank

Multiple Choice

1. In California's system of separated powers, the legislature _____.
- A. carries out law
 - B. makes law or policy *and* carries it out
 - C. makes law or policy
 - D. none of these

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

2. The California Assembly contains _____ members, whereas the California Senate contains _____ members.
- A. 50; 100
 - B. 50; 50
 - C. 80; 40
 - D. 40; 80

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

3. How long is an Assembly term?
- A. 1 year
 - B. 2 years
 - C. 4 years
 - D. 5 years

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

4. How long is a state Senate term?
- A. 2 years
 - B. 4 years
 - C. 6 years
 - D. 8 years

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

5. The length of an Assembly term is _____ years, whereas the length of a Senate term is _____ years.
- A. 2; 4
 - B. 4; 6
 - C. 2; 6
 - D. 8; 12

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

6. As a professionalized institution, California's legislature resembles that of _____.
A. the U.S. Congress
B. New York, Pennsylvania, and Michigan
C. no other state; it is in a class of its own
D. the U.S. Congress, New York, Pennsylvania, and Michigan

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

7. The California legislature is considered a(n) _____ legislature because _____.
A. amateur; it is full of low-paid, amateur legislators
B. citizen; it meets part-time
C. professionalized: it is full of highly paid legislators who meet year-round
D. professionalized; most lawmakers are career politicians who have spent decades enjoying the advantages of incumbency

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

8. What is the approximate, average size of an Assembly district?
A. 100,000
B. 250,000
C. 450,000
D. 900,000

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

9. What is the approximate, average size of a Senate district?
A. 110,000
B. 250,000
C. 450,000
D. 930,000

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

10. What is the maximum number of years that a person can serve in the Assembly?
A. 4 years
B. 8 years
C. 12 years
D. 16 years

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

11. What is the maximum number of years that a person can serve in the Senate?
A. 4 years
B. 8 years
C. 12 years

D. 16 years

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

12. Lawmakers elected after 2012 are allowed to serve _____.
- A. as many terms as they want; there are no restrictions on service
 - B. 6 years in the Assembly, and 6 years in the Senate
 - C. a total of 12 years in one or both houses
 - D. 14 years in either house, and after they take a break for 6 years, they can restart their own clock and serve another 14 years

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

13. Lawmakers who were elected *before* 2012 are allowed to serve _____.
- A. a total of 14 years in one or both houses
 - B. 6 years in the Assembly and 6 years in the Senate
 - C. as many terms as they want; there are no restrictions on service
 - D. 12 years in either house, and after they take a break for 6 years, they can restart the clock and serve another 12 years

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature | Box 4.2 Term Limits: Political Earthquake

14. Which of the following is NOT an outcome directly attributed to term limits?
- A. Assembly members, often from the same party, vie for the same Senate seat, creating intraparty competition.
 - B. Annual budgets are delayed because legislators are term-limited out before final votes on the budget are taken.
 - C. Legislators in their last terms are less accountable to their constituents, because the electoral connection has been severed.
 - D. Incumbents still have huge advantages and nearly always win reelection.

Answer Location: Box 4.2 Term Limits: Political Earthquake

15. Legislative districts, or the districts that lawmakers represent, must contain equal numbers of people. Districts are redrawn _____, because _____.
- A. every 5 years; populations shift relatively quickly across the state
 - B. every 10 years; the official U.S. Census counts where people live
 - C. every 20 years; it's time-consuming to redraw the maps
 - D. never; the process is just too politically contentious

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

16. The power to draw legislative districts rests with whom?
- A. Assembly and Senate committee members and their expert staff
 - B. the leaders of the Assembly and Senate, and the governor

- C. the Citizens Redistricting Commission
- D. the U.S. Congressional House delegation

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

17. Who is in charge of drawing U.S. House (congressional) district boundaries?
- A. the Assembly and Senate
 - B. the governor
 - C. U.S. Congress
 - D. the state's Citizens Redistricting Commission

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

18. The political party that attained supermajority status in 2012 and 2016 was _____.
- A. Democratic
 - B. Republican
 - C. neither: membership was evenly split

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

19. The state law that "requires state and local agencies to identify the significant environmental impacts of their actions and to avoid or mitigate those impacts, if feasible," is known as _____.
- A. AB 32, the "Global Warming Solutions Act"
 - B. SB 32, the bill extending the Global Warming Solutions Act
 - C. CEQA, the California Environmental Quality Act
 - D. Proposition 140

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

20. What is NOT true of staff members?
- A. They vote on bills when the legislators are absent.
 - B. They handle the work that lawmakers would not be able to do alone, including constituency communication and casework, and meeting with the many special interest groups and lobbyists that want to discuss pending legislation.
 - C. They help run the offices in the district and Capitol.
 - D. They write bills, research legislation, write bill analyses, and make recommendations about how to vote.

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

21. Which body has been referred to as the "eyes and ears of the legislature," performing in-depth research on programs, bills, and the budget?
- A. The Chief Clerk of the Assembly
 - B. The Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO)
 - C. The Speaker's Office

D. The Legislative Counsel

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

22. The organization that acts as an in-house law firm, crafting legislators' proposals into formal bills, rendering legal opinions, and making bill information available to the public electronically is _____.

- A. the Legislative Counsel
- B. the Legislative Analyst
- C. the Speaker's Office
- D. the Chief Clerk of the Assembly

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

23. How many votes are needed to pass most bills?

- A. a simple majority (50% + 1)
- B. a supermajority of 55%
- C. a supermajority of 2/3
- D. a supermajority of 3/4

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

24. Unless they have supermajority state, the majority party usually can ignore the minority party, except when it comes to _____.

- A. the budget, which must be passed unanimously
- B. the budget, which contains money for every legislator's "pet projects" for a district
- C. raising taxes or fees, which requires a two-thirds majority vote
- D. any bill, which must be passed by two thirds

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

25. Thinking about "how a bill becomes a law," which of these entities does NOT have a regular role to play in the lawmaking process?

- A. the governor
- B. Assembly and Senate committees
- C. all legislators
- D. the attorney general

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

26. A person with tremendous power over a bill's fate is _____.

- A. the Speaker of the Assembly, who reads every bill and kills the ones she/he doesn't like
- B. the committee chairperson, who has the power to ignore bills that are referred to his/her committee
- C. the Legislative Analyst, whose office studies the effects of policies and programs

D. the Lieutenant Governor, who has a tie-breaking vote in the Senate

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

27. What vote threshold must be met to pass the annual budget?

- A. a simple majority
- B. two thirds
- C. three fourths
- D. unanimity

Answer Location: Annual Budgeting

28. When legislators or their staff respond to constituents' requests for help dealing with the state bureaucracy or "navigating the government system," they are performing _____.

- A. oversight
- B. policymaking
- C. constituency service
- D. descriptive representation

Answer Location: Constituency Service and Outreach

29. When a Senate committee chairperson calls state employees or administrators to testify about the programs they run, or orders that a program be reviewed to ensure that a law is being carried out according to the legislature's intent, the chair is performing _____.

- A. outreach
- B. budgeting
- C. casework
- D. oversight

Answer Location: Executive Branch Oversight

30. Confirming the governor's appointees to important boards and commissions is the responsibility of _____.

- A. the Office of Personnel
- B. the Assembly and Senate
- C. the Senate only
- D. the Legislative Analyst's Office

Answer Location: Executive Branch Oversight

31. The "Big Three" is a term that refers to _____.

- A. the governor, the Speaker of the Assembly, and the Senate president pro tem
- B. the top three leaders of each house (six in total)
- C. the state Supreme Court Chief Justice, the governor, the Speaker of the Assembly,

Senate president pro tem, and the state attorney general
D. the three most important bills that have been passed in a session

Answer Location: Leaders

32. Who is Willie Brown?

- A. the current Speaker of the Assembly
- B. a former governor of California, known for his anti-taxation policies
- C. former Speaker of the Assembly who became the “poster child” for term limits
- D. the only person to have held the posts of Assembly Speaker, president pro tem, and attorney general

Answer Location: Box 4.2 Term Limits: Political Earthquake

33. Approximately how many bills are introduced during a 2-year legislative session?

- A. 10,000
- B. 5,000
- C. 1,000
- D. 500

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

34. “Descriptive representation” is a term that refers to _____.

- A. how well legislators can describe their duties
- B. the quality of journalists’ coverage of the legislature
- C. how well a legislature reflects the demographic characteristics of a district, usually in terms of ethnicity, gender, and other background factors
- D. how well a legislator can translate constituents’ needs, interests, and values into policy

Answer Location: California Representatives at Work

35. “Substantive representation” is a term that refers to _____.

- A. how well legislators can describe their duties
- B. the quality of journalists’ coverage of the legislature
- C. how well a legislature reflects the demographic characteristics of a district, usually in terms of ethnicity, gender, and other background factors
- D. how well a legislator can translate constituents’ needs, interests, and values into policy

Answer Location: California Representatives at Work

36. Another word for a “law” is _____.

- A. resolution
- B. statute
- C. bill

D. caucus

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

37. A "statute" refers to a _____.
- A. statue that drinks too much "t."
 - B. constitutional amendment
 - C. criminal proceeding
 - D. law

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

38. Who is the leader (or highest ranking member) of the state Assembly?
- A. the president pro tem
 - B. the majority leader
 - C. the speaker
 - D. the Speaker Pro Tempore

Answer Location: Leaders

39. Who is the leader (or highest ranking member) of the state Senate?
- A. the president pro tem
 - B. the majority leader
 - C. the speaker
 - D. the Speaker Pro Tempore

Answer Location: Leaders

40. When either the Assembly or Senate holds a floor session, who presides over the proceedings on a typical day?
- A. chiefs of staff to the leaders
 - B. speaker pro tem or a senator who acts as president pro tem
 - C. Sergeant at Arms for either chamber
 - D. the actual speaker and president pro tem of the Senate

Answer Location: Leaders

41. Regular bills require how many votes to pass?
- A. 41 in the Assembly, 21 in the Senate
 - B. 50 in the Assembly, 50 in the Senate
 - C. the same number of votes in the Senate as in the Assembly
 - D. a total of 100 votes

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

42. In the Assembly, how many votes constitute the “supermajority” needed to raise taxes or fees, pass urgency measures, or override a veto?

- A. 21
- B. 41
- C. 54
- D. 83

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

43. In the Senate, how many votes constitute the “supermajority” needed to raise taxes or fees, pass urgency measures, or override a veto?

- A. 21
- B. 28
- C. 33
- D. 39

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

44. An open seat election is _____.

- A. one in which no limits are placed on spending
- B. one in which no incumbent is running
- C. one in which all the challengers are outspent
- D. one in which a career politician decides to run again

Answer Location: Box 4.2 Term Limits: Political Earthquake | Key Terms

True/False

1. State Senate districts in California are enormous, containing even more people than U.S. House districts.

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

2. Nearly 1 million people live in each state Senate district, and nearly a half-million people live in each Assembly district.

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

3. Nearly 1 million people live in each Assembly district, and nearly a half-million people live in each Senate district.

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

4. Assembly districts are twice the size of a Senate district.

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

5. The size of a Senate district is double that of an Assembly district.

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

6. The term limits law imposes a lifetime ban, meaning that once a legislator serves the maximum number of years allowed, that person may not serve in the legislature ever again.

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

7. Since term limits were enacted, California state senators typically have had more than twice as much legislative experience as their counterparts in the Assembly.

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

8. The term limits law restricts legislators to serving a total of 12 years in one house alone or both houses combined, which means that a person can serve all 12 years in the Assembly, all 12 in the Senate, or some combination in both houses.

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

9. The term limits law in California allows a person to hold an office for a given period of time, and then run again later for the same office after “rotating out” for 6 years or more.

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

10. The California legislature is the only “professionalized” lawmaking body in the United States, except for Congress.

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

11. If California’s lawmakers were to receive low pay, meet part-time, and be assisted by only a few staff, it would be considered a “citizen” legislature.

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

12. Day to day, legislators from both parties work closely together in committees and agree on many fixes for local and state problems.

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

13. As a general rule, on local as well as state matters, Democratic and Republican representatives do not work together and are on opposite sides of every issue.

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

14. Bipartisanship plays an essential role in California politics.

Answer Location: California Representatives at Work

15. Legislators split their time between their district offices and their Sacramento offices.

Answer Location: California Representatives at Work

16. In any given term, a significant portion--about 20%--of the Assembly members are freshmen who are in the steepest part of the learning curve.

Answer Location: California Representatives at Work

17. The U.S. Supreme Court recently held that under the U.S. Constitution, citizen redistricting commissions that were created through the initiative process are constitutional.

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

18. Committees consider virtually every bill that is referred to them by holding hearings for all of them.

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

19. In the state senate, the president pro tem exerts a great deal of power by chairing the all-powerful Rules Committee.

Answer Location: Leaders

20. After the 2016 elections, the state legislature was a near-perfect "portrait in miniature" of California's population, with every major ethnic group represented proportionally by representatives.

Answer Location: Figure 4.1 Profile of California's Population versus California State Legislature, 2017

21. To counterbalance the governor's power, leaders of the legislature have the privilege of directly appointing some members to California boards and commissions.

Answer Location: Executive Branch Oversight

22. Today, Whites constitute less than half the state's population, and are proportionally represented in the legislature (fewer than half of legislators are White).

Answer Location: California Representatives at Work | Figure 4.1 Profile of California's

Population versus California State Legislature, 2017

23. Whites now constitute less than half the state's population, but hold a majority of seats in the legislature.

Answer Location: California Representatives at Work | Figure 4.1 Profile of California's Population versus California State Legislature, 2017

24. California legislators draw their own district boundaries.

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

25. The recent modification to the term limits law (Prop 28) applied only to legislators, not to executive branch officials.

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

16. Women are approximately 50% of the legislature because term limits have created regular opportunities for them to run for office.

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature | Box 4.2 Term Limits: Political Earthquake

27. Approximately one out of four California legislators is a woman.

Answer Location: California Representatives at Work

28. Term limits have had weak effects on women's election to the state legislature. The overall percentage of women overall has declined since hitting a high in the late 1990s.

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature | Box 4.2 Term Limits: Political Earthquake

29. Since term limits were adopted in 1990, the number of racial and ethnic minority members has grown almost continuously, and in 2017, the Assembly was a majority minority chamber.

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature | Box 4.2 Term Limits: Political Earthquake

30. After the 2016 elections, the largest racial/ethnic group in the state Senate was White male.

Answer Location: California Representatives at Work

31. The LGBT caucus is the first of its kind to be officially recognized by a state legislature.

Answer Location: California Representatives at Work

32. The process of lawmaking is a difficult political process that is full of conflict, and generally it is supposed to be that way.

Answer Location: Conclusion: Of the People, for the People

Short Answer

1. _____ is in charge of drawing boundaries for Assembly and state Senate districts. the Citizens Redistricting Commission

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

Essay

1. What features render the California legislature a “professionalized” institution?

Ans: Varies. The answer lies in the three “s’s” that were discussed in Chapter 2: high salary (legislators make over \$100,000 per year); staff support (there are hundreds of staff who assist legislators in their capitol and district offices, in committees, and through leadership); and long sessions (legislators meet year-round, or full-time).

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

2. What is bipartisanship, and where does it occur?

Ans: One definition (as spelled out in the Key Terms) is “agreement or cooperation between members of two opposing political parties.” In other words, legislators from both political parties work closely together in committees and other meetings, and agree on many fixes for local and state problems. (Socializing outside the legislature is mentioned, but it should be pointed out that “bipartisanship” in the legislative setting is about cooperating to get work done.)

Answer Location: California Representatives at Work | Key Terms

3. Describe the function of the Citizens Redistricting Commission.

Ans: Varies. Proposition 11, the Voters FIRST Act (in 2008), transferred the power to draw district maps for the Assembly and Senate (along with Board of Equalization maps and, through Prop 28, the U.S. House district maps) to a 14-member, independent citizens’ commission--making California one of 13 states to relocate primary redistricting power outside the legislature. To be chosen once a decade through a multistage, public process, the politically balanced and demographically diverse commission is charged with drawing districts based on “strict, nonpartisan rules designed to ensure fair representation.” The rules mandate equal population, adherence to the federal Voting Rights Act, contiguous (all parts touching) and compact districts that respect existing communities, and they also eliminate incumbency protection and partisan districting from consideration. They hold public hearings and their work is subject to extensive

public review.

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

4. Has the Citizens Redistricting Commission achieved the aims of its proponents?

Ans: Varies. The proponents of the Citizens Redistricting Commission wanted to open the process to the public, and that has occurred. They also wanted to produce maps that avoided gerrymandering, that is, they wanted to set up a process in which incumbents (sitting legislators) and certain political parties were not purposely favored, and this also occurred; many sitting legislators faced their colleagues because their districts were redrawn without respect to where incumbents lived. The first set of maps did favor the election of Democrats, but this outcome is likely due to political party registration that favors the Democrats in most places and Republicans in relatively few.
Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

5. In what ways does the California legislature resemble the U.S. Congress? In what major ways does it differ?

California's legislature resembles the U.S. Congress in both structure and function. Both are bicameral lawmaking bodies (divided into two houses) designed to check each other through staggered terms (two years in the lower house; four in the California Senate; and six in the U.S. Senate), though both of the states' houses are based on population. State and Congressional districts are huge, numbering in the hundreds of thousands. Both types of legislatures meet year-round, are "professionalized" bodies supported by thousands of staff members, and their members are well paid (over \$100,000 per year). Unlike members of the U.S. Congress, California legislators are term-limited, and there are far fewer members than in the U.S. Congress (120 vs. 535 total).
Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

6. Describe term limitations (or "term limits") for California legislators.

legislator may serve up to 12 years in the Assembly alone, in the Senate alone, or the Assembly and Senate combined; this is a lifetime ban, meaning that once a person has hit the maximum of 12 years, she/he may not serve in that office again. These limits apply to legislators who were elected to their first term in 2012. (For those who were elected prior to 2012, they may serve a total of 14 years with two 4-year terms in the Senate, and three 2-year terms in the Assembly, lifetime ban.)

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

7. What's an "incumbent?"

person who currently holds an elected seat; for example, a legislator.

Answer Location: Key Terms

8. Describe the effects of term limits on the California state legislature.

Ans: Varies. The effects discussed in the book range across four types of changes: electoral, membership (demographic), institutional, and behavioral. Depending on one's perspective, many can be evaluated either positively or negatively. Among the electoral changes: competition for offices at all levels has increased; open seat primary elections occur with regularity and are competitive; incumbents still have huge advantages and

almost all are reelected; intraparty competition has risen as members of the same party become candidates for the next office. Among the changes in membership: higher numbers of ethnic minority members; higher numbers of women candidates (though not higher percentages in the legislature overall); more Democratic women in leadership and the state Senate. Institutional changes: newer legislators have recently experienced the effects of laws; “institutional memory” has drained away; many long-term staff with institutional knowledge have also left and staff positions turn over quickly; legislators’ understanding of how state systems/programs interrelate is poorer; the Senate contains more experienced legislators than the Assembly, though this is changing as legislators elected for the first time in 2012 (and after) are choosing to stay in the Assembly for up to 12 years; some lobbyists and administrative branch officials have become more influential because they know subject areas better than legislators; oversight of the executive branch is difficult. Among the behavioral changes: “lame duck” legislators lack accountability to their current districts; long-term, comprehensive lawmaking suffers, while short-term, district projects thrive; there is a sense that “everyone is running for the next office” (this will lessen somewhat as more Assembly members stay beyond the previous limit of 6 years; they are now able to stay up to 12 years in one house).
Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature | Box 4.2 Term Limits: Political Earthquake

9. In 2012 voters approved Prop 28, a modification to the term limits law for state legislators. What are some of the issues or concerns that Prop 28 is supposed to address that were raised by Prop 140, the original term limits law?

Ans: Varies. Voters approved a change to the term limits law in 2012 with Proposition 28, reducing the total number of years that a lawmaker can serve (from 14 to 12), but allowing a lawmaker to serve all 12 years in one house or a combination of both. Proponents aimed to reduce the membership turnover that was caused by the previous term limits rule that Assembly members could only serve three terms, or a maximum of 6 years, in that chamber. Such strict limits created the impression that “everyone’s running for the next office,” meaning that many members left when a more attractive office became available--often before they had served all 6 years. The 6-year limit also created higher numbers of “lame ducks” who did not face another election to keep them accountable to their constituents. Such steep membership turnover and large classes of inexperienced freshmen reduced the Assembly’s effectiveness in comparison to the Senate. Senators, with more expertise, “institutional memory,” and experience, currently have longer term perspectives and more experienced staff. As Assembly members accumulate more experience, the differences between the chambers will lessen.
Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature | Box 4.2 Term Limits: Political Earthquake

10. What are the major activities of state legislators?

The major categories of a state legislator’s activities include lawmaking and policymaking; annual budgeting; constituency service (casework) and outreach; and executive branch oversight.

Answer Location: California Representatives at Work

11. What is a “stakeholder”?

Ans: Varies. As defined in the book, stakeholders are individuals and groups either directly or indirectly affected by a law or policy, or those who have a stake in the outcome.

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

12. How do legislators make law? Explain how they contribute to the lawmaking process at each stage.

Ans: Varies. Legislators work on their own bills and those of others. To do both, they need to research issues and participate in all aspects of the lawmaking process. They write and introduce bills. As committee members they hear testimony from witnesses, amend (i.e., change the language of) proposed legislation, and deliberate and vote on bills. They help form coalitions around issues, meet with constituents and stakeholders who desire to influence proposed legislation, talk informally with their colleagues to promote bills, and debate issues further on the Senate or Assembly floor where they will vote on bills.

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

13. Outline the major steps in the lawmaking process.

bill is introduced and then referred to committee. After the committee holds hearings, the bill is voted on and then sent to the entire chamber for consideration (if a majority votes for it). After the bill is debated and voted upon, it will be sent to the other house for similar action (committee will hear the bill and vote on it, and it will then be considered by the whole house and voted upon by all members). If the two versions are the same, the bill is sent to the governor, who can sign or veto the measure. If the two houses produce a different bill, they will consider the other’s version [or produce a compromise version, a point that is not made explicit in the book] which must be voted upon and then sent to the governor. Bills usually take effect on January 1 of the following year.

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking | Figure 4.2 How a Bill Becomes a Law

14. Describe the work that staff members perform.

Ans: Staff assist legislators with virtually all aspects of the representative’s job. Thousands of staff members working in legislators’ offices (in the capital and in the district) and for committees assist with scheduling, constituent and community relations (including casework), research, and expert legislative analysis.

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

15. How can minority political party lawmakers have an impact on lawmaking if their votes aren’t needed to pass laws or the budget?

Ans: Varies. To be effective, minority party members contribute to the process in ways other than being the pivotal vote on bills or the budget. For instance, they keep the majority party accountable by raising pointed questions in committee hearings and voicing concerns during floor debates, by shaping their bills to attract consensus, and by trying to amend the majority’s bills to soften potential impacts on their constituents.

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

16. What is constituency service?

activities dedicated to helping constituents (the members of a legislator's district) with their individual problems that often stem from state laws, policies, or regulations. Providing help for individual "cases" might also be called "casework."

Answer Location: Constituency Service and Outreach

17. What is "oversight" and why is it important for the legislature to perform it?

Ans: Varies. Students should state that the legislature monitors executive branch activities to determine whether the laws (or programs and/or policies) are being carried out according to legislative intent. Stated more elaborately, through law the legislature creates programs and establishes policies that are carried out by the administration--a collection of departments, agencies, and bureaus otherwise known as "the state bureaucracy." Through reviews and monitoring, which would include studies, investigations, reports, and hearings or testimony from executive officials, the legislature can determine whether the laws are being carried out or are being implemented as intended. The legislature has the right to determine whether the laws it created are being "faithfully executed." (However, in reality, there is little time and few resources to carry out the regular reviews and monitoring needed to perform oversight well.)

Senators also influence programs through their power to confirm hundreds of gubernatorial appointees to the major executive departments and influential state boards and commissions.

Answer Location: Executive Branch Oversight

18. Which people form the "Big Three," and what are their primary tasks?

he governor, the Speaker of the Assembly, Senate president pro tem. (NOTE: when the minority leaders of both houses are added to this list, together they are referred to as the "Big Five.") These leaders from the executive branch and the legislative branch speak for the members of their parties, and are responsible for cobbling together last-minute political bargains that typically resolve disputes over budgeting (items in the annual budget) or guarantee the signing of big bills.

Answer Location: Leaders

19. Describe the responsibilities of a legislative leader.

Ans: Varies. A leader's job is to keep his or majority in power or to regain majority status. Nonstop fund-raising, policymaking, rulemaking, and deal-making all serve that overarching objective. Party leaders oversee their caucus and help shape the electorate's understanding of what it means to support their respective parties. Leaders also negotiate budgets, bills, and policies, make themselves available to the press, and help cultivate a distinct culture within the houses they lead. They raise campaign funds and distribute them to their fellow party members as rewards or withhold them as punishments. The Speaker and President Pro Tem appoint committee chairs and make committee assignments. (Leaders of the Assembly are the Speaker and the Assembly minority leader; in the Senate, it is the President Pro Tem and the Senate minority leader.)

Answer Location: Leaders

20. Lawmakers are often accused of being lazy, incompetent, greedy, and/or incapable of crafting laws that solve the state's pressing problems. Take the legislator's viewpoint, and explain why it is difficult to accomplish one's job in today's political environment. What conditions complicate the job of legislating?

Ans: Varies; students might approach this question in several ways, but answers should focus on the institutional and political factors that frustrate the kind of quick action and responsiveness that many citizens might expect of their representatives. Some of the conditions to consider include term limits (legislators today may not have a comprehensive understanding of state programs or the process itself but are responsible for chairing committees, for example, and many are either in a learning curve or looking for their next office); the volume of issues with which they must deal; the electoral process (expensive races and relatively short election cycles pressure legislators to continually campaign and raise funds from those interests for and about whom they write bills); constraints imposed through the initiative process (budgetary rules, for example); the involvement of many interests in the process and the basic need to reconcile competing interests (the need to compromise among "hyperdiverse" interests, and the inability to please everyone); the existence of rules that thwart compromise (rules imposed through initiatives, such as the rule that two thirds of the legislature must approve an increase in taxes or fees); and partisanship (rigid ideological positioning and an unwillingness to compromise).

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking | Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature

21. What is the function of the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO)?

The nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office is the so-called "conscience" and "eyes and ears" of the legislature. Since 1941 it has provided fiscal and policy advice based on ongoing, in-depth research of programs, bills, and the annual budget. It remains one of the premier sources of expert information about state programs and the budget.

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

22. What is the purpose of a legislature?

Ans: Varies. In a system of separated powers, different branches assume different responsibilities for governing. According to the state constitution, which mirrors that of the U.S. Constitution, the legislature holds the power to make laws or set policies. Their actions are also subject to the approval of the governor, and if challenged in a court of law, their decisions may be reviewed by state judges or justices of the state Supreme Court. In a very broad sense, they are supposed to solve problems that arise from the economic, social, and political conditions of almost 40 million people who must work and live with each other. With the help of the governor and other members of the executive branch, they decide who gets what, when, and how.

Answer Location: Design, Purpose, and Function of the Legislature | Lawmaking and Policymaking

23. With respect to lawmakers, why did Gov. Jerry Brown state that "Republicans appear to have no power"?

Ans: Varies. The Republicans' votes are not needed to pass bills, because the

Democrats hold a strong majority in both houses (in fact Democrats attained supermajority status in 2012 and 2016), and members generally vote along party lines. Republicans' votes aren't needed to pass the budget either, because as of 2010, only a simple majority is required. When Gov. Brown made this statement, the Democrats held a supermajority in both houses and the Republicans' votes weren't needed to raise taxes or fees, which require a two-thirds vote.

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

24. What is a party caucus?

An organization (or gathering) of all the legislators of a political party who coordinate their work on a political agenda or a related set of issues.

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

25. What conditions or factors affect how a bill is shaped?

Ans: Varies. Several factors are quickly mentioned in the book, while others are alluded to (but are not pointed out explicitly). There are many individual elements that condition the final shape of a bill. This question could solicit a long or short answer. Some of the relevant factors include: 1. The mix of "players" or participants, including interest groups and their lobbyists, individual legislators, citizens, administrators, staff members, other elected officials, and so forth. 2. Personal relationships among the members, which could help facilitate coalitions or compromise (or hinder them). 3. Reputations of members as specialists or experts in their field. 4. Rules, such as whether a simple majority or a supermajority is required for passage, or those imposed by initiatives (such as devoting almost 40% of the budget to education spending). 5. Timing, such as whether the bill has been introduced before and support for it has been building over time, or whether there is a new governor who is opposed to it or sympathetic to it, or whether it addresses a pressing problem or recent crisis. 6. The governor's ideological, practical, or political concerns, and whether those have been communicated to the bill's author or committee chairperson. 7. Public opinion, or interest levels expressed by certain constituencies or groups. 8. Fiscal costs (long-term, short-term) and available funds. 9. Political costs (how will a vote affect the representative's chances for reelection?). 10. Compromise, meaning the extent to which the provisions accommodate participants' concerns. 11. Anticipated outcomes and analyses provided by staff or outside groups. 12. Party leaders' concerns, or the position of the party caucus. 13. The values, beliefs, and goals of the legislators working on the bill. 14. Wider environmental or institutional factors, such as which party is in charge (who is in the majority), whether the same majority party is in both houses, the strength of the majority party, and whether the governor shares the partisanship of the majority party in both or either house.

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

26. What factors complicate lawmaking, and render it a difficult process? What conditions make lawmaking particularly difficult in California?

Ans: Varies. Generally speaking, the bicameral (two-chambered) structure of the legislature reflects the U.S. Founders' desire to build "checks and balances" into the system, so that tyranny of the majority (or a minority) cannot prevail. Two houses share

responsibility for considering the same pieces of legislation, and many legislators (120) share responsibility for passing each bill. The governor's participation in the process (signing and vetoing bills) adds another hurdle to the process. The involvement of many entities means that the solutions to a problem will rarely be agreed upon by competing interest groups, stakeholders, and fellow lawmakers, and the legislator's personal decision-making process is further influenced by a host of factors, including ambition, values, and perceptions (such as how important an issue is to powerful groups). Sometimes hard choices must be made between serving one's district or constituents and serving the entire state's citizenry, all of which tend to be "hyperdiverse" in California. Direct democracy also conditions lawmakers' responses to issues (they know that citizens can and do turn to the initiative process to solve problems) and voters can use direct democracy to impose restrictions on legislators, such as requiring certain vote thresholds for passing certain kinds of bills (such as two thirds to raise taxes and fees through Prop 13).

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking | Executive Branch Oversight

27. Briefly, what do committees do?

Ans: Varies. Committees deal with bills, and occasionally they exercise oversight over administrative bodies in the executive branch by conducting hearings or investigations. Led by chairpersons who have discretion over which bills to bring up for consideration, mainly committees shape (reword) or amend bills after holding hearings at which witnesses who will be affected by potential changes provide testimony, predictions, and complaints about what's being proposed. Committee members deliberate over the merits and possible effects of a proposed law, and ultimately vote on it; if a majority on the committee vote for it at this stage, they are recommending that the bill be considered and voted on by the whole chamber. The majority party members outnumber minority party members on every committee, so the majority party steers the discussions and shapes the legislation to reflect their policy preferences.

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

28. What is a resolution?

An official statement that expresses the legislature's position on an issue, voted on by the membership.

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

29. What is a "local bill"?

A local bill deals with a local issue; the issue may matter a lot to the people directly affected by the legislation but usually have only minor impacts on state government (usually they do not cost the state much money). These typically concern land uses, for example, or conditions in specific cities.

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

30. How does the work of paid, legislative staff members differ from that of lobbyists?

Ans: Varies. Staff members who work on legislation are usually responsible for helping to draft bills, talk with stakeholders (people and entities affected by potential laws or changes to existing laws) and incorporate changes based on their concerns, analyze

potential outcomes, estimate costs, and help build coalitions or support for bills by convincing others that the potential law (or changes to it) are necessary. These duties are almost identical to those performed by lobbyists, but the two groups differ in one major respect: lobbyists work for a client, usually a private interest with narrow “self-interested” goals, whereas a staff member is employed by the state of California and is hired to help a legislator serve the people of a district, and promote the public’s interest over private ones. To do so, a staff member has greater incentives to construct a “bigger picture” by gathering more viewpoints and perspectives than might be presented by a lobbyist, who instead might be more inclined to provide a narrower frame (one that is most beneficial to his or her client) through which to view an issue.

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

31. How does the legislature “check” the governor and executive branch?

Ans: Varies. The “separation of powers” structure of state government provides a system of checks and balances so that one branch does not dominate. The legislature is composed of representatives from every part of California, and they bring their own districts’ concerns to state government, whereas the governor generally looks out for the interests of the entire state. Together, they are expected to write laws and establish policies that balance these competing perspectives. Bills also reflect research that is performed by legislative staff (personal and committee), and their perspectives help counterbalance the perspectives of those who serve in the administration, especially career civil servants. Certain rules also help the legislature to “check” the executive branch. The legislature may override a gubernatorial veto of a bill and line-item vetoes (but overrides are a rarity). The Senate has the right to confirm (or not confirm) the governor’s appointees to administrative positions, and legislative leaders have the right to appoint directly some high-level officials to important boards and commissions. The legislature has the responsibility of passing the state budget bill, which is based on the governor’s version but is amended throughout the process to reflect the legislature’s (possibly competing) priorities. Together, the two branches must compromise to produce a final version. Finally, the legislature may actively exercise “oversight” by holding hearings at which administrative branch officials must testify about their activities, ordering agencies to report on their activities, threatening to reduce (or actually reducing) the budgets of government agencies, including reducing the number of positions in an agency.

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking | Executive Branch Oversight

32. What is the difference between district staff and committee staff?

District staff work in the district office of a legislator (Assembly members or Senators). Committee staffers are policy specialists whose intimate knowledge of past and present policy solutions allow them to play key roles in analyzing and shaping the bills referred to the committee for which they work in the Capitol (Sacramento).

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

33. What legislative actions require a supermajority threshold?

A supermajority vote is any threshold above a simple majority. Two thirds is the most popular threshold in legislative proceedings. Raising taxes or fees requires a two-thirds

supermajority; a veto override also requires two-thirds assent of both chambers. (Bills that require money or take effect immediately also require a two-thirds vote, but the book does not discuss this.)

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking

34. Besides legislators, who typically participates in the lawmaking process?

Ans: Varies. Members of the public can voice their concerns about proposed laws by calling or meeting with their representatives or testifying at hearings. Certain segments of the public are also represented by lobbyists, who more typically represent government entities, interest groups, or corporations--virtually anyone who has a stake in the outcome of a bill; they would be considered "stakeholders." Staff do research on bills, analyze bills for their bosses, and help shape the language of legislation throughout the process. Administrators and others from the executive branch also weigh in, often providing advice and information to help legislators understand the possible effects of a bill's implementation. The governor and his staff also help shepherd some bills (budget bills in particular) through the process, participating at the end by signing or vetoing legislation.

Answer Location: Lawmaking and Policymaking