

Name: _____ Date: _____

FCPS English 2 Standard Benchmark 2 v2

Read both selections, and choose the best answer to each question.

Selection 1: We Must Take Action on Congress's Inaction

by The Editorial Board

- 1 With the midterm elections just weeks away, a new online poll shows that Congress is as unpopular as ever: only 14% of adults approve of the way Congress is doing its job. Typically, a performance review this abysmal would justify the immediate firing of an employee—but the voting public cannot fire or recall members of Congress. What we can do, however, is refuse to let their longstanding ineffectiveness lull us into inaction ourselves.
- 2 Congress members are accountable to us—their constituents—and we should limit the amount of time we allow these public servants to hold office. Creating term limits for senators and House representatives is not a panacea, but it is a practical way to obtain the Congress that our country needs and deserves.

Elections Are Not Enough

- 3 One common objection to term limits is that we already have them in the form of elections. It's true that every two years, elections are held for all 435 seats in the House of Representatives and one-third of the seats in the Senate. But think back to the 2016 election. As usual, roughly 90% of Congressional legislators sought reelection. Congress's approval rating was just 18% before voters headed to the polls, and yet, virtually all of the incumbents won their races: 97% of the running House members got another 2-year term, and 93% of the senators got another 6-year term.
- 4 For decades, Congress members have been almost guaranteed reelection to as many terms as desired. Why? Many of their constituents—those who vote, at least—believe that experience in Congress translates into expertise. In one sense, they're right: Few challengers can compete with incumbents' abilities to use their positions for publicity, fundraising, and obtaining strategic campaign endorsements.
- 5 Is it any wonder that 20% of legislators in today's Congress have been in office for 16 years or more? The longest serving representative was in the House for 52 years before retiring; the longest serving senator is currently in his 44th year. Those who insist that voters have a right to retain legislators they like, for as long as they like, should consider whether career politicians are dedicated public servants or power-hungry bad actors who would rather die than give up their influence. Term limits would not destroy democracy but protect it. What is more undemocratic than holding a position of power for life?

Term Limits Are a Start

- 6 Limiting the total number of terms that Congress members can serve would remove the job security that often leads to complacency. Think of how much more we value our lives knowing that we're mortal and how our mortality is a powerful incentive to make every moment count. A definite end-date to a legislator's employment would provide a sense of urgency in each new term. It would also regain valuable time previously spent on fundraising and campaigning for accomplishing the job the senator or representative was elected to do: serving the residents of their state, not themselves.
- 7 This Election Day, consider the track records of your U.S. Congressional candidates and exercise your right to vote. Think of the needs of your family, friends, neighbors, state, and the country at large. If you're part of the 86% of this country that thinks Congress could do better, contact your district's legislators to ask them to support the call for Congressional term limits.

Selection 2: *from* Federalist No. 71

by Alexander Hamilton

DURATION in office has been mentioned as the second requisite to the energy of the Executive authority. This has relation to two objects: to the personal firmness of the executive magistrate, in the employment of his constitutional powers; and to the stability of the system of administration which may have been adopted under his auspices. With regard to the first, it must be evident, that the longer the duration in office, the greater will be the probability of obtaining so important an advantage. It is a general principle of human nature, that a man will be interested in whatever he possesses, in proportion to the firmness or precariousness of the tenure by which he holds it; will be less attached to what he holds by a momentary or uncertain title, than to what he enjoys by a durable or certain title; and, of course, will be willing to risk more for the sake of the one, than for the sake of the other. This remark is not less applicable to a political privilege, or honor, or trust, than to any article of ordinary property. The inference from it is, that a man acting in the capacity of chief magistrate, under a consciousness that in a very short time he MUST lay down his office, will be apt to feel himself too little interested in it to hazard any material censure or perplexity, from the independent exertion of his powers, or from encountering the ill-humors, however transient, which may happen to prevail, either in a considerable part of the society itself, or even in a predominant faction in the legislative body. If the case should only be, that he MIGHT lay it down, unless continued by a new choice, and if he should be desirous of being continued, his wishes, conspiring with his fears, would tend still more powerfully to corrupt his integrity, or debase his fortitude. In either case, feebleness and irresolution must be the characteristics of the station.

1. **Reread paragraph 4 of Selection 1. Why do you think the author acknowledges that “experience in Congress translates into expertise” in “one sense”?**
- A. because term limits would reduce incumbents’ opportunities to secure fundraising and campaign endorsements
 - B. because Congress approval rates don’t matter if the same people vote over and over again
 - C. because politicians up for reelection enjoy an advantage in election campaigns due to their connections and time spent in office
 - D. because most legislators have been in Congress for so long because they are the most skilled at fundraising

2. **What evidence from the text best supports the inference made in Question 1?**
- A. “For decades, Congress members have been almost guaranteed reelection to as many terms as desired.” (paragraph 4)
 - B. “Few challengers can compete with incumbents’ abilities to use their positions for publicity, fundraising, and obtaining strategic campaign endorsements.” (paragraph 4)
 - C. “The longest serving representative was in the House for 52 years before retiring.” (paragraph 5)
 - D. “[T]he longest serving senator is currently in his 44th year.” (paragraph 5)

3. **Reread this sentence from paragraph 5 of Selection 1.**

Those who insist that voters have a right to retain legislators they like, for as long as they like, should consider whether career politicians are dedicated public servants or power-hungry bad actors who would rather die than give up their influence.

What is the purpose of the hyperbole in this sentence?

- A. It emphasizes career politicians’ hunger for the campaign trail.
- B. It emphasizes career politicians’ attachment to their office.
- C. It emphasizes voters’ willingness to support their favorite candidates.
- D. It emphasizes voters’ disapproval of Congress.

4. In paragraph 5 of Selection 1, the authors use a straw man fallacy. A straw man fallacy is when someone misrepresents the opposing argument to make it easier to attack. Read these sentences, in which the straw man fallacy is underlined.

Those who insist that voters have a right to retain legislators they like, for as long as they like, should consider whether career politicians are dedicated public servants or power-hungry bad actors who would rather die than give up their influence. Term limits would not destroy democracy but protect it. What is more undemocratic than holding a position of power for life?

What is the effect of the straw man fallacy on the author’s argument?

- A. The argument seems more persuasive because the fallacy creates an indignant tone to connect with the emotions of the readers.
 - B. The argument seems illogical because the fallacy supports the opposing viewpoint’s claim.
 - C. The argument seems more important because the fallacy increases the stakes of the opposing viewpoint.
 - D. The argument seems less reasonable because the fallacy answers a claim opponents never actually made.
5. **The second subsection of Selection 1, titled “Term Limits Are a Start,” presents the authors’ original ideas instead of counterarguments. How do the authors use appeals to help give this section a persuasive beginning?**
- A. They appeal to readers’ feelings about their own job security (or lack of it) with an angry tone to make readers feel angry at members of Congress.
 - B. They appeal to readers’ reasoning using an analogy between job security and term limits to suggest that only hard workers deserve term limits.
 - C. They appeal to readers’ feelings about life’s brevity and the duties of Congress to help convince readers that term limits are an important issue.
 - D. They appeal to readers’ reasoning using facts and evidence about how Congress members spend their time to suggest that term limits are a logical solution.

6. **Read the following quote from Selection 2.**

It is a general principle of human nature, that a man will be interested in whatever he possesses, in proportion to the firmness or precariousness of the tenure by which he holds it; will be less attached to what he holds by a momentary or uncertain title, than to what he enjoys by a durable or certain title; and, of course, will be willing to risk more for the sake of the one, than for the sake of the other.

Compare this argument to the arguments made in Selection 1. How do the views in Selection 2 compare or contrast with those in Selection 1?

- A. Both selections argue that the main risk associated with longstanding politicians is complacency.
- B. Selection 1 argues that essential time spent campaigning takes away from time available for governing, while Selection 2 argues that politicians should not campaign.
- C. Selection 1 argues that returning politicians are more likely to be ineffective, while Selection 2 argues they are more likely to behave in an unwise manner.
- D. Selection 1 argues that term limits are the only way to motivate politicians to work hard, while Selection 2 argues they would make politicians less likely to care about doing their jobs well.

7. **How does Alexander Hamilton's use of the phrase "a man will be interested in whatever he possesses" impact the tone of Federalist No. 71?**

- A. It emphasizes the temporary nature of political power and privilege.
- B. It underscores the potential corruption of political leaders who seek long-term office.
- C. It highlights the inherent risk associated with holding political office.
- D. It suggests that political leaders are less motivated by long-term stability.

8. **How does Selection 1 refine its argument for Congressional term limits in paragraph 6?**

- A. By contrasting the mortality of individuals with the indefinite tenure of legislators.
- B. By advocating for strict regulations on campaign finance.
- C. By emphasizing the historical context of the American Revolution.
- D. By highlighting the benefits of experience in legislative positions.

9. **In Federalist No. 71, how does Alexander Hamilton develop his argument regarding the duration of executive office?**
- A. By questioning the effectiveness of short-term executive appointments.
 - B. By contrasting the advantages of long-term executive tenure with those of short-term tenure.
 - C. By discussing the historical context of the U.S. Constitution.
 - D. By advocating for strict term limits for executive officeholders.

10. **Reread the following passage from Federalist No. 71 by Alexander Hamilton:**

"His wishes, conspiring with his fears, would tend still more powerfully to corrupt his integrity, or debase his fortitude."

How does the syntax—the word order—in the sentence contribute to the author's argument?

- A. It emphasizes the potential moral decline of a leader facing the prospect of losing office.
 - B. It highlights the contrasting emotions of desire and apprehension experienced by a leader.
 - C. It suggests that a leader's personal ambitions often conflict with their official responsibilities.
 - D. It underscores the importance of ethical conduct in political leadership.
11. **How does the editorial's use of statistical data in paragraphs 1 and 3 contribute to the author's point of view regarding Congressional term limits?**
- A. It demonstrates the author's impartiality and objectivity in presenting the argument.
 - B. It establishes the historical context necessary for understanding the debate over term limits.
 - C. It emphasizes the widespread dissatisfaction with Congress and supports the call for term limits.
 - D. It highlights the financial implications of term limits for elected officials.
12. **Compare the arguments presented in the editorial advocating for Congressional term limits and Alexander Hamilton's perspective on executive tenure in Federalist No. 71. How do these documents address similar themes regarding governmental structure and accountability?**
- A. By emphasizing the importance of public opinion in shaping legislative decisions.
 - B. By contrasting the benefits of short-term versus long-term tenure in government positions.
 - C. By discussing the challenges of political corruption and its impact on democratic processes.
 - D. By advocating for increased transparency in legislative decision-making processes.

Read the selection and examine the image, and choose the best answer to each question.

from Antigone
by Sophocles

In Sophocles' play Antigone, the brother of Antigone, Polyneices, has been killed in a civil war. The ruler of Thebes, Creon, has declared that Polyneices will not be buried, and anyone who tries to bury him will be put to death. In this scene, Antigone asks her sister Ismene to help bury their brother.

Antigone. Wilt thou join hand with mine to lift the dead?

Ismene. To bury him, when all have been forbidden?
Is that thy thought?

Antigone. To bury my own brother
And thine, even though thou wilt not do thy part.
I will not be a traitress to my kin.

Ismene. Fool-hardy girl! against the word of Creon?

Antigone. He hath no right to bar me from mine own.

Selection 2: Antigone and Ismene

By Emil Teschendorff



Antigone and Ismene by Emil Teschendorff, 1892, New York Public Library Digital Collection

13. **Based on Antigone's pleas to her sister in this excerpt, what is a theme in the play *Antigone*?**
- A. Standing up for one's beliefs can shape one's destiny.
 - B. Good always conquers evil.
 - C. Death is not something to be feared.
 - D. One person cannot make a difference.
14. **Which statement best describes how the interaction between Antigone and Ismene helps develop the theme identified in Question 13?**
- A. It establishes Antigone as the central character around whose actions the conflict will revolve.
 - B. It reveals Antigone's loyalty to her family and the danger that loyalty puts her in.
 - C. It establishes that Creon has forbidden the burial of Antigone's brother.
 - D. It creates a sense of suspense and a mood of urgency.
15. **Antigone is facing the conflict of being forbidden to bury her brother. How does the excerpt intensify this conflict?**
- A. Antigone and Ismene's bond strengthens their determination to honor their brother, despite the risk.
 - B. It becomes clear that Antigone is prepared to do it on her own, even if it means risking her own life.
 - C. Ismene's mocking disdain only makes Antigone angrier about what Creon did to her brother.
 - D. It suggests that Creon will charge Antigone as a traitor.
16. **From the excerpt, what can you infer about the cultural customs of the society in which the play is set?**
- A. Only women may bury the dead.
 - B. Burial after death means safe passage to the afterlife.
 - C. Death in battle is an honorable way to die.
 - D. A ruler's word is law and is to be taken very seriously.

17. Read the following lines of verse, which are based on the play *Antigone*.

Now, my brother, we are alone.
I alive, you still as stone,
Your flesh, my flesh, I lie there too,
Whatever shall I do?
'Tis a crime to bury you, they say
But to leave you here, to turn away
Let the world lay waste to the flesh of my kin
Would that not be the greater sin?

How does this depiction of the scene differ from the lines of the play?

- A. It shows that Antigone is conflicted about whether to bury her brother.
- B. It shows that Antigone believes it would be wrong not to bury her brother.
- C. It shows that Antigone decides to bury her brother without Ismene's help.
- D. It shows that Antigone mocks Creon's law when deciding to bury her brother.

18. Read the following lines of poetry, which are based on the play *Antigone*:

Antigone, dead siblings
are set.
As for the living —
pick me for a sister.
I, too, love a proper funeral.
Drag, Dig and Sisters' Pop-Up Burial.
Landlady,
I make the rounds of graves
keeping up
my family's
top-notch properties.

How does the depiction of this scene differ from the lines of the play?

- A. It contrasts by focusing on practical matters rather than emotional or ethical dilemmas.
- B. It emphasizes the ceremonial aspects of burial rather than the conflicts between family members.
- C. It diverges by portraying the speaker as detached and business-like rather than emotionally involved.
- D. It differs by emphasizing the importance of tradition and familial duty over personal desires.

19. Which detail from the play is emphasized in Selection 2?

- A. The rivalry between Antigone and Ismene over their brother's burial.
- B. Antigone's defiance of Creon's decree and insistence on burying her brother.
- C. Ismene's hesitation due to fear of Creon's punishment for defying his orders.
- D. The civil war that led to the death of Polyneices.

20. How does Sophocles' portrayal of Selection 1 compare with Emil Teschendorff's depiction in Selection 2?

- A. Sophocles focuses on the emotional conflict between the sisters, while Teschendorff emphasizes their strategic planning.
- B. Sophocles highlights Antigone's resolve to act alone, whereas Teschendorff emphasizes Ismene's role in the burial plan.
- C. Both present Antigone as resolute and defiant.
- D. Sophocles explores Antigone's legal arguments against Creon's decree, while Teschendorff delves into Ismene's philosophical reasoning.

21. How does Sophocles' portrayal of Antigone's defiance reflect broader cultural values of ancient Greek society as depicted in world literature?

- A. It highlights the importance of individual rights over communal duties.
- B. It reflects a belief in the supremacy of divine law over human law.
- C. It emphasizes the role of women as leaders in political dissent.
- D. It demonstrates a preference for compromise and negotiation in conflicts.

22. How does Sophocles use dialogue between Antigone and Ismene to create tension in the scene?

- A. By revealing Antigone's plan to bury Polyneices at the beginning of the scene.
- B. By having Ismene express doubt and hesitation initially, then later showing a shift in her willingness to help.
- C. By presenting Creon's decree against burying Polyneices before Antigone asks for Ismene's help.
- D. By introducing the conflict between Antigone's determination and Ismene's fear of Creon's authority.

Passage Estimated Lexile Range

Grade 10 Band: 1085L - 1400L

- We Must Take Action on Congress's Inaction **1010L - 1200L**
- from Federalist No. 71 **1010L - 1200L**
- from Antigone **1090L**

Answer Key/Standards Guide

1. C; RI.9-10.1 - Make Inferences
2. B; RI.9-10.1 - Text Evidence
3. B; RI.9-10.4 - Determining Meaning (Figures of Speech)
4. D; RI.9-10.8 - Avoiding fallacies
5. C; RI.9-10.3 - Idea development
6. D; RI.9-10.9 - Comparing Seminal Documents
7. A; RI.9-10.4 - Tone
8. A; RI.9-10.5 - Text Structure
9. B; RI.9-10.3 - Idea Development
10. A; RI.9-10.4 - Diction, Syntax, and Mood
11. C; RI.9-10.6 - Author's Point of View
12. B; RI.9-10.9 - Comparing Seminal Documents
13. A; RL.9-10.2 - Theme
14. B; RL.9.10.3 - Analyzing Character
15. B; RL.9-10.3 - Analyzing Character
16. D; RL.9-10.6 - Analyzing Cultural Experiences
17. A; RL.9-10.9 - Comparing Source and Adaptation
18. C; RL.9-10.9 - Comparing Source and Adaptation
19. C; RL.9-10.7 - Comparing Text and Media
20. C; RL.9-10.7 - Comparing Text and Media
21. B; RL.9-10.6 - Analyzing Cultural Experiences
22. D; RL.9-10.5 - Text Structure