

AP Comparative Government: Summer Binder Assignment

Welcome to AP Comparative Government! To get ready for the year ahead, you'll create a binder that will serve as your foundation for organizing everything we do. This assignment is designed to help you begin thinking like a political scientist; tracking current events, organizing information by country, and becoming familiar with the world map and political systems.

Your Binder Setup

Set up a physical binder with seven labeled sections in the following order:

1. Introduction
2. United Kingdom
3. Russia
4. China
5. Iran
6. Mexico
7. Nigeria

What to Include

Introduction Section

Key Measurements Page

- Print and complete the measurement definition page.

Each Country Section

For each country section, include the following:

1. Political Map

- Print and include a political map of the country.
- Your map must clearly show:
 - National borders
 - Major cities
 - The capital city

2. Country Overview Page

- Print one overview page for each country.
- DO NOT complete these pages yet.
 - We will fill them out throughout the school year.

3. Current Event Write-Up

- Find one news story for each country from the past 3 months that relates to the country's politics or government.
- Write a half-page response for each article that includes the following:

Part 1: Summary (1–2 paragraphs)

Explain:

- What happened?
- Who is involved?
- Why is this politically significant?

Part 2: Connection to Government (1 paragraph)

Explain:

- What does this story reveal about how this country's government works (or does not work)?
- What type of government system is involved? (democracy, authoritarianism, theocracy, etc.)
- Does this connect to elections, leadership, corruption, laws, protests, civil liberties, international relations, or another political concept?

Part 3: Your Reaction (Optional but Encouraged)

Reflect on:

- What do you think about this story?
- Did anything surprise, frustrate, or inspire you?

For each article, be sure to include:

- Article title
- News source
- Author (if listed)
- Publication date

Recommended News Sources

Use reputable English-language news sources that focus on international affairs, such as:

BBC
Reuters
The Economist
Al Jazeera
AP News
The New York Times
The Washington Post
Other reputable sources are also acceptable.

Due Date: First Week of School

Come to class ready to share something interesting you learned from your research!

Recommended Reading/Viewing

Below are some *books* and films that will help give you insight about our countries. *Note: some books/films contain advanced topics/themes.*

UK

(F) The Crown

(F) The Queen

(F) The King's Speech

(F) Braveheart

(F) Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy

(NF) *Say Nothing: A True Story of Murder and Memory in Northern Ireland*

China

(NF) One Child Nation

(NF) *Red Scarf Girl*

(F) *Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China*

(F) *Freedom Swimmer*

Mexico

(F) *La Silla del Águila*

(NF) *Opening Mexico*

(NF) Cartel Land

(F) Radical

Russia

(F) Death of Stalin

(F) Enemy at the Gates

(F) Chernobyl

(NF) Navalny

(NF) Icarus

(F) *A Gentleman in Moscow*

(NF) *Red Notice: A True Story of High Finance, Murder and One Man's Fight for Justice*

(NF) *The Future Is History: How Totalitarianism Reclaimed Russia*

Nigeria

(F) Far From Home

(F) *Things Fall Apart*

(F) *Half of a Yellow Sun*

Iran

(F) Argo

(NF) Jafar Panahi's Taxi

(F) *The Stationary Shop*

(F) *Persepolis*

(F) *Reading Lolita in Tehran*

(NF) *Black Wave: Saudi Arabia, Iran and the Rivalry That Unraveled the Middle East*

AP6 Country Overview Template

Country: _____

Basic Information

Indicator	Source	Value
Capital	CIA Factbook	_____
Population	CIA Factbook	_____
Territory / Area (sq km)	CIA Factbook	_____
Government Type	CIA Factbook	_____
GDP (USD)	CIA Factbook	_____
GDP per capita (USD)	CIA Factbook	_____
Population Below Poverty Line (%)	CIA Factbook	_____
Gini Index	World Bank	_____
HDI + Rank	UNDP	_____
Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)	Transparency Intl	_____
Infant Mortality Rate (per 1,000)	CIA Factbook	_____
Life Expectancy at Birth	CIA Factbook	_____
Literacy Rate (%)	CIA Factbook	_____

Political Structure

- Head of State: _____
 - Head of Government (if different): _____
 - How leaders are selected: _____
 - Legislative Branch: _____
(Name & unicameral or bicameral)
 - Judicial Branch: _____
(Is it independent? Major court?)
 - Major Political Parties: _____
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Civil and Political Freedoms

Indicator	Source	Value
Political Rights Score (1-40)	Freedom House	_____
Civil Liberties Score (1-60)	Freedom House	_____
Overall Score + Freedom House Status	Freedom House	_____

Key Measurements

Measurement	Definition/ What does it measure?
Economic Indicators	
GDP <i>Gross Domestic Product</i>	
GDP Per Capita	
PPP <i>Purchasing Power Parity</i>	
Inflation Rate	
Unemployment Rate	
Development Indicators	
HDI <i>Human Development Index</i>	
CPI <i>Corruption Perception Index</i>	
GINI Index	
Poverty Rate	
Life Expectancy	
Infant Mortality Rate	
Political Indicators	
Voter Turnout	