



UNIVERSITY INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE
Making a World of Difference

CURRENT ISSUES & EVENTS

 @UILCIANDE

2023 • INVITATIONAL A

Dec. 1, 2022



President Joe Biden, joined by Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and Chairman of the House Democratic Caucus Hakeem Jeffries (D-N.Y.), participates in a Q&A at the House Democratic Caucus Issues Conference, Friday, March 11, 2022, at the Hilton Philadelphia Penn's Landing in Philadelphia. Official White House photo by Adam Schultz



House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy speaking with supporters of Donald Trump at a "Make America Great Again" campaign rally at Phoenix Goodyear Airport in Goodyear, Arizona, Oct. 28, 2020. Photo by Gage Skidmore

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INVITATIONAL A • 2023

- 1. Signaling major improvements in public health that have lowered the risk of dying and have increased life expectancy, according to the United Nations, the global population reached what on Nov. 15, 2022?**
 - a. 8 million
 - b. 8 billion
 - c. 8 trillion
 - d. 9 billion
- 2. A federal judge ordered three of the country's largest pharmaceutical chains to pay \$650.6 million to two Ohio counties that were found to have been flooded with prescription painkillers. Which was NOT one of the three pharmaceutical chains ordered to pay?**
 - a. CVS
 - b. Walgreens
 - c. Rite Aid
 - d. Walmart
- 3. When the 118th U.S. Congress convened, which parties had control?**
 - a. Republicans controlled the Senate; Democrats controlled the House.
 - b. Democrats controlled the Senate; Republicans controlled the House.
 - c. Democrats controlled both chambers.
 - d. Republicans controlled both chambers.
- 4. The Denver Broncos sold for \$4.65 billion, a record for the most money paid for an American sports franchise, breaking the \$2.35 billion record for the Brooklyn Nets in 2019. Who bought the Broncos?**
 - a. hedge fund manager Steve Cohen
 - b. Joseph Tsai, Taiwanese-born Canadian businessman, lawyer, and philanthropist
 - c. the Walton-Penner family, led by Walmart heir Rob Walton
 - d. Houston businessman Tilman Fertitta
- 5. Europe's largest nuclear power plant has been controlled by Russian forces since early March. What was the name of the plant?**
 - a. Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant
 - b. Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant
 - c. Three Mile Island
 - d. Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant
- 6. Deputy President William Ruto has been elected as the country's next president. Ruto won with 50.49% of the vote, narrowly defeating veteran opposition leader and former Prime Minister Raila Odinga who was contesting his fifth election. Where?**
 - a. Chile
 - b. Syria
 - c. Nigeria
 - d. Kenya

7. **California regulators approved stringent rules that would ban the sale of what by 2035 and set interim targets to phase them out?**
 - a. new gasoline powered cars
 - b. almonds and sugar beets, the two crops that consume the most water
 - c. cows, the farm animal that consumes 11 times as much water as other food sources
 - d. trucks that use diesel fuel, replacing them with trucks that use ethanol or other plant-based fuel

8. **LeBron James signed a two-year, \$97.1 million contract extension with the Los Angeles Lakers, making him the highest-earning player in what sports history?**
 - a. football
 - b. baseball
 - c. soccer
 - d. basketball



9. **An image (above) contained in a court filing by the Department of Justice on Aug. 30, 2022, and redacted in part by the FBI shows a photo of folders that apparently contained top secret and secret documents. Where were the folders, documents and more than 10,000 other government documents found?**
 - a. a White House storage area
 - b. the National Archives
 - c. a public recycling center waiting for disposal
 - d. Donald Trump's Mar-a-Logo estate in Florida

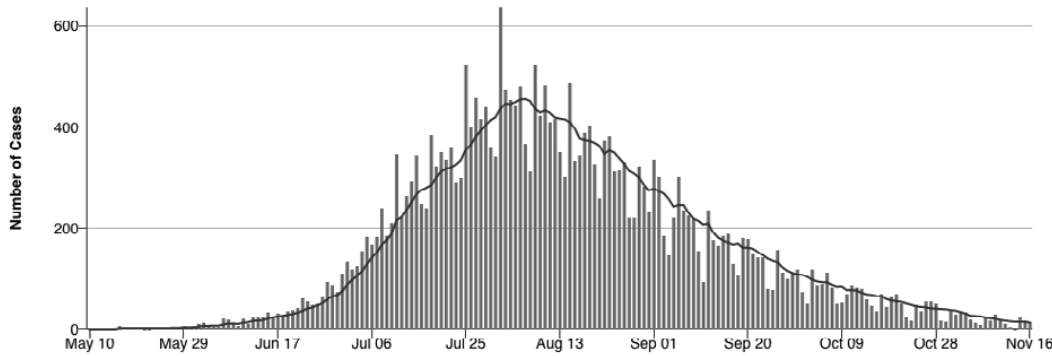
10. **Mary Peltola, a Democrat, won a special House election in Alaska. Which of the following is true of the election?**
 - a. She beat Sarah Palin, a Republican and incumbent.
 - b. She will be the first Alaska native in Congress.
 - c. She beat Don Young, a Republican and incumbent.
 - d. She will serve the remainder of the vacant six-year term.

11. **It's 110 years old. Still, the only surviving battleship that served in both world wars is undergoing a \$35 million restoration. What ship?**
 - a. the U.S.S. Texas
 - b. the U.S.S. Constitution
 - c. the Khufu
 - d. the HMS Diamond Rock

12. **For the first time in 25 years, not a single named tropical storm formed in August in the Atlantic Ocean Basin. What was the first hurricane of the 2022 Atlantic season?**
 - a. Bonnie
 - b. Alex
 - c. Colin
 - d. Danielle

- 13. The last time a public official faced removal from office under Section 3 of the 14th Amendment was in 1869. But in September, a judge removed Couy Griffin from office as a New Mexico county commissioner for his role in what?**
- trying to overthrow the election of Joe Biden
 - attempting to assassinate Argentina's Vice President Christina Fernandez de Kirchner
 - founding the group Proud Boys
 - participating in the Jan. 6 insurrection on the U.S. capitol
- 14. The parents of a child who was killed in the Uvalde school shooting met with Republican U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, and asked him to support a federal ban on semi-automatic weapons. The senator declined and instead suggested what?**
- increasing law enforcement presence on school campuses
 - arming each and every teacher with a handgun or semi-automatic weapon
 - requiring "TSA-level" security at every school entrance
 - banning all weapons including handguns and semi-automatic weapons for individuals other than certified law-enforcement agents
- 15. After Boris Johnson was forced to step down, Liz Truss took over as what?**
- prime minister of the United Kingdom
 - queen of England
 - secretary of the United Nations
 - prime minister of Sweden
- 16. After Queen Elizabeth died, her pets were taken in by Prince Andrew and Sarah, Duchess of York. What pets?**
- English Springer Spaniels
 - English Cocker Spaniels
 - Welsh Corgis
 - Yorkshire Terriers
- 17. The FDA issued a warning in response to a TikTok video challenge. What were they warning people not to do?**
- sniff cinnamon
 - cook chicken in NyQuil
 - drink a gallon of milk all at one sitting
 - pour a bucket of ice water their head
- 18. NASA's DART spacecraft collided with a small asteroid Sept. 26. Why?**
- Neither the spacecraft nor anyone on Earth detected the asteroid.
 - The asteroid was pulled off course by a mysterious gravitational force and now may collide with earth.
 - NASA said there was a "programming error" and instead of landing on the rock, the spacecraft collided with it at 14,000 miles per hour.
 - It was intentional. NASA was testing the viability of an asteroid deflection concept.
- 19. After months of legal wrangling and public acrimony, Elon Musk closed a \$44 billion deal. He subsequently fired the top executives, including CEO Parag Agrawal, of what company?**
- Tesla
 - Space X
 - Neuralink
 - Twitter

- 20. Texas passed a major milestone in September 2022 when the U.S. Census Bureau said what group now made up 40.2% of the population?**
- Blacks, while Hispanics were almost tied at 39.4%
 - whites, who went below 50% for the first time since the state became a state
 - Hispanics, while whites were at 39.4%
 - Hispanics, while Blacks were almost tied at 39.4%
- 21. The U.S. Postal Service announced that a first-class stamp would cost how much, effective Jan. 22, 2023?**
- 53¢
 - 63¢
 - 73¢
 - 83¢
- 22. In a ceremony set to follow the traditional pageantry used for anointing monarchs over the last 1,000 years, Buckingham Palace announced that who will be crowned at London's Westminster Abbey in May?**
- Charles III, Prince of Edinburgh
 - Archbishop of Canterbury
 - William, Prince of Wales
 - Harry, Duke of Sussex
- 23. A proposal to do what would see New Zealand farmers lead the world in reducing emissions and help give New Zealand a competitive advantage in green conscious global marketplace according to Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern?**
- tax food for cattle including hay
 - make customers pay more for purchasing beef and less for animals that don't give off greenhouse gasses
 - lower taxes and fees on plants to encourage people to become vegetarians at least part of the time
 - make farmer's pay for the gas emissions of their livestock
- 24. In new guidelines that highlight the ongoing mental health crisis among American youth, a panel of medical experts recommended for the first time that primary care doctors screen all children ages 8 to 18 for what?**
- suicidal thoughts
 - depression
 - anxiety
 - COVID-19 antibodies
- 25. Anna May Wong, a Hollywood film star who had a trailblazing career, will be the first Asian American featured on U.S. currency. Her face will appear on which currency?**
- the quarter
 - the penny
 - the \$100 bill
 - Bitcoin
- 26. Oregon voters in November voted whether Oregon would be the first in the nation to amend its constitution to declare that what is a fundamental human right?**
- marijuana usage
 - abortion
 - affordable health care
 - voting



27. The chart above represents cases of what disease in the U.S. as reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the fall of 2022?
- Smallpox
 - Polio
 - Monkeypox
 - COVID-19
28. The U.S. Supreme Court denied a petition by citizens of what U.S. territory who were living in Utah and who said their designation as U.S. nationals rather than full citizens violates the U.S. Constitution by denying them key rights such as the ability to vote, to run for office and to hold certain jobs?
- Puerto Rico
 - Guam
 - Virgin Islands
 - American Samoa
29. The animal's population in Antarctica is in significant danger due to diminishing sea ice levels and is being granted endangered species protections. What animal?
- blue whale
 - emperor penguins
 - leopard seal
 - sooty albatross
30. It reached an average area of 8.9 million square miles between Sept. 7 and Oct. 13 – slightly smaller than last year and continuing an overall shrinking trend. What?
- Montana's Blackfoot Glacier
 - an asteroid loosely orbiting Earth and skimming the atmosphere
 - the ozone hole
 - an oil spill in the Gulf resulting from a leaking pipeline that can't be fixed
31. Texas Gov. Greg Abbott arranged for free rides for people to travel to cities like New York, Washington, D.C., and Chicago. These rides have cost the state \$12.7 million so far, reports said in late August. Who gets the "free benefit"?
- public employees who have completed more than 10 years of state service
 - military veterans
 - migrants
 - tourists who want to spend entertainment monies out of state

- 32. The mega-star's 10th studio album was released at midnight on Friday, Oct. 21, 2022. Her 10th album broke the Spotify record for the most-streamed album in a single day. Who released the album?**
- Beyoncé
 - Ariana Grande
 - Selena Gomez
 - Taylor Swift
- 33. On Oct. 2, Ketanji Brown Jackson took office after a formal investiture ceremony the previous Friday. As she took office, what "first" did she make?**
- She was the first African American woman to sit on the U.S. Supreme Court.
 - She was the first Black woman to become governor of Georgia.
 - She was the first person of color to win a Nobel Peace Prize.
 - She was the first Black woman to travel into space.
- 34. Civil rights advocates say Texas Senate Bill 797 'imposes religion' as new law. Still, the law now requires public campuses to display any donated items bearing what phrase?**
- "Remember the Alamo"
 - "Don't Tread On Me"
 - "An Appeal to Heaven"
 - "In God We Trust"
- 35. Chief Justice John Roberts got into an argument with an attorney representing Harvard who compared oboe players to people of color when the U.S. Supreme Court heard a case challenging affirmative action in admissions policies at Harvard and which other university?**
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
 - University of Texas at Austin
 - University of California, Davis
 - University of Michigan
- 36. According to the United Nations, 95% of what country's residents were going hungry last fall, in a food crisis exacerbated by the Biden administration's decision to freeze what country's central bank's assets?**
- Russia
 - Afghanistan
 - Venezuela
 - Syria
- 37. Voters in California, Michigan and Vermont approved ballot measures enshrining protections for what in their state constitutions?**
- school safety
 - recreational marijuana use
 - abortion
 - the right to carry a gun openly
- 38. In November, the speaker of the house announced she would step down from her House leadership after leading the Democrats for nearly 20 years. Who?**
- Nancy Pelosi
 - Hillary Clinton
 - Dianne Feinstein
 - Cynthia Lummis

- 39. Having led the agency for 38 years and advised seven presidents, Dr. Anthony Fauci, 81, the highest paid out of all 4 million federal employees, stepped down from which federal agency to pursue his “next chapter”?**
- National Institutes of Health
 - National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
 - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
 - Centers for Disease Control
- 40. Having defeated TV celebrity Dr. Mehmet Oz and with spending approaching \$375 million, John Fetterman won the Senate race in what state?**
- Pennsylvania
 - Georgia
 - California
 - Arizona

THE ESSAY

NOTE: *Contestants who do not write an essay will be disqualified.* Essay length is not a major grading factor as long as the essay is substantial and demonstrates a sincere effort to discuss the assigned topic. Cover as many corners of the issue as practical, including historical, political, economic, social and cultural, when relevant. Avoid including your personal opinions, as more than enough information on the subject has been published.

A focused, concise and specific essay beats a vague and rambling essay.

PROMPT

Pre-election polls had many expecting a nationwide “red wave” of Republican victories, with voters blaming President Biden and the Democrats for the economic pain brought by surging inflation. But that “red wave” didn’t happen.

Discuss some specific issues leading up to the November midterm election as well as outcomes and surprises of the elections in Texas and other states.

DO NOT DISTRIBUTE TO STUDENTS BEFORE OR DURING THE CONTEST!

ANSWER KEY

ESSAY PROMPT

Pre-election polls had many expecting a nationwide “red wave” of Republican victories, with voters blaming President Biden and the Democrats for the economic pain brought by surging inflation. But that “red wave” didn’t happen.

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**POTENTIAL DISCUSSION POINTS PREPARED Dec. 1, 2022
might include, but should not be limited to...**

- | | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| 1. B | 21. B | |
| 2. C | 22. A | • <i>Election</i> — There were no significant disruptions at polling places as conspiracy theorists warned. Some pundits viewed this as a “return to normalcy” and expressed a sigh of relief. |
| 3. B | 23. D | • <i>Key issues</i> — Exit polls nationwide showed that the percentage of people who said inflation and abortion were key was nearly equal. In swing states like Michigan, voters cited abortion (45%) over inflation (29%) as a top concern in exit polling. Immigration and democracy itself were other issues voters noted. |
| 4. C | 24. C | • <i>Supreme Court and abortion</i> — “The 2022 midterm election was expected to be a referendum on Joe Biden. It’s closer to say it was a referendum on the Supreme Court, and the Supreme Court lost,” said William Galston, a liberal political theorist, Brookings Institution senior fellow, and <i>Wall Street Journal</i> columnist. The midterm election was the first since the Supreme Court overturned the constitutional right to an abortion. Since then, 12 states have put in place total bans on the procedure and other states have enacted restrictions. In the Nov. 8 election, voters in California, Michigan and Vermont approved state constitutional protections for abortion |
| 5. B | 25. A | • <i>Inflation</i> — With nearly one-third of midterm election voters indicating inflation was their top campaign concern this year, attention now turns to what the new political alignment in Washington will mean for tackling the issue. The annual inflation rate for the U.S. is 7.7% for the 12 months ended October of 2022 after rising 8.2% previously, according to U.S. Labor Department data published Nov. 10. |
| 6. D | 26. C | • <i>Gas prices</i> — This year’s turbulent prices — the national average peaked at over \$5 in June, tumbled into September, then leveled off — have offered a real-time demonstration of what many researchers have found. Gas prices can affect consumer sentiment and presidential approval ratings (never mind that presidents typically have little control over gas prices). Biden’s approval rating was 39% around election time. |
| 7. A | 27. C | • <i>Climate change</i> — Climate change didn’t influence the campaigns in the same way that the economy and reproductive rights did. It hardly made headlines. |
| 8. D | 28. D | • <i>Texas governor’s race</i> — Republicans once again won top statewide seats in the midterm election. Texas Gov. Greg Abbott will serve a third term after defeating Democratic challenger Beto O’Rourke in one of the most polarizing and expensive races in Texas political history. O’Rourke found himself bumping into the ideology of the Democrats in Washington, who presented themselves as maybe too liberal for the rest of the country, especially for Texas. His political future remains uncertain. |
| 9. D | 29. B | • <i>Texas leadership</i> — In addition, Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, the incumbent, won as did Attorney General Ken Paxton. |
| 10. B | 30. C | • <i>Texas representation in Congress</i> — The Lone Star State sent 25 Republicans and 13 Democrats to Washington, D.C., in January. |
| 11. A | 31. C | • <i>Georgia governor</i> — Gov. Brian Kemp, a Republican who refused to help overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election in Georgia, with 53.4% of the vote beat Stacey Abrams, a Democrat he also narrowly defeated four years ago. |
| 12. D | 32. D | • <i>Pennsylvania senator</i> — Democrat John Fetterman won Pennsylvania’s pivotal race for U.S. Senate, flipping a Republican-held seat as he recovered from a stroke during the bare-knuckled campaign. Fetterman defeated Dr. Mehmet Oz, the smooth-talking and wealthy heart surgeon-turned-TV celebrity who had just moved to the presidential battleground state to run for Senate. |
| 13. D | 33. A | • <i>Trump</i> — Former President Donald Trump announced his intention to run for election in 2024 only a few days after the midterm. |
| 14. A | 34. D | |
| 15. A | 35. A | |
| 16. C | 36. B | |
| 17. B | 37. C | |
| 18. D | 38. A | |
| 19. D | 39. B | |
| 20. C | 40. A | |

CURRENT ISSUES & EVENTS

CONTESTANT ANSWER SHEET

DO NOT write your name or school on this paper. Clearly write the **LETTER** corresponding to the best response to each question in the space below. Each objective question is worth 1 point. Write your response to the essay on the paper provided. The essay is worth as much as 10 points. You have 60 minutes.

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 21. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 22. _____ |
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| 4. _____ | 24. _____ |
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| 16. _____ | 36. _____ |
| 17. _____ | 37. _____ |
| 18. _____ | 38. _____ |
| 19. _____ | 39. _____ |
| 20. _____ | 40. _____ |



FOR JUDGE'S USE

Points from **OBJECTIVE**
questions (each correct
answer counts 1 point) _____

If in the top eight places,
add the points from the
ESSAY question _____

TOTAL POINTS _____

Reminder: Team score is based on the cumulative score of the multiple choice portion of the contest only. Do not count the essay scores toward the team championship.