Name _____ Date _____

The Amendment Process: From Proposal to Ratification

Directions: Answer each question about how the U.S. Constitution can be changed. The proposals described are invented.

1. In an invented example, Congress proposes an amendment and the states ratify it. Match each step to its place in the order.

Write the letter of the matching answer on each line.

1. _____ The proposal is sent to the states.
2. _____ A member of Congress introduces the proposed amendment.
3. _____ Enough states approve the amendment.
4. _____ The House and the Senate each pass the proposal.

A. First
B. Fourth
C. Second
D. Fifth
E. Third

2. An invented proposed amendment comes up for a final vote in Congress. What vote does it need in each chamber before it can go to the states?

A. A two-thirds vote in each chamber
B. A simple majority in each chamber, as for an ordinary bill
C. Two-thirds of all members, with both chambers counted together
D. A three-fourths vote in each chamber

3. Besides a vote in Congress, which other way to propose an amendment does the Constitution provide?

A. The president can send a proposed amendment straight to the states for a vote.
B. Three-fourths of the governors can sign a petition, which then becomes an amendment.
C. The Supreme Court can add an amendment to the Constitution when it decides a major case.
D. Legislatures in two-thirds of the states can ask for a national convention, which can propose amendments.

4. Both chambers of Congress have just approved a proposed amendment. What must the president do before it goes to the states?

A. Nothing, since the president has no formal part in amendments
B. Sign it, the same way the president signs an ordinary bill
C. Either sign it or veto it within ten days, as with any bill
D. Hold a national vote on it before the states consider it

5. With all 50 states counted, what is the smallest number of states that must ratify a proposed amendment for it to become part of the Constitution?

_____ states

6. A proposed amendment is on its way to the states. Who decides whether the states will ratify it through their legislatures or through special ratifying conventions?

A. The Supreme Court
B. Congress
C. The president
D. Each state's governor

7. In an invented example, 40 of the 50 states ratify a proposed amendment. What happens in the 10 states that voted against it?

A. It does not apply in those 10 states, since they voted against it.
B. Those 10 states can cancel the amendment for themselves within one year.
C. Those 10 states must keep voting until each of them approves it.
D. It applies there too, as part of the Constitution for the whole country.

8. A student asks whether an amendment, once ratified, can ever be undone. Which answer is accurate?

A. Yes. The Supreme Court can repeal an amendment by ruling that it was a mistake.
B. Yes, but only if all 50 states vote together to repeal it.
C. No. Once ratified, an amendment stays in the Constitution forever without change.
D. Yes. The Twenty-first Amendment (1933) repealed the Eighteenth, which had banned alcoholic drinks.