

Vermont Poll 2008

Civics I.Q. Frequency Report

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The 2008 Vermont Poll included seven questions to gauge Vermonters' level of understanding about civic structure in Vermont. Here are the results from the 645 respondents.

Table 1. Listen to the following options and tell me which number most closely matches the percent of Vermont's towns and cities with less than 2,500 people in the 2000 Census?

	Frequency	Percent
10%	26	4.4
25%	131	22.0
50%	164	27.6
(Correct) 70%	194	32.6
90%	80	13.4
Total	595	100.0

Table 2. Which of the following numbers most closely matches the average date of incorporation for Vermont's 246 towns and cities?

	Frequency	Percent
1675	14	2.5
1710	66	11.9
(Correct) 1780	296	53.3
1820	127	22.9
1860	52	9.4
Total	555	100.0

Table 3. Which of the following numbers most closely matches the total number of all volunteer and paid LOCAL officials in Vermont?

	Frequency	Percent
2,500	60	10.4
5,000	125	21.7
(Correct) 10,000	164	28.5
25,000	150	26.0
50,000	77	13.4
Total	576	100.0

Table 4. Please try to name the towns found at each of the four corners of Vermont.

	Frequency	Percent
All four correct (Alburgh/ Canaan/ Pownal/ Vernon)	7	1.6
Three correct	13	2.9
Two correct	29	6.5
One correct	109	24.3
None correct	290	64.7
Total	448	100.0

(Don't know or refused: 186)

Table 5. Nationally, our division of power in the United States consists of the Executive, Judicial and Legislative branches of government. What boards, committees or officials in your town would be examples of these branches on a local level?

Please give me a local example of the Executive branch.

	Frequency	Percent
Selectboard/ city council/ trustees	198	39.3
(Correct) Mayor/ town manager/ city manager	201	39.8
(Correct) Town clerk	29	5.8
Governor	23	4.6
Chair of local board	12	2.4
School board	6	1.2
Other	35	6.9
Total	504	100.0

Table 6. Please give me a local example of the Judicial branch.

	Frequency	Percent
Court	144	32.5
Judge	81	18.3
Police/ constable/ sheriff	78	17.6
(Correct) Board of civil authority/ Justice of the peace	47	10.6
(Correct) Selectboard/ city council/ planning/ zoning/ school board	46	10.4
State/ district attorney	10	2.2
Town clerk/ administrator	8	1.8
City/ town attorney	7	1.6
Other	22	5.0
Total	443	100

Table 7. Please give me a local example of the Legislative branch.

	Frequency	Percent
(Correct) Selectboard/ city council/ trustees	219	45.4
State representative or senator	154	31.9
(Correct) Residents/ Town Meeting	28	5.8
Planning board	12	2.4
Aldermen	9	1.9
Town clerk/ administrator	9	1.9
Development review/ zoning boards	7	1.5
School board	7	1.5
Mayor	7	1.5
Other	30	6.2
Total	482	100

Methodology – Vermonter Poll I

The data used in this report was collected by the Center for Rural Studies at the University of Vermont as part of the annual Vermonter Poll. The survey was conducted between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. beginning on February 19, 2008 and ending on February 25, 2008. The telephone polling was conducted from the University of Vermont using computer-aided telephone interviewing (CATI). The sample for the poll was drawn using a simple random sample of telephone exchanges in the state of Vermont as the sampling frame. Only Vermont residents over the age of eighteen were interviewed. The poll included questions on a variety of issues related to public policy in the state of Vermont. There were 645 respondents to the 2008 Vermonter Poll (Version I). The results based on a group of this size have a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percent at a confidence interval of 95 percent.