



# HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY

STUDENT BOOK

▶ **7th Grade** | Unit 8

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# HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY 708

## Political Science

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# Political Science

## Introduction

Since the beginning of history, men have lived in organized groups. These groups have ranged in size from a few related families to nations with several million people. Groups of any size, whether they be bands, clans, tribes, or nations, have at least two things in common. All groups have leaders, and each group has rules or laws that specify how its members should act. Usually, these rules are based on the religious and philosophical beliefs of the majority of the group.

The ancient tribes of Israel possessed laws based upon the *Torah*, the first five books of the Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. These laws were carried out by the politico-religious leaders. Modern nations such as the United States possess rules made by the agreement of the citizens and carried out by the various branches of government. The study of the leaders and the laws of various nations, as well as the people who were governed by them, is the focus of political science.

In this LIFEPAC® you will learn why political scientists consider their focus for studying the history of man to be important. You will learn the meaning of terms such as freedom, rights, and human dignity and the part these concepts play in Western civilization. You will also study some of the ideas that important Western political thinkers have written. This LIFEPAC will help you understand more fully some of the foundational ideas of your family, your society, and your country.

## Objectives

**Read these objectives.** The objectives tell you what you will be able to do when you have successfully completed this LIFEPAC. When you have finished this LIFEPAC, you should be able to:

1. Discuss the subject matter of political science.
2. Identify the three general categories of political science.
3. Explain the difference between explanation and description and tell why this difference is important in the study of political science.
4. Discuss the three bases of human knowledge.
5. Outline the goal of political science.
6. Identify the contributions of Jewish civilization to Western political thought.
7. List the contributions of Greek civilization to Western political thought.
8. Identify the contributions of Christianity to Western political thought.
9. List the contributions of some modern political thinkers.
10. Explain the use of models in political science.
11. Construct a model of government based upon current events.

Survey the LIFE PAC. Ask yourself some questions about this study and write your questions here.

A large rectangular area with a light gray background and horizontal green lines, intended for writing questions. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the box.

# 1. WHAT POLITICAL SCIENCE IS

Political science is concerned with one aspect of man’s culture—the rules and procedures man uses to govern himself. The process of making rules to live by and putting these rules into practice in society is called **politics**. In the study of politics, political scientists want to know how the individuals in a group are organized to carry out the goals of that group. They ask questions about the power relationships that exist between individuals or sections of a group. Political scientists try to identify who the leaders are and how they obtained their positions and power. Political scientists also examine the process by which decisions are made concerning the allocation of a nation’s resources.

Harold Lasswell, a twentieth-century political scientist, defined political science as “the study of who gets what, when and how.” Although this definition is very simple, it is a good description of what a political scientist does.

In this section of the LIFE PAC you will learn that political scientists make a distinction between description (telling what you have seen) and explanation (telling how you think what you have seen works). You will learn that this distinction is based upon the ways in which we see the world and upon the ways we collect facts to make up knowledge. We use this knowledge in describing and explaining what we see.

## SECTION OBJECTIVES

**Review these objectives.** When you have completed this section, you should be able to:

1. Discuss the subject matter of political science.
2. Identify the three general categories of political science.
3. Explain the difference between explanation and description and tell why this distinction is important in the study of political science.
4. Discuss the three bases of human knowledge.
5. Outline the goal of political science.

## VOCABULARY

**Study these words to enhance your learning success in this section.**

**allocation** (al’ u kā shun). Allotment or distribution, especially by a government.

**empiricism** (em pir’ u siz um). The idea that knowledge is based upon the physical senses.

**epistemology** (i pis’ tu mol’ u jē). The study of how we know what we know.

**fideism** (fī’ dē iz um). The idea that knowledge is based upon faith.

**politics** (pol’ u tiks). The process of governing; the making of rules for a group or nation.

**rationalism** (rash’ u nu liz um). The idea that knowledge is based upon logical human thought.

**theorist** (thē’ ur ist). A thinker.

**Note:** All vocabulary words in this LIFE PAC appear in **boldface** print the first time they are used. If you are not sure of the meaning when you are reading, study the definitions given.

**Pronunciation Key:** hat, āge, cāre, fār; let, ēqual, tērm; it, īce; hot, ōpen, ōrder; oil; out; cup, pūt, rüle; child; long; thin; /ʃh/ for then; /zh/ for measure; /u/ represents /a/ in about, /e/ in taken, /i/ in pencil, /o/ in lemon, and /u/ in circus.

## AREAS OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Even though political science is limited to the study of the political aspects of man's culture, this area for study is very wide. Because of the great amount of political knowledge available, most political scientists study only small special areas. Like the historian who studies only the history of England or the sociologist who specializes in the behavior of disadvantaged groups, the modern political scientist chooses an area small enough for him to study in depth. Although these areas of specialized study are many, they can be grouped for our purposes into three main categories: political theory, comparative government, and **epistemology**. All of these categories overlap so much that a political scientist must have at least some knowledge in each of them. His interests cannot be so specialized that he excludes associated areas of **politics** from his studies.

**Political theory.** The first of these general categories, political theory, has as a central concern the philosophical basis of man's systems of government. A political **theorist** may ask basic questions about how governments are formed and where the leaders in a government obtain their power. He could be told that a ruler's power is a grant from God, like the anointing of David by Samuel, or that the power of the leader is part of a contract made among the citizens of a nation. A political thinker or theorist may also seek to know about political alternatives within a group. He could ask what would happen if the people of a group no longer accepted the form of government under which they have been living.

Political theory is concerned with how man forms and views his governments. Political

theory also includes the study of the history of man's thoughts about the various governments that have existed and the relationship of the rules of a government to the rights of an individual under that government. Much of the way in which modern nations are governed is based on the thoughts of political thinkers who lived as long ago as two thousand years. Because these ideas are still accepted and are passed from one theorist to another so often, they are generally referred to as the tradition of Western political thought.

**Comparative government.** Comparative government is the study of the ways in which governments work. Comparative government includes the descriptions of the operations within nations, the process of politics in these nations, and the political institutions that help organize a nation. These studies have become so detailed that some political scientists refer to comparative government as the study of the "machinery of government."

Some specific studies in comparative government include political parties and elections, various governments of the world (of which United States government is one such study), and international relations, the study of how nations interact with each other. A political scientist interested in comparative government could also study the political behaviors or cultures of groups within a nation. He may want to discover where these citizens get their political beliefs and why they act as they do toward their government. A final area of study within comparative government is public administration. Public administration is the method of actually operating government and public institutions.



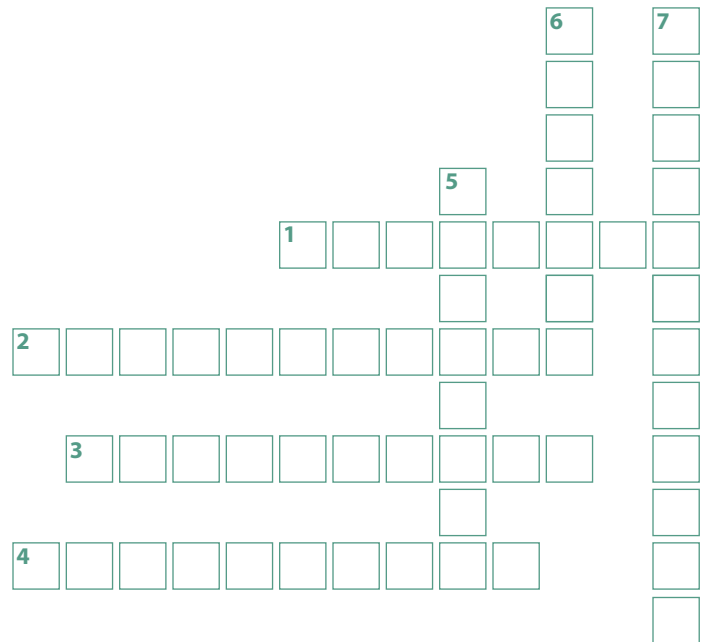
### Complete the vocabulary crossword.

#### 1.1 ACROSS

1. a thinker
2. the idea that knowledge is based on logical human thought
3. allotment or distribution, especially by a government
4. the idea that knowledge is based upon the physical senses

#### DOWN

5. the process of governing; the making of rules for a group or nation
6. the idea that knowledge is based on faith
7. the study of how we know what we know



### Complete these statements.

- 1.2 Two things that all organized groups have in common are a. \_\_\_\_\_ and b. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 1.3 The process of man governing of himself is called \_\_\_\_\_.
- 1.4 The rules of a group are based upon the a. \_\_\_\_\_ or b. \_\_\_\_\_ beliefs of the majority of that group.
- 1.5 Two of the general categories of political science are a. \_\_\_\_\_ and b. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 1.6 International relations is the study of how \_\_\_\_\_ interact with each other.



**Epistemology.** The final category of study in political science is called epistemology. This impressive word, *epistemology*, means *how we know what we know*. All political scientists are concerned with epistemology in their studies, regardless of their specialized interests. Understanding knowledge is important to political science because few things are discussed as much, and with as much emotion, and have as many possible interpretations as politics.

People have always had a concern for the way in which their governments have been

operated. Many people have made statements like “this is the very best form of government,” or “the Republican Party is the party of the rich.” Political scientists need to know the nature of the evidence that supports these types of statements. Therefore, the political scientist not only asks questions about how nations and the people in them behave, but he also seeks to understand the basis for the political opinions of the people. He is concerned about the type of evidence to which people refer in answer to his questions about their political behavior.



### Complete these statements.

- 1.7 Political scientists are concerned with the \_\_\_\_\_ of nations and people.
- 1.8 Political scientists seek to understand the basis for the political \_\_\_\_\_ of the people.
- 1.9 \_\_\_\_\_ is the study of how we know what we know.
- 1.10 If a political scientist is told, “Democrats are wealthy,” he would look for \_\_\_\_\_ that supports that statement.

## WAYS OF KNOWING

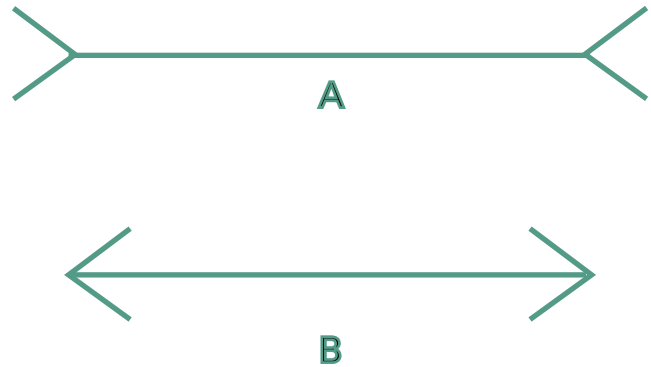
Between the time that you were born and now, you have collected many facts about how the world in which you live works. You have learned about how the people around you behave and what to expect from the world around you from day to day. All of the facts that you know, when added together, make up the body of knowledge you use to make decisions about how to conduct your life. Not all of the facts that you know come from the same source, and not all of them have the same value to you as far as being useful, correct, or even believable.

Discovering how people know what they know is one of the first steps in understanding the methods that political scientists use in studying governments. Scholars refer to three general

ways in which people can know things: **empiricism**, **rationalism**, and **fideism**.

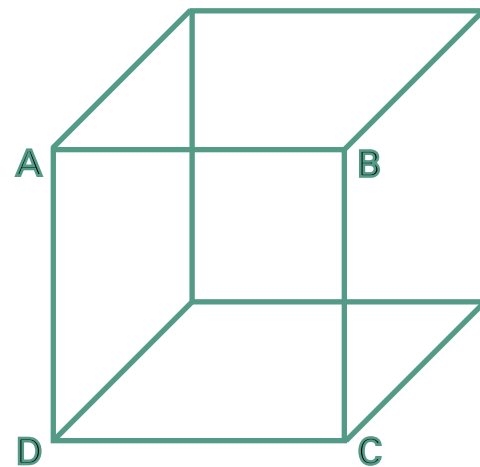
**Empiricism.** The way of knowing that relies on our physical senses is called empiricism. We continually experience our world through our senses. Through sight, touch, and smell children first learn what a flower is. Through sight and sound they also learn what an airplane is and what it does. By seeing, touching, or smelling many flowers, a child will learn a whole class of things that fit the word *flower*. In the same way, a child learns about *airplane* by seeing and hearing many airplanes. Although a single flower or airplane may be different from any other the child has experienced, he will know empirically to what class they belong.

Our sense experiences provide us with most of the knowledge we use in daily life. However, empirical knowledge is not always reliable. We can be tricked by our senses into believing what is not really so. Look at the two lines A and B to the right, without measuring them decide which of them is longer.



Both of these lines are the same length. However, without using a ruler to extend your empirical knowledge, your sense of sight will probably not provide an accurate measurement.

Now look at the first box and decide which way the front (the side toward you) faces. Does it have the corners ABCD toward you?

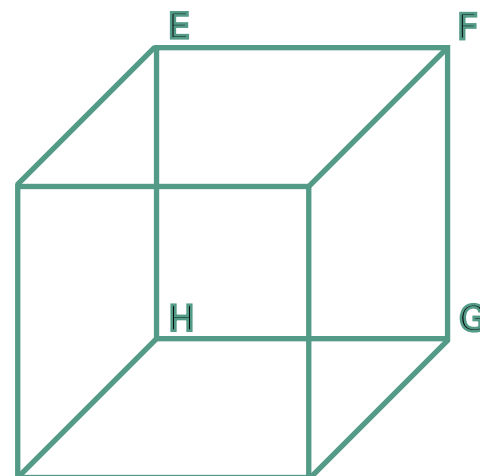


Perhaps the second box is facing toward you with the corners EFGH in front.

As you can see, reality is not always as it seems to be. The world has many mirages, like those you see on hot pavement in the summer. This mirage consists in seeing that the road at a distance is full of water. Empirically, you cannot tell that the mirage is being caused by rising heat.

Empirical knowledge is sometimes misleading. In the exercise with the sketched box, the position of the observer or the position of the object being observed can affect what we sense. Man's position on the face of the earth led him to believe for thousands of years that the sun really did "rise" in the east and "set" in the west as it circled the earth.

The illustrations at the top of the next page show two different views of the same thing. As you can see, large insects are crawling up each side of the trunk. However, if you were to change your position and view the other side of the tree, you would find that these "insects" are the claws of a bear climbing the tree.



Empirical knowledge may be defended on the grounds that we would not be misled if we had all of the facts. However, empirical knowledge alone is not sufficient to allow people to study thoroughly or to function adequately in the world.



**Rationalism.** A second source of knowledge is logical thinking, or rationalism. Rationalism emphasizes the ideas of the mind more than the knowledge that we gain by physical senses. Because of rational thought, we accept things because they seem to fit what we already know. Rational knowledge is very much like completing a jigsaw puzzle—the last few pieces fit easily into the established picture.

Look at the following series of letters and decide what they stand for. Fill in the final two letters in this series.

$a \times a = a$	$b \times a = b$	$c \times a = c$
$a \times b = b$	$b \times b = d$	$c \times b = \underline{\quad}$
$a \times c = c$	$b \times c = f$	$c \times c = \underline{\quad}$

You probably discovered that these letters are the beginning of the multiplication tables, with letters standing for numbers— $a = 1$ ,  $b = 2$ ,  $c = 3$  and so on. The pattern that was created was reasonable enough that you probably did not need to know the “answers” to the column with the blanks in it. You accepted your conclusions about the letters and what they meant because the letters fit a pattern that you knew.

Look at the following series of letters and fill in the one that is missing:

**S M T W — F S**

The missing letter is T. You probably recognized these letters as being the first letters of the days of the week.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
u	o	u	e	h	r	a
n	n	e	d	u	i	t
d	d	s	n	r	d	u
a	a	d	e	s	a	r
y	y	a	s	d	y	d
		y	d	a		a
			a	y		y
			y			

The answer to this puzzle was not based on empirical knowledge. You used your own sense of sight to the extent that your eyes read the letters. The answer itself was based on rational or logical patterns of thought.

An example of how rationalism is used to understand the world around us can be seen in the question of whether the earth moves around the sun or the sun moves around the earth. If the question is answered only on the basis of empirical knowledge, then we would

know that the sun revolves around the earth. However, this answer is not based on a thorough empirical experience. This question should not have been answered empirically until the first astronaut went into space and observed how the earth moved in relationship to the sun. The question was answered rationally in 1543, more than 400 years before the first man left the face of the earth to go into space. Nicolaus Copernicus described the movements of the planets in relation to the sun long before man could fly in airplanes or even move about in automobiles. Through the use of mathematics (a type of rationalism) and reasoning, Copernicus said that the sun is the center of the solar system and that the planets moved around it.

If used by itself, rational knowledge can lead us to believe things that are really not true, just as empirical thought can. Consider this word problem:

Since 1865, the governments of Mexico and the United States have had an agreement called the *Dead and*

*Misplaced Persons Treaty*. This agreement says that if a natural disaster occurs near the border between the United States and Mexico, the bodies of the victims of the disaster will be buried in the country in which the disaster took place. Pretend that you are the American ambassador to Mexico and you are told that a plane has crashed exactly on the border of the two countries. The choice is yours. Where would you bury the survivors?

If you answered either Mexico or the United States, you would be in error. The problem is a trick, containing incomplete, conflicting, and untrue information. Therefore, any attempt to answer the question based on what was given to you in the problem would have been in error. If either the problem is stated wrongly or decisions are based on incomplete facts about the problem, the answer will be in error. Rationalism by itself is not a sufficient base for knowledge. All our knowledge will result in an incomplete view of the world.



### Write true or false.

- 1.11 \_\_\_\_\_ The three ways in which people can know things are empiricism, rationalism, and fideism.
- 1.12 \_\_\_\_\_ Empiricism relies on our physical senses to tell us things we know.
- 1.13 \_\_\_\_\_ The use of our senses forms the basis for little of the knowledge we most often use.
- 1.14 \_\_\_\_\_ Reality is always what it seems to be.
- 1.15 \_\_\_\_\_ A mirage is a true image that we can use.
- 1.16 \_\_\_\_\_ Empirical knowledge alone is not enough to allow people to function adequately in the world.

**Complete these statements.**

- 1.17** Rationalism emphasizes the idea of the \_\_\_\_\_ more than the knowledge we gain from our physical senses.
- 1.18** The movements of the earth were described by \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 1.19** Through the use of a. \_\_\_\_\_ and b. \_\_\_\_\_ , Copernicus said that the sun was the c. \_\_\_\_\_ of the solar system with the planets moving around it.
- 1.20** Rationalism is not a sufficient base for \_\_\_\_\_ .

**Complete this activity.**

- 1.21** Write a rational puzzle similar to the letter puzzles in the text. When you have finished writing your puzzle, have one of your classmates work it.

**HELPER CHECK**

\_\_\_\_\_ initials

\_\_\_\_\_ date

**Fideism.** Fideism comes from the Latin word meaning *faith* and refers to a way of knowing. This method of knowing is based on our inner feelings. We can know things simply through an act of faith. The belief in a Supreme Being is not based on empirical knowledge because we have never seen God with our physical senses. This belief is also not based on rationalism. Although many people have attempted to prove the existence or nonexistence of God through rational means, the question of God's existence cannot be settled by totally rational means. One simply has faith that God exists. As the Bible says (Hebrews 11:6), "...he that cometh to God must believe that he is...."

Fideism also extends to our emotions, knowing how we feel. For example, we do not need our eyes or our logical thoughts to tell us that we feel love. Our love for others is expressed through what we do, but it is known by how we feel.

Using fideism as the only base for our knowledge about earthly things could be very harmful. A person who has faith in someone and follows his orders could be committing a wrongful act. The appropriateness of an action done at the request of a person will be related to the integrity of that person. A person of high integrity will direct others to do righteous acts; likewise, one of low integrity will lead others to sin.

Also, knowledge based completely on faith can be misleading if the source of the knowledge is false. For example, those who attempt to conduct their lives by reading the horoscope in the daily newspaper are following a false guide. On the other hand, those who conduct their lives by the Scriptures have a sure guide for life (Psalm 119:105): "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." Occasionally, we use each of the three ways of knowing separately; but, more commonly, we use them

in combination. Our rational thoughts, our faith, and our senses work together in gaining knowledge.

If you were visiting a foreign country where all of the traffic lights were white and flashed different symbols instead of the colors red, yellow, and green, you may have a difficult time deciding when to cross the street safely.

If you saw the cars stop at the intersection every time the light marked x was on, you could conclude after watching long enough, that x always means stop. In the same manner, if the cars drove through the intersection when the + light was on, the + would evidently mean go. Your conclusion about what these two traffic signals mean is based on observation of the cars—empirical knowledge. The conclusion that the cars *always* stop on x and *always* go on + is rational knowledge because you have decided that the signals form a pattern which should continue as long as cars, stop lights, and laws continue in that country.

If a very good friend told you that ✱ meant that the cars were supposed to slow down and you believed him, you would then have knowledge based on faith.

The methods of gaining knowledge—empiricism, rationalism, and fideism—have been the basis of political science throughout history. All of these ways of knowing have been used



by political scientists to explain behavior in the world of governments and to *predict* what will happen in the future. The goal of political science is twofold: to explain and to predict.

In the next section of this LIFE PAC, you will learn how political philosophers have used each of these methods of gaining knowledge to explain or to predict political events.



### Complete these activities.

The following statements are based upon empirical knowledge, rational knowledge, or faith. Put *E* for empirical, *R* for rational, or *F* for faith. Some of the statements are based on more than one type of knowledge.

- 1.22 \_\_\_\_\_ When the crosswalk guard says I can cross the street, the cars will stop for me.
- 1.23 \_\_\_\_\_ Plants need water to live.
- 1.24 \_\_\_\_\_ If two times two is four, then two times three is six.
- 1.25 \_\_\_\_\_ If you throw a rock up into the air, it will come down.
- 1.26 \_\_\_\_\_ “My grandfather told me that the Democrats will put the country into debt, and I believe him.”
- 1.27 \_\_\_\_\_ The earth is round.
- 1.28 \_\_\_\_\_ My parents will keep me safe.
- 1.29 \_\_\_\_\_ Birds fly south because the weather is too cold for them in the north.
- 1.30 \_\_\_\_\_ If I study hard enough, then I should get an A.



**Review the material in this section in preparation for the Self Test.** The Self Test will check your mastery of this particular section. The items missed on this Self Test will indicate specific areas where restudy is needed for mastery.

# SELF TEST 1

**Complete these statements** (each answer, 3 points).

- 1.01** All groups have two things in common: a. \_\_\_\_\_ and b. \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 1.02** The rules of groups are based upon the a. \_\_\_\_\_ and b. \_\_\_\_\_ beliefs of the majority of the groups.
- 1.03** Political science is the study of the a. \_\_\_\_\_, b. \_\_\_\_\_, and people who make up a nation.
- 1.04** The process of governing and making rules to live by is called \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 1.05** Knowledge based on the senses is called \_\_\_\_\_ knowledge.
- 1.06** According to Harold Lasswell, \_\_\_\_\_ science is “the study of who gets what, when and how.”

**Write the letter of the correct answer in the blank** (each answer, 2 points).

- 1.07** The goal of political science is \_\_\_\_\_ .  
 a. description and explanation                      b. not usually stated  
 c. rational and empirical                              d. explanation and prediction
- 1.08** “The sky is blue” is a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ statement.  
 a. rational                      b. empirical                      c. faith                      d. nonsense
- 1.09** “The Lord is my shepherd” is a statement based upon \_\_\_\_\_.  
 a. senses                      b. faith                      c. thought                      d. the Old Testament
- 1.010** The study of how government and public institutions are operated is the study of \_\_\_\_\_.  
 a. political theory                      b. empiricism  
 c. public administration                      d. election processes
- 1.011** A political theorist may ask questions about how \_\_\_\_\_.  
 a. thoughts are formed                      b. classes are formed  
 c. theories are formed                      d. governments are formed
- 1.012** “God created the heavens and the earth” is a statement of \_\_\_\_\_.  
 a. source knowledge                      b. faith knowledge  
 c. empirical knowledge                      d. rational knowledge
- 1.013** Epistemology is the study of \_\_\_\_\_.  
 a. political science                      b. philosophy                      c. how we know                      d. rationalism
- 1.014** Which of the following is not included in comparative government? \_\_\_\_\_.  
 a. social customs                      b. political institutions  
 c. governments of the world                      d. political beliefs
- 1.015** “After hours of thought, I have decided that green cows could exist” is a statement of \_\_\_\_\_.  
 a. faith knowledge                      b. empirical knowledge  
 c. rational knowledge                      d. sense knowledge



**Write true or false** (each answer, 1 point).

- 1.016 \_\_\_\_\_ Political science is the study of religious beliefs in a nation.
- 1.017 \_\_\_\_\_ Empirical knowledge is based on the senses.
- 1.018 \_\_\_\_\_ Rational knowledge is based on faith and not on logical thought.
- 1.019 \_\_\_\_\_ Epistemology is the study of how we know what we know.
- 1.020 \_\_\_\_\_ Rationalism is accepting facts as knowledge because they fit like the pieces of a jig-saw puzzle.
- 1.021 \_\_\_\_\_ We cannot be misled by relying on any one of the means of knowledge.
- 1.022 \_\_\_\_\_ Political scientists are not interested in the kind of knowledge on which the answers to questions are based.
- 1.023 \_\_\_\_\_ Copernicus said that the sun was the center of the solar system.
- 1.024 \_\_\_\_\_ The use of our senses forms the basis for little of the knowledge we most often use.

**Complete these statements** (each answer, 3 points).

- 1.025 Knowledge based upon logical thought or patterns is called \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 1.026 \_\_\_\_\_ relies on our physical senses to tell us things we know.
- 1.027 Fideism comes from the Latin root word meaning \_\_\_\_\_ .

50 63	<b>SCORE</b> _____	<b>TEACHER</b> _____	initials	date
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HIS0708 - May '14 Printing

ISBN 978-1-58095-188-3



 **Alpha Omega**  
PUBLICATIONS

804 N. 2nd Ave. E.  
Rock Rapids, IA 51246-1759

800-622-3070  
[www.aop.com](http://www.aop.com)