



## **Essential Questions for Domestic Policy**

1. How should we define the “Common Good,” and how can young people help one another to work for it?
2. What role should the government take in our economy and society: active or passive?
3. How should power and wealth be distributed in our society, and what role should government play in that distribution?
4. Do citizens have a duty to dissent against government policies they consider to be unjust or illegitimate?
5. What human rights should be protected by the government, and which should people be responsible for protecting for themselves?
6. Since patriots put country and the Common Good before self, how can we increase patriotism in our society?
7. How should we balance the need for unity with respect for diversity?
8. How should we balance individual freedoms with society’s need for order and security? In other words, where do your rights end and another person’s begin?
9. How should economic progress be balanced with social justice? Are these two ideas necessarily mutually exclusive?
10. Should government make up for past wrongs, and how can it do so?
11. What philosophical standards should be used to determine right and wrong in American politics and society?
12. How do governments earn and keep legitimacy (respect?)
13. Is democracy compatible with the huge imbalances in wealth that result from our economic system of capitalism?

14. What should the role of advocacy and dissent (protest) be in our society, and how should we view them? Or, when should we participate in them? Which is better?
15. Does – and should – government have a responsibility to provide equal opportunity for all citizens?
16. What kinds of dissent are (and are not) acceptable for groups to use in protecting citizens rights? Is violent, unlawful dissent ever justified?
17. How much influence should religious groups have in determining the decisions our government makes?
18. How should we balance the need for unity with respect for diversity? Should America be the stereotypical melting pot, or a great big tossed salad where each “flavor” is separate with its own taste and identity?



## **Essential Questions for American Foreign Policy**

1. How should power and wealth be distributed among nations?
2. Should the US lean towards passive isolationism, or active interventionism?
3. Should the US lean towards an opportunistic foreign policy based on power, or towards a principled foreign policy?
4. What should be the primary determinant (motivator) of US foreign policy goals: Our national self-interest or the “interests” of the entire world?
5. Under what circumstances should the US feel justified attacking and waging war on other nations? (Consider just war theory.)
6. What philosophical standards should be used to determine “right” and “wrong” in American foreign policy?
7. How should the US government balance its duty to serve the economic interests of its citizens with its moral responsibility to act decently in the world?
8. Is the United Nations good or bad for US interests?
9. Does the US have an ethical responsibility to stay in the UN?
10. How much dissent should the US allow in times of war?
11. How should we balance the need for security (from terrorists, etc.) and stability at home with the need to protect constitutional civil liberties?
12. What are the dangers of appeasement – of letting other nations off the hook when they violate international law?
13. Who produces propaganda in America and how can the public avoid being manipulated by it?