

CivicForge – Joke Book

A Spark & Anvil joke book. Groan-worthy puns, tricky riddles, silly nonsense, and real fun facts from the world of CivicForge – read them out loud and make someone laugh.

Why did the student bring a broom to civics class?

Because the teacher said they were going to sweep the elections!

How to use this book

Read a joke, pause at the question, and try to guess the answer before you read on. Best of all: read them out loud to a friend, a grown-up, or your class. A good laugh makes the tricky stuff easier – that's real science.

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Puns

Why did the student bring a broom to civics class?

💡 Because the teacher said they were going to sweep the elections!

Why is the Constitution like a good Wi-Fi connection?

💡 Because it gives everyone the right to free speech!

What did the legislative branch say to the executive branch?

💡 "I make the rules around here -- literally!"

Why did the senator go to the doctor?

💡 Because they had too many bills and couldn't pass any of them!

Why was the Supreme Court so cool?

💡 Because it had the best bench in the entire country!

Why did the ballot feel so important?

💡 Because every time it showed up, people marked the occasion!

Why are amendments like phone updates?

💡 Because they patch the old system, and some people still complain about the changes!

Why couldn't the government function without compromise?

💡 Because without it, Congress would just be a bunch of people standing their ground on opposite sides of the aisle -- which, come to think of it, sounds familiar!

What did the President say to the veto pen?

💡 "You're my favorite way to say no and still look presidential!"

Why did the jury bring snacks to the courtroom?

💡 Because they heard the trial could last for hours and they wanted to reach a verdict before lunch!

Why was the Bill of Rights always invited to parties?

💡 Because it knew everyone's rights -- including the right to assemble!

Why did the governor feel stressed?

💡 Because they had to execute so many laws -- it was an executive order of magnitude!

Why was the electoral college so confusing?

💡 Because nobody could find the campus!

Why did the citizen go to school?

💡 Because they wanted to exercise their right to be well-informed -- cardio for the brain!

Why did the lobbyist stand in the hallway all day?

💡 Because that's literally where the word "lobbying" comes from!

What's a filibuster's favorite hobby?

💡 Talking. Just talking. For hours. That's the whole joke and the whole strategy.

Why did the town hall meeting go so well?

💡 Because every citizen had a point of order -- and a point of view!

Why was the preamble always chosen to speak first?

💡 Because it was great at introductions -- "We the People" is the ultimate opening line!

Why did the political party throw a party?

💡 Because they wanted to rally their base -- and their balloon budget!

Why was the checks-and-balances system like a good friendship?



Because nobody got to boss everyone else around!

Riddles

I have three branches but I'm not a tree. I serve the people, and my roots are in democracy. What am I?

💡 The United States government! Its three branches are legislative, executive, and judicial.

I'm older than the country I protect. I start with "We the People" and I've been amended 27 times. What am I?

💡 The U.S. Constitution! It was ratified in 1788, making it one of the oldest written constitutions still in use.

I'm a secret choice that everyone gets to make. You step behind a curtain, mark your preference, and your voice counts as much as anyone else's. What am I?

💡 A vote! In a democracy, every citizen's vote carries equal weight.

I'm the first ten. I protect your speech, your beliefs, and even your right to stay quiet. What am I?

💡 The Bill of Rights! The first ten amendments to the Constitution, ratified in 1791.

I make the laws but I don't enforce them. I have two chambers, and my members represent the people. What am I?

💡 Congress! It's divided into the Senate and the House of Representatives.

I interpret the law, but I don't write it. I have nine members who serve for life, and my decisions affect the whole country. What am I?

💡 The Supreme Court! Its justices are appointed, not elected, and serve lifetime terms.

I'm not the popular vote, and I confuse a lot of people. I'm a group of 538 electors who officially choose the President. What am I?

💡 The Electoral College! Each state gets electors based on its representation in Congress.

I can say "no" to a bill that Congress passed. But Congress can override me with a two-thirds vote. What power am I?

💡 The presidential veto! It's one of the key checks the executive branch has on the legislative branch.

I'm a change to the highest law of the land. I need two-thirds of Congress and three-fourths of the states to agree before I become official. What am I?

💡 A constitutional amendment! The process is deliberately difficult to prevent hasty changes.

I'm a duty that citizens are called to perform. You sit in a courtroom, listen to evidence, and help decide if someone is guilty or not guilty. What am I?

💡 Jury duty! The Sixth Amendment guarantees the right to a jury trial.

I'm the leader of a city's government. I'm not a governor and I'm not the President, but I run the show in my town. What am I?

💡 A mayor! Mayors lead municipal government, the level closest to citizens' daily lives.

I guarantee that the government can't search your home without a good reason and proper paperwork from a judge. What am I?

💡 The Fourth Amendment! It protects against unreasonable searches and seizures.

I'm a system where power is divided between a national government and state governments. Neither side has all the control. What am I?

💡 Federalism! It's the framework that balances national and state authority in the U.S.

I was added to the Constitution in 1870 and said that the right to vote cannot be denied based on race. What am I?

💡 The Fifteenth Amendment! Though it took nearly another century before voting rights were fully enforced.

I'm a document that lists your complaints and declares you free from a ruler you think is unfair. Thomas Jefferson helped write me in 1776. What am I?

 The Declaration of Independence! It declared the colonies' separation from Britain.

I'm the minimum age to be President of the United States. I'm not 18, I'm not 21, and I'm not 30. What number am I?

 Thirty-five! Article II of the Constitution sets this requirement.

There are 100 of us, two from each state. We serve six-year terms, and we confirm the President's nominees. Who are we?

 United States Senators! The Senate provides equal representation for every state.

I let the accused remain silent and not testify against themselves. Lawyers say "I plead the Fifth" because of me. What am I?

 The Fifth Amendment! It protects against self-incrimination.

I'm a meeting where citizens gather to discuss local issues, ask questions of their leaders, and make their voices heard. What am I?

 A town hall meeting! One of the oldest forms of direct democracy in America.

I was passed in 1920 and finally gave half the population the right to vote. What am I?

 The Nineteenth Amendment! It guaranteed women's suffrage after decades of activism.

Silly Stuff

Imagine if the three branches of government were actual tree branches. The legislative branch would be covered in sticky notes of bills. The executive branch would have a desk and a veto stamp. And the judicial branch would just be nine owls in robes staring at you disapprovingly.

The filibuster is a real thing in the U.S. Senate where a senator can talk for as long as they want to delay a vote. One senator once read a phone book. Another read Green Eggs and Ham. The Senate is simultaneously the most powerful and most ridiculous room in America.

If the Founding Fathers could see modern elections, they'd probably be confused by a lot of things. Attack ads on television. Campaign slogans on hats. Candidates debating on stages with countdown timers. But the thing that would blow their minds most? "Wait, EVERYONE can vote now? Even people who don't own land? Excellent!"

The Constitution has been amended 27 times in over 230 years. That's roughly one update per decade. If your phone updated that slowly, you'd still be playing Snake and calling it cutting-edge technology.

Jury duty is when the government sends you a letter that says "Congratulations! You've been selected to sit in an uncomfortable chair, listen to lawyers argue, and decide the fate of a stranger. Sincerely, Democracy." And you can't even unsubscribe.

Imagine running for class president, but with the Electoral College rules. You could get more votes than your opponent in the overall school, but still lose because your opponent won the right combination of classrooms. Welcome to American presidential elections.

The Bill of Rights protects your freedom of speech, your right to a fair trial, and your right not to have soldiers live in your house. That third one -- the Third Amendment -- was a really big deal in 1791. Now it's the amendment equivalent of that friend who shows up to every party but nobody

remembers inviting.

If local, state, and federal governments were a family, local government would be the parent who knows your name and fixes the potholes on your street. State government would be the grandparent who sets the house rules. And federal government would be the great-grandparent who lives far away but somehow controls the budget.

The President of the United States must be at least 35 years old, a natural-born citizen, and have lived in the country for at least 14 years. Notably, there is no requirement for the President to be able to cook, do laundry, or parallel park. The bar is both very high and very specific.

In a direct democracy, every citizen votes on every single law. In ancient Athens, they actually did this. Imagine if your school ran that way -- you'd spend more time voting on rules than actually going to class. "All in favor of longer recess? All in favor of no homework? All in favor of pizza for lunch every day?" Nothing else would ever get done.

A bill has to survive committee review, floor debate, a vote in one chamber, then do it ALL OVER AGAIN in the other chamber, then get signed by the President. If a bill were a video game character, it would need to beat the same boss level seven times in a row just to become a law.

Supreme Court justices serve for life. That means once you're on the Supreme Court, the only things that can remove you are retirement, impeachment, or time itself. It's the ultimate "permanent position." Even your school principal can be transferred.

The First Amendment protects freedom of the press. This means newspapers can criticize the government, and the government just has to deal with it. Imagine if your teacher couldn't give you a bad grade even when the school newspaper said their lesson was boring. That's the power of the press, but for an entire country.

To amend the Constitution, you need two-thirds of Congress AND three-fourths of state legislatures to agree. Getting 38 states to agree on anything is like getting 38 cats to walk in the same direction. And yet, it's happened 27 times. Democracy is persistent.

Checks and balances means no branch of government can do whatever it wants. The President can veto laws, but Congress can override the veto. Congress can pass laws, but the Supreme Court can strike them down. It's like rock-paper-scissors, except the game never ends and the stakes are the entire country.

Fun Facts

Did you know? The original U.S. Constitution doesn't mention the word "democracy" even once! The Founders created a "republic" -- a system where citizens elect representatives to govern on their behalf.

Did you know? The youngest person ever elected President was John F. Kennedy at age 43, but Theodore Roosevelt became President at 42 after President McKinley was assassinated. The oldest? Joe Biden took office at 78!

Did you know? When the Constitution was signed in 1787, only about 6% of the population was eligible to vote -- mostly white men who owned property. Today, any citizen 18 or older can vote regardless of race, gender, or wealth!

Did you know? The U.S. Capitol building has its own subway system! Senators and representatives ride small underground trains between their offices and the Capitol so they can get to votes on time.

Did you know? The word "candidate" comes from the Latin word "candidatus," meaning "dressed in white." In ancient Rome, people running for office wore bright white togas so voters could spot them in a crowd!

Did you know? The Supreme Court building wasn't completed until 1935 -- that's 146 years after the court was established! Before that, the justices met in the basement of the Capitol and even in taverns.

Did you know? The longest filibuster in U.S. Senate history was by Senator Strom Thurmond in 1957. He spoke for 24 hours and 18 minutes straight -- he prepared by dehydrating himself beforehand so he wouldn't need a bathroom break!

Did you know? There are over 500,000 elected officials in the United States, from the President all the way down to local school board members. That's roughly one elected official for every 660 people!

Did you know? The Liberty Bell cracked the first time it was rung after arriving in Philadelphia! It was melted down and recast twice before it was usable -- and then it cracked AGAIN in the 1840s.

Did you know? In Australia, voting is mandatory -- citizens who don't vote can be fined! In the U.S., voting is a right but not a requirement, and voter turnout in midterm elections often drops below 50%.

Did you know? The Constitution is only about 4,400 words long -- shorter than most terms-of-service agreements you scroll past without reading. It's one of the shortest national constitutions in the world!

Did you know? James Madison, known as the "Father of the Constitution," was only 5 feet 4 inches tall and weighed about 100 pounds. He was the smallest President in American history, but he helped create the biggest ideas in American government!

Did you know? The Twenty-Seventh Amendment, which limits when Congressional pay raises take effect, was originally proposed in 1789 but wasn't ratified until 1992 -- a 203-year wait! A college student's research paper helped revive the effort.

Did you know? The phrase "We the People" at the start of the Constitution is written in much larger letters than the rest of the document. The calligrapher, Jacob Shallus, was paid \$30 for the entire job -- about \$1,000 in today's money!

Did you know? In 1920, when the Nineteenth Amendment gave women the right to vote, the deciding vote came from the youngest member of the Tennessee legislature -- 24-year-old Harry Burn -- who changed his vote after receiving a letter from his mother telling him to "be a good boy" and vote for suffrage!

Keep laughing

That's **70 jokes** from CivicForge. Made someone laugh? Try making up your own – the best jokes are the ones you tell.

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