

CHAPTER
3
SECTION 3**READING COMPREHENSION****Change by Other Means****3**

1. Complete the chart by explaining how each method contributes to the process of governmental change.

Means of Change	How It Works
Legislation	
Executive Action	
Court Decisions	
Party Practices	
Custom	

READING COMPREHENSION (continued)

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2. Identify each of the following changes as coming from legislation, executive action, court decisions, party practices, or custom.
- A. A law supporting segregation in schools is overturned.

 - B. The President appoints a conservative judge to please the party's conservative supporters.

 - C. The State of the Union address is given each year at roughly the same time.

 - D. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 extends protections against discrimination.

 - E. The President sends troops on a peacekeeping mission to an area torn by civil war.

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Directions: Write your answer to each question.

1. List the five methods by which the meaning of the Constitution has been changed.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____

2. Identify each of the following changes as coming from one of the five methods you listed in question 1.

- a. _____ A law is overturned by the Supreme Court.
- b. _____ No President before Franklin Roosevelt served more than two terms.
- c. _____ Candidates for President are selected by the Democrats and the Republicans.
- d. _____ Congress passes the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to extend the protections in the Constitution.
- e. _____ By executive agreement, the President makes a security pact with a foreign nation.

3. In the spaces below, explain how Congress has used basic legislation to expand the meaning of the Constitution in each area listed.

- a. Federal court system: _____

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b. Executive department: _____

c. Commerce powers: _____

4. How have Presidents used their role as commander in chief to expand the powers of the executive branch?

5. Why did President Woodrow Wilson say that the Supreme Court is "a constitutional convention in continuous session"?

6. How have political parties changed the electoral college?

7. When a President dies in office, the Vice President takes over. How is this an example of how a custom has changed the Constitution?

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Identify each statement as true or false and explain your answer.

1. Change by methods other than formal amendment rarely occurs.

2. The day-to-day workings of government may lead to change.

3. Congress has defined its powers over the years by exercising them.

4. Any pacts that the President makes with foreign countries must be approved by Congress.

5. The Supreme Court affects governmental change by interpreting cases.

6. Political parties affect governmental change at all levels of government.

7. The Constitution calls for the establishment of the 15 executive departments that make up the President's Cabinet.

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SECTION 3**CORE WORKSHEET****Change by Other Means****3**

Part 1 Change occurs in five basic ways, in addition to formal amendment: basic legislation, executive action, court decisions, party practices, custom and usage. For each scenario below, identify the informal method used for the governmental change.

1. Although the Constitution states only that candidates for the Senate must be residents of the State from which they are elected, only candidates who have been residents for two years or more are normally allowed to run.

2. Citing Thomas Jefferson and the Louisiana Purchase, the President declares Puerto Rico the 51st State.

3. Congress passes a law setting up special federal courts to handle cyber-crimes.

4. After a long legal battle, the Supreme Court declares that laws restricting carbon emissions should be left to the States, restricting Congress's power to make environmental laws at the federal level.

5. A Democratic convention is held to help identify possible appointees to the Supreme Court.

Part 2 On the lines below, write an additional scenario for each informal method of constitutional change.

1. basic legislation

2. executive action

3. court decisions

4. party practices

5. custom and usage

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SECTION 3

CORE WORKSHEET

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Part 1 Amending the Constitution is one way to change how our government operates, but it can also be changed in other ways. The five basic ways are:

- basic legislation (Congress passes laws to fill in details when the Constitution is not specific enough.)
- executive action (Presidents use powers not clearly given to them by the Constitution.)
- court decisions (The courts interpret the Constitution in the cases they hear.)
- party practices (Parties decide how candidates for President are nominated. They also influence government in many other ways.)
- custom and usage (Government officials follow unwritten customs as if they are rules.)

Each of the situations below is an example of one of these ways. Read each situation. Then decide which of the five basic ways is being used.

1. The Constitution says that senators must be residents of the State that elects them. It does not say how long they must have lived in the State. Even so, if a person has not lived in a State for at least two years, he or she is normally not allowed to run as a candidate from that State.

2. The President makes Puerto Rico the 51st State. He says he is following the precedent set by Thomas Jefferson and the Louisiana Purchase.

3. Congress passes a law to create special courts to handle cyber-crimes.

4. The Supreme Court says that laws to limit carbon emissions should be left to the States. This decision limits Congress's power to make environmental laws.

5. A special Democratic convention is held. It will help identify possible nominees for the Supreme Court.

CORE WORKSHEET (continued)

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Part 2 For each of the five basic ways to change the Constitution, come up with your own example. Describe your examples in the spaces below.

1. basic legislation

2. executive action

3. court decisions

4. party practices

5. custom and usage
