

2015 Constitution Day/Civics Study Annenberg Public Policy Center

TOPLINE RESULTS August 31, 2015

The study was conducted for Annenberg Public Policy Center via telephone (503 Landline and 509 Cell Phone Interviews, with both English and Spanish Respondents) by SSRS, an independent research company. Interviews were conducted from **August 27 – 31, 2015** among a sample of **1,012 total respondents**. The margin of error for total respondents is +/- 3.7% at the 95% confidence level. More information about SSRS can be obtained by visiting www.ssrs.com

US-01. Suppose you were part of a group that was given the task of writing a new United States Constitution. I'm going to read you a list of things that might be in this constitution and for each one, please tell me whether you strongly favor including it in the constitution, somewhat favor including it, don't feel strongly one way or the other, somewhat oppose including it or strongly oppose including it.

	Favor (NET)*	Strongly favor including it	Somewhat favor including it	Don't feel strongly one way or the other	Oppose (NET)*	Somewhat oppose including it	Strongly oppose including it	DK	Ref.
a. A person should be required to testify against himself in court	26	14	11	17	53	13	40	2	2
b. The Government SHOULD NOT be able to prohibit the practice of a religion even if a majority of voters decide that religion holds Un-American views	50	35	15	13	31	12	19	3	2
c. The government SHOULD be able to stop the press from publishing articles that are critical of the government	12	7	5	9	76	11	65	1	1
d. The government should NOT be	54	36	19	15	27	12	15	2	1

able to prohibit a peaceful march down the main street of a small town even if those in the town find the views of the marchers offensive									
e. After a person has been found not guilty of a crime, IF the police find new evidence, the government should NOT be able to try that person again for the same crime	41	25	16	10	46	19	27	3	1
f. If the Supreme Court issues a Constitutional ruling that is unpopular, Congress should be able to overturn that ruling	42	23	19	15	39	14	24	3	2

***NET numbers may not add up because of rounding**

Now we have a few questions that some people can answer and some people cannot so just tell me if you don't know the answer.

US-02. I'm going to read some protections, rights and guarantees. For each one please tell me if the protection, right or guarantee appears in the Bill of Rights, or not.

Does (ITEM) appear in the Bill of Rights, or not?

	Yes	No	Don't know	Refused
a. The right to own your own home	34	46	19	*
b. The right to own a pet	12	74	14	*
c. The freedom to peacefully assemble	81	7	12	*
d. A guarantee of "Equal Pay for equal work"	27	56	17	1
e. Protection from "unreasonable searches and seizures"	69	13	18	*

US-03. Do you happen to know any of the three branches of government?

	2015	2014	2013	2011
	%	%	%	%
Yes	74	72	75	73
No	22	25	24	22
Don't know	4	3	1	6
Refused	*	*	*	*
N →	1,012	1,416	1,302	1,230

Would you mind naming any of them (the three branches of government)?

Based on total sample

	2015	2014	2013	2011
	%	%	%	%
They know all three branches	31	36	38	38
They know two branches	12	16	18	13
They know one branch	24	13	15	16
They do not know any branches	32	35	29	33
Refused	*	*	-	*
N →	1,012	1,416	1,302	1,230

US-03a. Would you mind naming any of them?

Based on those who know any of the three branches of government

	2015	2014	2013	2011
	%	%	%	%
Judicial branch, the courts, Supreme Court	65	72	81	79
Legislative branch, Congress, people in Congress, Congressmen, Congress people	66	77	72	71
Executive branch, the president, presidency, the White House	61	67	65	64
Local, state, and federal government	3	1	2	1
Republicans, Democrats, Independents, political parties	2	2	1	2
Other (SPECIFY)	1	3	1	3
Don't know	5	5	3	6
Refused	*	-	1	*
N →	771	1,007	1,011	951

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Results may add to more than 100% due to multiple responses.

{TREND FROM 2011 AND EARLIER}

US-04. If the Supreme Court rules on a case 5 to 4, does this mean...?

	2015	2014	2013	2011	2007
	%	%	%	%	%
The decision is the law and needs to be followed	53	47	45	48	45
The decision is sent back to Congress for reconsideration	15	21	20	13	14
The decision is sent back to the lower courts to be decided there	13	8	8	10	7
Don't know	18	25	26	29	34
Refused	1	-	*	*	*
N →	1,012	1,416	1,302	1,230	1,514

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{Trend: SC Q24d}

US-05. Thinking about the Supreme Court, please tell me if you agree or disagree with the following statements. PAUSE FOR ANSWER, THEN:
Would that be strongly or somewhat...?

	Agree (NET)*	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Disagree (NET)*	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	DK/Ref
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
a. If the Supreme Court started making a lot of rulings that most Americans disagree with, it might be better to do away with the Court altogether <i>{JS2011 Q32a, JS2007 Q49a, SC Q24d}</i>							
2015	25	14	12	70	24	46	5
2013	23	8	15	74	23	51	3
2011	22	11	11	74	18	56	5
2007	17	8	9	81	20	61	2
2005	21	10	11	75	22	53	3
b. When Congress disagrees with the Supreme Court's decisions, Congress should pass legislation saying the Supreme Court can no longer rule on that issue or topic <i>{JS2011 Q32b, JS2007 Q49b}</i>							
2015	26	10	17	67	27	40	6
2013	23	6	17	71	22	49	6
2011	23	8	15	69	21	48	9
2007	22	8	14	73	22	51	6

***NET numbers may not add up because of rounding**

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US-06. In high school, did you ever take a class in civics or a course that focused on the US Constitution or the judicial system, or do you not remember?

	2015	2013	2011
	%	%	%
Yes	54	61	62
No	30	25	23
Don't remember/Don't know	15	14	15
Refused	*	0	*
N →	1,012	1,255 ¹	1,190 ²

{TREND FROM 2011}

(ASK IF Z-8=3, 4, 5)

US-07. While you were in college, did you ever take a course that focused on understanding the U.S. system of government and the Constitution?

{JS2011 D10 modified}

Based on those with at least some college

	2015	2013	2011
	%	%	%
Yes	36	38	39
No	62	61	57
Don't remember/Don't know	2	2	4
Refused	*	0	*
N →	613	800	820

¹ Modified base in 2013, "Based on those with at least some high school"

² Modified base in 2011, "Based on those with at least some high school"

Z-8/US-07 Combo Table

	2015	2013	2011
	%	%	%
Went to college	55	57	57
Took US Government/Constitution course in college	20	21	22
Did not take US Government/Constitution course in college	34	35	32
Did not go to college	45	42	41
Don't know	-	*	*
Refused	*	*	2