

American Democracy
Government Observations Assignment

Semester: Fall 2011-12

Teacher: Mr. Bisson

California State Standards: 12.3.2 12.7.1 12.7.4

Carpinteria High School Expected School-wide Learning Results (ESLRs):

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS

-receive information and relay thoughts clearly
-speak, read, write and listen reflectively and critically in English

LIFE-LONG LEARNERS

-continually gather information to expand his/her world view

QUALITY PRODUCERS

-establish and use standards of quality in artistic, intellectual and physical work
-effectively organize, analyze and assess essential data

CRITICAL THINKERS

-research, discover and describe data
-analyze and evaluate the validity of data
-synthesize data to create informed, rational conclusions
-argue and defend conclusions based on data and personal moral judgments

SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS

- understand the function and implementation of governmental processes

Your task is to observe two different governmental meetings and to write a summary of each using the attached forms. You may attend a Carpinteria City Council meeting, a Carpinteria Unified School District Board meeting or a Santa Barbara County Courts trial. Each observation is worth 60 points. Two observations are required but you may complete a third for extra credit.

You will need to plan your observation dates ahead of time and arrange transportation. If you attend a court session plan to do it at a time when you have no school obligation. No credit will be given if you miss school to do this assignment. Written summaries for your observations may be turned in at any time on or before the **final deadline of Monday 05 December, 2011** at the beginning of the class period. No extensions will be granted for any reason.

Carpinteria City Council normally meets on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month at 5:30pm in the City Hall. Expect to stay two hours. Call 684-5405 to verify times and dates of meetings.

Carpinteria Unified School District Board meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month at 5:30pm in the City Hall (unless otherwise specified). Expect to stay two hours.

Santa Barbara County Courts normally conduct hearings Monday thru Thursday at the County Court House in Santa Barbara beginning about 9am with a long lunch break followed by an afternoon session. You may attend court proceedings in civil court, criminal court, small claims court or traffic court. You should observe for two hours. You may stay in one court room the entire time or move from one court to another. Call 568-2220 or 568-3140 to confirm that courts will be meeting on a specific date and time.

If you have trouble with arrangements, transportation, or anything else involving this assignment, speak to your teacher as soon as you become aware of the problem or any questions arise. There are other public meetings (such as the Planning Commission, Architectural Board of Review, etc.) that can be substituted if necessary. Give yourself time to set up alternative assignments or you will lose the points!

CHS American Democracy Meeting Observation Form

Student Name:

Signature of public official or other adult present at the meeting:

Circle one: Is this your first, second or third observation?

What sort of meeting did you attend ?

Date of observation ?

What other students attended this meeting ?

What elected officials were present ?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

What speakers addressed the meeting ?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

What agenda items were dealt with during the meeting ?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Take notes of your general impression of the meeting and the participants on the other side of this paper. You may also use your own paper as long as it includes all elements on this form.

The assignment is in three parts: 1) your notes and signature of a public official, 2) a one page summary of the event you witnessed, and 3) a page detailing your opinions about the ideas expressed, whether the proceedings made sense to you, whose ideas you agreed with, which participants seemed reasonable and which did not, how this relates to what you have learned from your readings and class, etc.

Use your notes to write a **word processed** summary of the meeting and your impressions. Use acceptable English conventions. Turn in both notes and a two page **printed summary**.

CHS American Democracy Court Observation Form

Student Name:
<u>Signature of public official or other adult present at the meeting:</u>

Circle one: Is this your first, second or third observation?

What court or courts did you observe? (name and number of court)

Date of observation:

What other students attended this hearing?

Who was the presiding judge ?

Who were the attorneys ?

Who was the defendant ?

As you understand from observing, describe the charges or disputes involved in the hearings you observed:

Take notes of your general impression of the meeting and the participants on the other side of this paper. You may also use your own paper as long as it includes all elements on this form.

The assignment is in three parts: 1) your notes and signature of a public official, 2) a one page summary of the event you witnessed, and 3) a page detailing your opinions about the ideas expressed, whether the proceedings made sense to you, whose ideas you agreed with, which participants seemed reasonable and which did not, how this relates to what you have learned from your readings and class, etc.

Use your notes to write a **word processed** summary of the meeting and your impressions. Use acceptable English conventions. Turn in both notes and a two page **printed summary**.

