

Standardized Test for Congress

Office of the People's Commission for an Educated Government

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The Standardized Test for Congress was collaboratively written by a coalition of citizens of the United States of America. This test measures skills highly appropriate for the offices of the United States Senate and House of Representatives.

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*** PCEG seal designed by Edwin Breton.*

TEST TAKING TIPS

- Stay calm. Do not allow yourself to get nervous.
- Make sure and read each question carefully.
- Use a soft lead No. 2 pencil with a good eraser.
- Answer the easy questions first, then go back and answer the more difficult ones.
- If the question is difficult for you, eliminate as many incorrect answers as you can, then make an educated guess among those remaining.
- **Answer every question.**
- Mark your answers clearly. Erase any wrong mark completely.

INSTRUCTIONS

Read each question thoroughly before deciding which answer is best. Next, locate on the answer sheet the row of ovals numbered the same as the question. Then, locate the circle in the row lettered the same as your answer. Fill in the circle completely to mark your answer to the question. Use a No. 2 pencil and make your marks heavy and black. *DO NOT USE INK OR A MECHANICAL PENCIL.*

For each question, mark only one answer. If you change your mind about an answer, erase your first mark thoroughly. Make certain that you mark in the row of circles with the same number as the question.

All of the questions on the test will be scored. A question not answered will be scored negatively, so it is advantageous for you to guess at the correct answer if you do not know it.

The Standardized Test for Congress is administered on the “honor system”, therefore, it is not appropriate to ask any of your staffers or others in your office for answers to any of the questions.

After you have completed the test and made sure all of the questions have been answered, sign the answer sheet and enclose it in the self-addressed stamped envelope included in your test taking package. Return postage has been generously paid for by the Office of the People’s Commission for an Educated Government, so you do not need to affix any postage to the envelope. Just drop the envelope in the US Postal Service and you’re done!

SCIENCE

- 1. Fossil fuels are renewable in a human lifetime.**
 - A) True
 - B) False
- 2. The earth has existed for more than 10,000 years.**
 - A) True
 - B) False
- 3. Republican Representative from Texas, Joe Barton said, “*Wind is a finite resource*”. Is it true or false that the top donor to Barton's re-election campaigns is Anadarko Petroleum?**
 - A) True
 - B) False
- 4. The Tyrannosaurus Rex walked the earth with Jesus.**
 - A) True
 - B) False
- 5. All radioactivity is caused by humans.**
 - A) True
 - B) False

6. **The scientific method is a system for acquiring new knowledge or correcting/integrating old knowledge. Which of the following is NOT included in the scientific method?**
- A) Experimentation
 - B) Verification
 - C) Spirituality
 - D) Systematic observation
7. **Which of the following gases is most prevalent in Earth's atmosphere?**
- A) Oxygen
 - B) Nitrogen
 - C) Hydrogen
 - D) Helium
8. **Hydraulic fracturing is the process of doing what?**
- A) Breaking ice cubes into smaller pieces before pouring your 23 yr. old Pappy Van Winkle bourbon into a glass
 - B) Breaking your leg while water skiing
 - C) Looking for mathematical fractals in puddles
 - D) Mining for natural gas by pumping known carcinogenic chemicals into the ground for short-term financial gain
9. **In the last 20 years, US taxpayers have spent over 100 billion dollars subsidizing corn and soy farming. What is one way to diversify the US farm market?**
- A) Grow more soy
 - B) Grow more corn
 - C) Redirect more funding for farmers to grow a larger range of fruits and vegetables
 - D) Pay Monsanto to genetically engineer corn and soy so that they are actually the same thing

10. **As of the writing of this test, the Environmental Protection Agency does not require gas companies involved in fracking to publicly list the chemicals they are injecting into the shale beds to extract natural gas. Would you and your family drink well water from these sites based on the assurances by the gas companies that the water is safe?**
- A) Yes
 - B) No

TECHNOLOGY

11. **The Internet is the property of the United States government.**
- A) True
 - B) False
12. **Former US Senator, Ted Stevens of Alaska, said the internet is “a series of tubes”. What exactly is the internet?**
- A) A global system of standardized interconnected computer networks sharing data and information
 - B) Google
 - C) Artificial Intelligence
 - D) Something that is owned by Comcast and Time Warner
13. **The National Security Agency collects data on US citizens without a warrant.**
- A) True
 - B) False
14. **"Dynamic" websites are written using a range of different coding languages. Which of the following is NOT one of them?**
- A) Ruby on Rails
 - B) Python
 - C) Mule
 - D) PHP

15. **As reported by the Nielsen Company, how many hours per week did the average American spend watching TV in 2013?**
- A) 4
 - B) 11
 - C) 35
 - D) 14
16. **If you are arrested in the United States, the police do NOT have the right to search your cell phone without a warrant.**
- A) True
 - B) False
17. **Bitcoin is a digital currency used by millions around the world. Who controls the Bitcoin network?**
- A) The United States
 - B) NATO
 - C) Nobody
 - D) The European Union
18. **As of September 2014, which one of the countries listed below has the slowest broadband internet speed?**
- A) Republic of Moldova
 - B) The United States of America
 - C) Bulgaria
 - D) Latvia

19. **In 1983, 90% of the US media was owned by 50 companies. How many companies own 90% of the US media in 2014?**

- A) 46
- B) 6
- C) 37
- D) 79

20. **According to Enerdata's "Global Energy Statistical Yearbook", the US consumed less total energy in 2013 than it did in 2000.**

- A) True
- B) False

GOVERNMENT

21. **The US government does not have an official national language.**
- A) True
 - B) False
22. **"Dark money" is a term that refers to funds used to pay for an election campaign that are not disclosed to voters prior to voting.**
- A) True
 - B) False
23. **From 2008 - 2013, approximately how often has the US bombed Pakistan?**
- A) Every 7 days
 - B) Every 14 days
 - C) Every 21 days
 - D) Every 28 days
24. **The following passage: *"The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized."* is found in which of the texts below?**
- A) The Gettysburg Address
 - B) The 4th Amendment to the United States Constitution
 - C) The Anarchist's Cookbook
 - D) Scientology: The Fundamentals of Thought by L. Ron Hubbard

25. **What are TWO ways that US citizens can participate in their democracy?**
- A) Vote and join a civic group
 - B) Give an elected official your opinion on an issue and join a community group
 - C) Write to a newspaper and call Senators and Representatives
 - D) All of the above
26. **Who does a U.S. Senator represent?**
- A) All of the people of the state
 - B) The state legislature
 - C) The people in the state who voted for the Senator
 - D) All of the people of the state who belong to the Senator's political party
27. **The United States of America is a:**
- A) Democracy
 - B) Republic
 - C) Banana Republic
 - D) Aristocracy
28. **A government that is an "oligarchy" is defined as:**
- A) A government in which all power is vested in a few persons or in a dominant class
 - B) A government in which a small group exercises control particularly for corrupt and selfish purposes
 - C) A government that is controlled by a small group of wealthy people
 - D) All of the above

29. **The American Bar Association's Lobbying Reform Task Force conducted research in 2013 that suggested the number of working lobbyists in Washington DC is approximately 100,000. There are 535 members of Congress. Approximately how many lobbyists per member of Congress does that equal?**
- A) 5
 - B) 25
 - C) 75
 - D) 187
30. **Of the following in the list below, which President has used executive orders the LEAST per year?**
- A) Ronald Reagan
 - B) Barack Obama
 - C) George W. Bush
 - D) Gerald Ford
31. **What is the official religion of the United States government?**
- A) Christianity
 - B) Islam
 - C) Capitalism
 - D) None
32. **Halliburton's Pentagon contracts jumped from \$483 million in 2002 to over \$6 billion in 2006.**
- A) True
 - B) False

33. **Donald Rumsfeld, George W. Bush, Paul Wolfowitz, and Philip Condit have all been accused of being war profiteers. The Merriam-Webster definition of a “profiteer” is the following:**
- A) An elongated usually tapering tropical fruit with soft pulpy flesh enclosed in a soft usually yellow rind
 - B) A piece of sweet fried dough that is often shaped like a ring
 - C) The meat of a pig that is used for food
 - D) One who makes what is considered an unreasonable profit especially on the sale of essential goods during times of emergency
34. **Is woman’s suffrage generally considered good or bad for women?**
- A) Good
 - B) Bad
35. **Despite historic gains for minority representation in Congress, what percent of the Senate is still white?**
- A) 95%
 - B) 45%
 - C) 80%
 - D) 75%
36. **A 2012 UNICEF study ranked 35 economically advanced countries according to the percentage of children living in poverty. What was the percentage of children in the US living in poverty and what is the rank of the US in this study?**
- A) 6.1%, ranked 3rd
 - B) 7.3%, ranked 8th
 - C) 8.9% ranked 15th
 - D) 23.1%, ranked 34th

ARTS / CULTURE

37. **The "Citizens United" legislation actually does more to unite corporations than citizens.**
- A) True
 - B) False
38. **Which of the following is a right of every American citizen?**
- A) Freedom of speech
 - B) Freedom to petition the government
 - C) Freedom of worship
 - D) All of the above
39. **Todd Aiken, Republican and former US Representative from Missouri, said that when a rape is "legitimate", a woman's body has "ways to try to shut that whole thing down". When is rape "legitimate"?**
- A) If she is wearing a short skirt.
 - B) If she is drunk at a party.
 - C) If she is "askin' for it".
 - D) Never. Rape is the unlawful compelling of a person through physical force or duress to have sexual intercourse.
40. **As of March 2014, how many times have House Republicans voted to repeal the Affordable Care Act?**
- A) 9
 - B) 23
 - C) 54
 - D) Never, the Affordable Care Act is a law that was passed by both the House and Senate and upheld by the US Supreme Court

41. **Which of the following is not part of a female's reproductive organs?**
- A) The vagina
 - B) The ovaries
 - C) The uterus
 - D) Legislation
42. **The Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, the law that the US government is using to prosecute internet activists like Aaron Swartz, was enacted by Congress in what year?**
- A) 2010
 - B) 2005
 - C) 2001
 - D) 1986
43. **As of September 2014, how many States still define marriage as only between a man and a woman?**
- A) 5
 - B) 9
 - C) 14
 - D) 29
44. **Discrimination is the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people or things on the grounds of race, age, or gender.**
- A) True
 - B) False

45. **What percentage of the new income created in the United States between 2009 and 2012 went to the wealthiest 1% of the population?**
- A) 95%
 - B) 80%
 - C) 65%
 - D) 50%
46. **In the 1992 hit single, “Baby Got Back”, what does Sir Mix-a-Lot mean when he uses the word “Back”?**
- A) A woman returning home after a long day
 - B) A woman getting “payback” on someone
 - C) A woman’s gluteus maximus
 - D) The back of his Mercedes
47. **In a May 2014 Gallup Poll, what percentage of AMERICANS believe that “God created human beings pretty much in their present form at one time within the last 10,000 years or so”?**
- A) 5%
 - B) 8%
 - C) 13%
 - D) 42%
48. **In a poll from Angus Reid Strategies, what percentage of CANADIANS believe that “God created human beings pretty much in their present form at one time within the last 10,000 years or so”?**
- A) 5%
 - B) 8%
 - C) 13%
 - D) 22%

49. **The Common Core State Standards Initiative claims to “prepare America’s students for success”. Which of the four choices below is NOT mentioned in the Common Core Standards?**
- A) Understanding Data in a Science or Technical Text
 - B) Using Conventions of Standard English
 - C) Implementing Trigonometric Ratios
 - D) Creativity
50. **In March 2013, the “Harlem Shake” video hit 1 billion views on YouTube in just 40 days. Translated into English, what are the opening lyrics in the song?**
- A) “hey hey shake”
 - B) “With terrorists”
 - C) “My humps”
 - D) “My hump, my hump, my hump”
51. **The NRA’s annual revenue of over \$200 million dollars is largely tax exempt under their 501(c)4 status. True or False: The IRS specifies that 501(c)4 organization are “operated exclusively for the promotion of social welfare”.**
- A) True
 - B) False
52. **Shortly after the school shootings in Newtown, Connecticut, Wayne LaPierre, the Executive Vice President of the National Rifle Association, said “The only way to stop a bad guy with a gun is with a good guy with a gun.”**
- A) Wayne is CORRECT.
 - B) Wayne is INCORRECT, there are other options for stopping a 20 year old from shooting 20 children and 6 adults inside an elementary school.

53. **The second amendment underscores several reasons for the right to bear arms. Paranoia is one of them.**
- A) True
 - B) False
54. **Military veterans who fought in combat are offered free lifetime healthcare through the Veteran’s Administration.**
- A) True
 - B) False
55. **Multiple independent studies have shown changes in students’ SAT scores when they take more courses in the arts during high school. Which of the following is true?**
- A) Students who take 4 years of arts courses, score an average of over 50 points higher on the VERBAL portion of the SAT, compared to students who take a half year or less of art classes.
 - B) Arts participation and SAT scores co-vary—that is, they tend to increase linearly: the more arts classes, the higher the scores.
 - C) Students who take 4 years of arts courses, score an average of almost 40 points higher on the MATH portion of the SAT, compared to students who take a half year or less of art classes.
 - D) All of the above
56. **Mitch McConnell, Republican Senator from Kentucky, said America “*has the finest healthcare system in the world.*” The Commonwealth Fund ran studies on this in 2014, 2010, 2007, 2006, and 2004. Out of the ten developed nations they studied, which place did the US rank in all 5 studies?**
- A) 1st
 - B) 3rd
 - C) 4th
 - D) 10th

57. **How many federally recognized Native American tribes are there in the US today?**
- A) 15
 - B) 562
 - C) 241
 - D) 87
58. **The Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index is an international study of the state of democracy in 167 countries. In 2012, the US was ranked between South Korea and Costa Rica. Which place was this in the rankings?**
- A) 3rd
 - B) 4th
 - C) 17th
 - D) 21st
59. **According to the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, in the federal No Child Left Behind Act, *"the arts share equal billing with reading, math, science, and other disciplines as "core academic subjects," which can contribute to improved student learning outcomes.***
- A) True
 - B) False

BUSINESS

60. **Wall Street financial traders use “OPM” as an acronym that stands for what?**
- A) Orders Per Minute
 - B) Other Poor Men
 - C) Outsider Pork Manager
 - D) Other People’s Money
61. **The 2008 US Financial Bailout was more expensive than the Marshall Plan, Louisiana Purchase, Race to the Moon, S&L bailout, Korean War, New Deal, Iraq War, Vietnam War, and NASA’s lifetime budget combined.**
- A) True
 - B) False
62. **Since World War II, the United States’ measure of gross domestic product (GDP) during Democratic administrations compared to that of Republican administrations has been what?**
- A) The same
 - B) 10% lower
 - C) 20% higher
 - D) 71% higher
63. **The International Labour Organization’s “Global Employment Trends 2013” report shows that over 206 million people were unemployed in 2013. If this was a country, it would be the 5th largest country in the world.**
- A) True
 - B) False

64. **In March of 2007, just months before the sub-prime mortgage crisis and subsequent US financial collapse, executives at Morgan Stanley sarcastically suggested which of the following as names for one of their sub-prime CDOs?**
- A) “Nuclear Holocaust”
 - B) “Meltdown”
 - C) “Shitbag”
 - D) All of the above
65. **According to US employers, which of the following is a top three personality trait most important to career success?**
- A) Persistence
 - B) Curiosity
 - C) Creativity
 - D) Fearlessness
66. **The US Bureau of Economic Analysis reported in 2013 that 3.2 percent of GDP (\$504 billion) was attributable to the Arts and Culture sector. Is it true that this is more than the US Travel and Tourism sector?**
- A) True
 - B) False
67. **The People’s Commission for an Educated Government feels that, “*At no other time in our history has it been more important for the People to maintain a standard level of intelligence in our elected officials.*”**
- A) True
 - B) False

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have finished the test!

Please fold and enclose your answer sheet in the envelope provided. Seal the envelope and drop it in the mail. The postage is paid for by the Office of the People's Commission for an Educated Government.

Your scores will be emailed to you within 4-6 weeks at the address provided on the answer sheet.

All of the questions on this test have source links listed on the Standardized Test for Congress' website. Please feel free to use the links for fact checking purposes.

www.StandardizedTestForCongress.com



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