

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Answer Key: Shatter the Status Quo: High School Comparative Politics Clash

Step into the shoes of a constitutional consultant to dissect power dynamics and institutional failures across distinct global regimes.

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**1. In the Russian Federation, the co-existence of a President and a Prime Minister suggests a semi-presidential system. However, when the President holds the power to dismiss the government and issue decrees with the force of law, this creates a 'hyper-presidential' imbalance. Which concept best describes this concentration of power?**

**Answer:** B) Executive dominance

Executive dominance occurs when the executive branch holds disproportionate power over the legislative and judicial branches, often bypassing traditional checks and balances.

**2. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, the \_\_\_\_\_ is the highest authority, holding the power to appoint the head of the judiciary and half of the Guardian Council, effectively vetting all candidates for elected office.**

**Answer:** C) Supreme Leader

The Supreme Leader is the head of state and the highest ranking political and religious authority in Iran, embodying the concept of theocratic rule.

**3. In a 'Consociationalist' democracy, such as that found in Switzerland, power-sharing is mandated among different ethnic or linguistic groups to prevent conflict.**

**Answer:** A) True

Consociationalism is a form of power-sharing democracy used in deeply divided societies to ensure that different groups are represented and have a veto over major changes.

**4. Unlike a federal system, the United Kingdom's process of 'Devolution' to Scotland and Wales is legally distinct because:**

**Answer:** A) The central government can technically revoke these powers at any time.

In unitary systems like the UK, sovereignty remains with the central parliament. Devolution is the delegation of power, not the constitutional transfer of sovereignty.

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**5. The Mexican political system transitioned from a 'Dominant Party' system led by the \_\_\_\_\_ for 71 years to a more competitive multi-party democracy in 2000.**

**Answer:** B) PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party)

The PRI maintained a virtual monopoly on political power in Mexico through most of the 20th century, utilizing state resources and patronage networks.

**6. In a purely Parliamentary system, the Head of State and the Head of Government are always the same individual.**

**Answer:** B) False

Parliamentary systems usually split these roles; the Head of Government is typically a Prime Minister, while the Head of State is often a Monarch or a ceremonial President.

**7. When comparing 'First-Past-The-Post' (FPTP) electoral systems to 'Proportional Representation' (PR), which outcome is most likely in a PR system?**

**Answer:** C) Coalition governments are formed by several smaller parties.

Proportional Representation allows seats to be allocated based on the percentage of total votes, often resulting in no single party having a majority, requiring coalitions.

**8. The concept of 'Illiberal Democracy,' a term popularized by Fareed Zakaria, refers to a government that holds elections but lacks \_\_\_\_\_, such as freedom of the press or an independent judiciary.**

**Answer:** B) Constitutional liberalism

Illiberal democracies may have the mechanics of elections but fail to protect the civil liberties and rule of law essential to a free society.

**9. Consider the 'Logic of Credit Claiming.' In a federal system like Australia's, when a policy succeeds, both state and national leaders may claim credit. What is the primary risk when a policy fails?**

**Answer:** B) The 'Blame Game' where levels of government avoid accountability

Federalism often leads to overlapping jurisdictions, making it difficult for citizens to determine which level of government is responsible for policy failures.

**10. The 'Judicial Review' power, used by courts to invalidate laws, is a universal feature found in every democratic nation's constitution.**

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**Answer:** B) False

Not all democracies have judicial review; some, like the Netherlands, emphasize parliamentary sovereignty, where the legislature's interpretation of the constitution is final.