

## Neil Boortz's Civics Exam Proposal (in response to "meaningless" exams seen elsewhere)

1. Forget when the [Declaration of Independence](#) was signed; tell me why it was signed? What were the signers trying to accomplish?
2. What happened to the men who signed the Declaration? Did they go on to be heroes and live happily ever after?
3. What does the Declaration of Independence say the people can do when a government becomes destructive to the ends of liberty?
4. What would happen to anyone who tried today to alter or abolish our government if it became destructive to idea that government derives its powers from the consent of the governed?
5. Which articles of the Constitution grant specific powers to the federal government?
6. Which article of the Constitution restricts the powers of the government to only those specifically set forth in the Constitution?
7. Describe the circumstances under which Francis Scott Key wrote the words to the Star Spangled Banner?
8. Do you believe people living in a free country ought to be compelled to recite a pledge of allegiance to that country? Why?
9. Was the Revolutionary War supported by a majority of the Colonists?
10. Where in our Constitution is it stated that anyone has a right to vote for the office of President of the United States?
11. How did our original Constitution provide for the appointment of Senators?
12. Most foreign countries appoint an ambassador to be their official representative before the government of the United States. Who officially represents the 50 state governments before the government of the United States?
13. Explain the difference between a rule of law and the rule of man.
14. Explain the difference between a democracy and a constitutional republic.
15. Was our country founded to be a country of majority rule?
16. Can you imagine what our country would be like today if the majority did rule?
17. Aren't you glad the majority doesn't rule?
18. Why does it matter in the grand scheme of things who the governor of North Carolina is?
19. Isn't a governor something you put on a state to keep it from moving ahead very fast?
20. What possible benefit could you gain by memorizing the motto of the State of North Carolina, or any other state for that matter?
21. How many times can the word "democracy" found in the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution?
22. How many times can the word "democracy" found in the constitutions of any of the 50 states?
23. What does this tell you?
24. Define "civil war."
25. Was the war between the northern and southern states in the mid-1800s a civil war?
26. Who is third in the line of succession to the presidency?
27. Based on your answer to the foregoing question, would you demand that George Bush and Dick Cheney never eat from the same container of potato salad should the Democrats gain control of the House of Representatives in the next election?
28. How did the political class manage to fool the people of the United States into supporting a Constitutional Amendment creating an income tax?
29. How do most people get their news on a daily basis?
30. Does the "freedom of press" clause in the First Amendment apply to the broadcast media?
31. So, do most people get their news from agencies licensed to operate by the federal government?

32. Why were the words "under God" placed into the Pledge of Allegiance?
33. Do you think that it is proper for the federal government to compel students attending government schools under compulsory attendance laws to acknowledge the role of God in the formation of our country? Would this constitute "effecting an establishment of religion?" If not, why not?
34. Do Americans derive their basic rights from the Constitution?
35. If we don't derive our rights from the Constitution, just why was the [Bill of Rights](#) added anyway?
36. Define a system of government where the means of production are owned and controlled privately.
37. Define a system of government where the means of production are privately owned but controlled by government.
38. Define a system of government where the means of production are owned and controlled by the government.
39. What percentage of total income is earned by the top one percent of income earners.
40. What percentage of total income taxes collected by the federal government is paid by the top one percent of income earners.
41. Where in our Constitution does it specifically state that only U.S. citizens may vote for the office of President of the United States?
42. Name one right that a state government can exercise without interference from the federal level.
43. Where in our Constitution does it specifically state that only U.S. citizens may vote for members of the House of Representatives?
44. Look at the Bill of Rights. List any Amendments in the Bill of Rights that were ratified for the purpose of limiting the powers of the government.
45. If our Constitution provides for equal protection under the law, why, then, does the Voting Rights Act only apply to certain states who were held in political disfavor in the 70's?
46. List any Amendments in the Bill of Rights that were ratified for the purpose of limiting the rights of individuals.
47. If the Bill of Rights was written to limit the rights of government and to guarantee certain rights in the individual, try to explain why so many people seem to think that the 2nd Amendment was written to limit the rights of individuals and guarantee the rights of government?
48. Does the First Amendment protect speech that some people might find offensive?
49. Explain how our Republic was threatened when Janet Jackson showed the world that she likes to wear a Japanese throwing star on the nipple of her left breast.
50. What is the one exclusive power our government has that no individual or business can legally exercise?

Now this list could be expanded to fill an entire book. I could, for instance, add a hundred or so questions beginning with "Where does the United States Constitution give the federal government the right to ....." Fifty questions is enough, though, and it's time to finish the Nuze and head to the studios.

It does occur to me that some of you high school and college government teachers and instructors might have a bit of fun with these questions and your students. No ... I'm not providing the answers.