AP Government & Politics Mr. Shears

Week 4 Reading Guide

\*\*NOTE: all assigned textbook readings always include the ‘extra material’ (separate graphics, extended quotes, tables, cartoons, debates, primary sources, etc.) found on the page!!!

\*\*NOTE: key terms and concepts should not only be precisely defined, but also expounded upon w/ relevant examples or other supporting details from the textbook where appropriate.

\*\*NOTE: please number the items in your “outline” as seen below (same order, same headings!!)

Section 2.5

1. The Madisonian System of preventing a ‘tyranny of the majority’

 a. limiting majority control (explain & give examples)

 b. separation of powers (explain and give examples)

 c. checks and balances (explain and give examples)

Section 2.8

2. Ways in which the Constitution of 1787 reflects democratic values but also reflects a fear of ‘too much democracy’

Section 2.7

3. how the Constitution can be ‘formally’ amended (summarize all the ways)

4. how the Constitution can be ‘informally’ amended (elaborate on each)

 a. judicial interpretation

 b. the political party system

 c. technology

 d. new laws and policies from Congress

5. why it is important to have a ‘flexible’ Constitution

*Extension Questions*

1. How would you characterize the present-day balance of power between our three branches of government? Is one branch more powerful than the others? Do think the present balance of power is optimal?

2. In what sense is the Constitution timeless and unchanging, and yet also flexible and adaptable to the changing times?

3. Given that the Constitution has only been amended 27 times in 200+ years, are the Constitutional requirements for proposing and ratifying amendments too difficult? What are the pros and cons of the amendment process?