

The Responsible Journalist
Quiz/exam questions bank
Chapter 1

True/False instructions: Please circle the correct answer.

1. The watchdog function of the press refers to the idea that journalists should keep an eye on the powerful. (True or False) Answer: True
2. The news media have a duty to contribute to citizens' self-governance by helping to inform the people. (True or False) Answer: True
3. The term *checks and balances* refers to the duty of journalists to keep track of their expenses. (True or False) Answer: False

Multiple choice instructions: Please circle the correct answer.

4. Which of the following best describes excellent journalism? Answer: A
 - a. It provides well-researched, meticulously reported facts attributed to credible sources, and it's useful, interesting and compelling.
 - b. It emphasizes getting information out first—before the competition—and it provides well-researched, meticulously reported facts whenever possible.
 - c. It emphasizes interacting with the audience, and it provides well-researched, meticulously reported facts whenever possible.
 - d. It emphasizes the entertainment value of the story, and it provides well-researched, meticulously reported facts whenever possible.
5. The founders of the U.S. government thought which of the following were true about citizens? Answer: B
 - a. While people sometimes make the best choices for themselves, they mostly do not because humans are not rational creatures.
 - b. People are capable of reason.
 - c. People are followers, so they need a leader to herd them.
 - d. People should be allowed to criticize the government, but if someone's ideas are hateful or bigoted, those ideas should be censored by Congress.
6. Which of the following best describes the Libertarian Theory of the Press? Answer: B
 - a. This theory says the press's function is to support the Libertarian Party.
 - b. This theory says the press's function is to monitor the government, keeping an eye on those in power.
 - c. Both A and B
 - d. Neither A nor B
7. Which of the following describes how journalists can serve the public? Answer: D
 - a. They provide access to ideas.
 - b. They evaluate evidence.

- c. They assess the credibility of sources.
- d. All of the above

Short answer instructions: In three or four sentences, please answer the following questions.

8. Please define the following term: “watchdog function”

Answer: The term refers to the idea that one of the duties of the news media is to keep an eye on the powerful, including governments and corporations. The news media should serve as a watchdog, guarding the rights of the citizenry from intrusions by the powerful. It is one of the ways that journalists can serve the public.

9. Please define the following term: “prior restraint”

Answer: The term refers to the government’s censoring what the news media can publish before the fact of publication. This relates to where Chapter 1 talks about the First Amendment. The First Amendment says that Congress can’t make a law abridging the freedom of the press. Prior restraint would abridge the freedom of the press.

10. Please list three ways that journalists can fulfill their public duty.

Answer: They can provide access to ideas; evaluate evidence; assess the credibility of sources; distinguish between fact and opinion; and push decision makers toward honest debate.

Long answer instructions: In 10 to 12 sentences, please answer the following question.

11. Think about the First Amendment, the watchdog function of the news media and the duty of the news media to provide information to the audience so it can make informed decisions. How are these ideals related?

Answer: A society that values an informed populace making decisions about self-governance requires some mechanism for getting unfettered information relevant to those decisions. The First Amendment is that mechanism: it frees journalists to investigate and report. The watchdog function relates to what they investigate and report—the activities of government and other powerful people and institutions. This is how freedom of the press allows quality information to be available to the citizenry so they can make informed choices about self-governance.