

AP Government summer assignment

1. Acquire *What You Should Know About Politics...But Don't: A Nonpartisan Guide to the Issues* by Jessamyn Conrad

- In the first week of school, you will be tested on certain information from the book. Please read the portions of each chapter listed below in preparation for the test.:

All chapters – bulleted items at beginning

Ch 1 – Elections – entire chapter

Ch 2 – The Economy – “Background to Current Debates”

Ch 3 – Foreign Policy – “Background to Current Debates” and “The Ideological Groups”

Ch 4 – The Military – “Background to Current Debates”

Ch 5 – Health Care – “Background to Current Debates”

Ch 6 – Energy – “Background to Current Debates”

Ch 7 – The Environment – “Background to Current Debates”

Ch 8 – Civil Liberties – entire chapter

Ch 9 – Culture Wars – “Background to Current Debates”

Ch 10 – Socioeconomic Policy – “Background to Current Debates”

Ch 11 – Homeland Security – “Background to Current Debates”

Ch 12 – Education – “Background to Current Debates”

Ch 13 – Trade – “Basic Terms” and “Background to Current Debates”

- Pick two chapters *other than Ch 1 or Ch 8*. For *each* chapter, write a policy brief for *each* side of the policy argument. (That would be four short papers.)
 - A policy brief is an analysis of one side’s argument, noting the legal and/or logical basis for their viewpoint.
 - This may be as short as two pages, although the level of sophistication is ***much*** more important than the length.
 - You do not need to write about every detail in the chapter you chose; just include enough to give an overview of the arguments on the policy topic.
 - This is a scholarly analysis; this is NOT a persuasive piece. When someone reads your policy brief, he or she should not be able to discern your political opinions.

2. You will also be tested on this information:

- a. The winners and losers and the political party of each candidate for each presidential election 1960-2008.
- b. The years in office for each president (*this is simple for most presidents – the January after the November election. For JFK/LBJ and for Nixon/Ford, though, the years are irregular*)