

Federalists v. Anti-Federalists

Overview

In this lesson, students will explore the Articles of Confederation and the Articles' influence in revising the Constitution of 1787. Students will experience the sentiments of Federalists and Anti-Federalists by participating in a partner debate as either North Carolina Federalist James Iredell or Anti-Federalist Willie Jones.

Grade

8

Essential Questions

- What is a constitution?
- What is a republic?
- What was the purpose of individual states creating constitutions?
- What was the Articles of Confederation?
- How was state and national power divided under the Articles of Confederation?
- What was the purpose of the Constitutional Convention of 1787?
- How was state and national power divided under the Constitution of 1787?
- How do Federalists and Anti-Federalists compare and contrast to one another?
- Why did North Carolina refuse to ratify the Constitution of 1787?
- What was the purpose of the Bill of Rights?

Materials

- Great Seal of the United States, attached
- Textbook
- A New Nation Grows, worksheet and answer key attached
- Daniel Shays's Rebellion, pictures attached
- Constitutional Convention, picture attached
- "Positions on the Constitution" from *We the People* (optional resource), attached
- Federalist and Anti-Federalist Roles, attached

Duration

- 60-90 minutes
- Time can be split over two class periods, in which case the teacher should determine at what point in the lesson to break.

Procedure

Day 1

The Great Seal of the United States

1. As a warm-up, project the attached *Great Seal of the United States* and discuss:
 - What symbols do you see here? What might they represent?
 - Why do you think an eagle was used on the Great Seal? Why do you think its wings are outstretched?
 - What do the words "E Pluribus Unum" translate to? ("Out of Many, One") What does this motto refer to?
 - What items do you note that are represented in the quantity of 13? (stars, stripes, arrows, letters in the motto, olive leaves, olives) Why is the number 13 significant?
 - How does the eagle's shield compare and contrast to the first United States flag?

2. Explain to students that on July 4, 1776, the same day that independence from England was declared by the thirteen colonies, the **Continental Congress** named a committee to design a **Great Seal**, or national emblem, for the country. Ask students:
 - The colonies were officially independent states after July 4, 1776. Why do you believe the states needed a “Great Seal,” or official symbol? (*Similar to other nations, America needed an official symbol of sovereignty to formalize and seal - or sign - international treaties and transactions.*)
 - What other symbols exist for the United States of America? For our state of North Carolina? For our city? For our school?
 - Why do you think symbols are so widely used?
3. Explain that it took six years and three committees (the first of which included **Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and John Adams**) in order for the Continental Congress to agree on a design. The Great Seal was finally made public in 1782!

Setting Up State and National Governments

4. Explain to students that one year after the **Declaration of Independence** was issued and the **Great Seal** was being decided upon, Congress asked states to set up their own governments. By 1780, all of the 13 states had drafted their own **constitutions**. Discuss:
 - What is a constitution? Why did each state need one? (*Facilitate answers such as: constitutions are written plans of government that declare what can and cannot be done, as well as what rights citizens should have; state constitutions gave the power of the government to the people.*)
5. Though the 13 states would have a certain amount of independent control, it was believed the states would be stronger together. Thus, the 13 states joined together to form the United States of America, which would operate as a **republic**. Ask:
 - What is a republic? (*Discuss with students that a republic is a form of government in which the head of state is not a hereditary monarch (i.e. king or queen) but in which the people (or at least a part of its people) have a voice and impact on its government.*)
 - Why do you think the United States of America organized as a republic, when most countries in 1783 were headed by either a king or queen?
 - What risk did the United States take in choosing to be a republic? Looking back, do you think this was a good decision? Why or why not?
6. While each state worked on its individual Constitution, the **Second Continental Congress** was working on a plan for a national government to link the new republic together. Ask:
 - Why was a national constitution needed? (*Facilitate answers such as: this would explain what the state and national governments could and could not do; this would link all of the states together.*)
 - If you were a member of the Second Continental Congress, what do you feel the national constitution should address and why?

Articles of Confederation

7. Explain that the Second Continental Congress finished a plan for a national government, called the **Articles of Confederation**, on November 15, 1777. Ratified into law in March of 1781, the Articles of Confederation set up a system of government in which power was divided between the national government and the state governments. The articles granted most of the power to the states, giving Congress little power.
8. Hand out the attached worksheet *A New Nation Grows* and tell students they are going to focus on Section I. Either assign a reading on the Articles from the students’ textbook or go over the information verbally. Students should fill out their worksheet as they learn about the Articles of Confederation. Tell them to pay close attention since they will need this information for a fun activity later!

9. When discussing the problems created by the weak national government as outlined in the Articles of Confederation, project the attached image of *Shays' Rebellion* and have students respond:
 - What do you see here? What do you think is happening?
 - Explain to students that in January of 1787, American Revolution veteran **Daniel Shays** lead a revolt against high taxes. Attempting to seize guns stored in Springfield, MA and taking over a courthouse in Massachusetts, the Governor of Massachusetts was faced with the problem of crushing **Shays' Rebellion**. However, when the Governor requested assistance from Congress, they had no power to help.
 - Why could Congress not assist the Governor?
10. Explain that the Continental Congress organized a **Constitutional Convention** to take place in Philadelphia in May, 1787. The purpose of this meeting would be to discuss how to make the national government stronger. So that delegates could “debate their ideas freely,” the discussions were kept secret. After three long, hot months debating and compromising, the delegates were finished in September and ready to send the revised Articles of Confederation - the new Constitution - to the 13 states for approval.
11. With a partner, have students fill out section II and III of their worksheet, using a reading from their textbook or the Internet. Again, remind them that accuracy and understanding is important for their participation in an experiential exercise later in the lesson.
12. Go over the answers from section II and III of the worksheet, ensuring students understand the difference in perspectives of **Federalists** and **Anti-Federalists**. For further exploration of Federalist and Anti-Federalist views, teachers can hand out the attached “Positions on the Constitution” from *We the People*.
13. As a summary of what they have learned, project the attached “Constitutional Convention” image and have students discuss:
 - What do you see here? Describe the people and environmental features.
 - What is the time period of this picture? What evidence makes you think this?
 - Who do you think these people are and why are they gathered?
 - Based on what you have learned about the Constitutional Convention and the debates between Federalists and Anti-Federalists, what emotions do you imagine were experienced in the situation represented in this painting and why?
 - (Point to particular figures or groupings of people in the image.) What do you imagine this man is thinking? What do you imagine these men are discussing?
 - What do you imagine happened when this meeting ended?

James Iredell Debates Willie Jones

14. Divide students into partners. Explain they will explore the differing perspectives of Federalists and Anti-Federalists by participating in an experiential exercise in which they play either North Carolina Federalist **James Iredell** or Anti-Federalist **Willie Jones**. Hand out the attached roles and project/explain the following instructions:
 - Once the Constitution was sent to each of the 13 states for approval, North Carolina’s state convention met in Hillsborough on July 21, 1788 to discuss the new plan for a national government and to decide whether or not to ratify the Constitution. At this convention, James Iredell and Willie Jones lead the debate on whether or not the Constitution created too powerful a central government or not.
 - Assuming the personality of either Iredell or Jones, you will participate in a debate in which you try to convince your opposing partner to ratify or not ratify the Constitution.
 - Read the bio given to you and interpret how your person felt as a Federalist or Anti-Federalist about the Constitution and why. You may also use your book or other classroom resources to further explore the views of Federalists or Anti-Federalists, depending on who you are playing. Also infer what your person’s personality and style of communicating would have been like.

- When you begin your meeting, you will debate and try to convince each other of your views. Each of you will have 3 minutes to introduce yourself to your opponent and state your opinions and reasoning regarding the Constitution. After both of you have had your 3 minutes, you may question each other and debate, with the goal of convincing your partner to change his/her opinion and believe as you do.
 - *Optional:* If students need further assistance with the views of Federalists and Anti-Federalists, provide them with the attached “Positions on the Constitution” from *We the People*.
15. Allow students around 10 minutes to study their bio and prepare for their meeting then allow 10-15 minutes for their partner discussions in character. Circulate and monitor partners as they work to ensure that they are on task while announcing and timing the following:
- 3 min. - Federalist James Iredell
 - 3 min. – Anti-Federalist Willie Jones
 - 10 min.- Open discussion/debate
16. Once sufficient time has passed for the meetings, call the class back together and discuss:
- What was it like participating in that activity?
 - What were the differences in perspectives among Federalists and Anti-Federalists? How did the two of you specifically differ?
 - Was it difficult to convince your partner to agree with you? Why or why not? Was anyone successful in swaying the other person?
 - In actuality, do you agree with the role you played or the role your partner played and why?
 - Why is it important to consider different perspectives?
 - How is understanding the perspectives of the Federalists and Anti-Federalists important for understanding democracy?

The Bill of Rights

17. Explain to students that when the North Carolina convention ended on August 4, 1788, North Carolina’s Anti-Federalists had won. The state decided not to ratify the Constitution because it created too powerful a central government. By the end of July 1788, 11 states had voted to approve the Constitution, with North Carolina and Rhode Island being the only two states rejecting it. Discuss:
- What did it take for North Carolina to finally ratify the Constitution?
 - Do you think North Carolina made the right choice in holding out for the Bill of Rights? Why or why not?
 - Why is the Bill of Rights important to us today?
18. For homework, instruct students to finish sections IV and V of their worksheet.

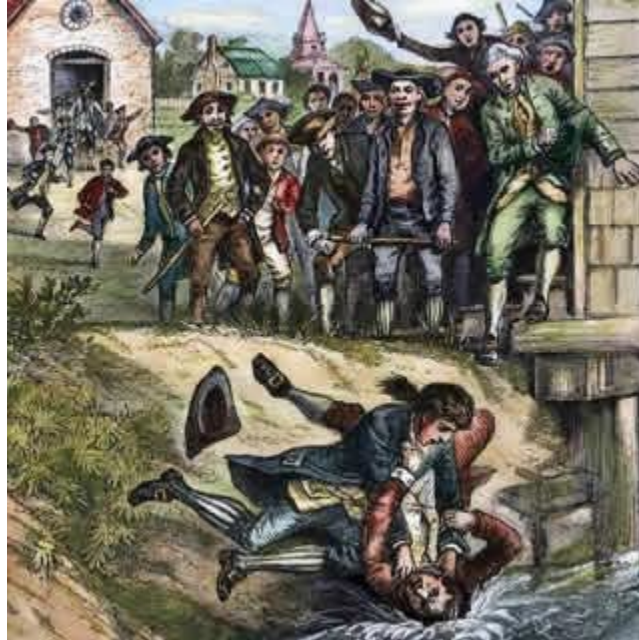
The Great Seal of the United States



The Constitutional Convention



Daniel Shays' Rebellion



Name: _____

A NEW NATION GROWS

I. Continental Congress creates the Articles of Confederation, 1777

Started in 1777 by the Continental Congress to set up a government in which power was divided between the national government (referred to as Congress) and the state government. This was approved by all states by 1781.

- **Granted majority of the power to the states.**
- **Created one body, the Congress, to serve as the national government.**

Powers given to the states:
Powers given to Congress (national):
Problems this division of power created:

George Washington said, *"We cannot exist long as a nation without having some power which will govern the whole union."* **What message was he trying to convey?**

II. Constitutional Convention creates the United States Constitution, 1787

Since the Articles of Confederation created a national government that was too weak, a Constitutional Convention was held on May 25, 1787. 55 delegates from each state (except Rhode Island) secretly began a three month meeting to discuss how to make the national government stronger.

Powers given to national government:

Congress	
Senate	House of Representatives

Electing the President:

The Constitution was completed on September 17, 1787, and delegates to the Constitutional Convention sent their new Constitution to the 13 states for approval. Voters in each state elected people to represent them in state conventions where these representatives debated the pros and cons of the Constitution.

III. Approving the Constitution

Federalist views:	Anti-Federalist views:
Which states immediately adopted the Constitution?	Which states rejected the Constitution? Why?

On November 21, 1789, North Carolina became the _____ state to approve the Constitution. Rhode Island approved it finally in May, 1790. These states finally approved the Constitution with the addition of the _____.

Once the Constitution had been accepted, the Continental Congress asked the states to hold elections for Senators, Representatives, and Electors. The electors would vote for the President.

_____ was elected the first president of the United States on _____.

IV. The Bill of Rights, 1791

To gain support of the Anti-Federalists, Federalists had promised to add a Bill of Rights. In 1791, Congress formally added ten amendments, or changes, to protect the basic rights of citizens.

The Bill of Rights (the First Ten Amendments) guarantees rights such as:

V. Federal system of government

The seven parts of the Constitution, called articles, explain the way government should be set up and how power should be divided.

<p>Legislative Branch Congress Senate House of Representatives</p>	<p>Executive Branch The President</p>	<p>Judicial Branch The Supreme Court & other Federal Courts</p>
<p>Checks and balances:</p>		

A NEW NATION GROWS-ANSWER KEY

I. Continental Congress creates the Articles of Confederation, 1777

Started in 1777 by the Continental Congress to set up a government in which power was divided between the national government (referred to as Congress) and the state government. This was approved by all states by 1781.

- **Granted majority of the power to the states.**
- **Created one body, the Congress, to serve as the national government.**

Powers given to the states: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Could tax citizens</i> - <i>Controlled trade</i>
Powers given to Congress (national): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Each state had one vote in Congress</i> - <i>Declared war</i> - <i>Provided mail service</i> - <i>Entered into treaties</i> - <i>Coined money</i>
Problems this division of power created: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Congress had trouble raising money to fight the American revolution because it could not collect taxes from the people or states.</i> - <i>Congress could not settle trade disputes between the states because it could not control trade or keep the states from unfairly charging high taxes on goods that passes through them.</i>

George Washington said, “We cannot exist long as a nation without having some power which will govern the whole union.” **What message was he trying to convey?** *Answers will vary but may include: That the country needed a stronger national government with enough powers to keep foreign nations from taking over the country and to prevent states from setting up their own separate countries.*

II. Constitutional Convention creates the United States Constitution, 1787

Since the Articles of Confederation created a national government that was too weak, a Constitutional Convention was held on May 25, 1787. 55 delegates from each state (except Rhode Island) secretly began a three month meeting to discuss how to make the national government stronger.

Powers given to national government: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The new national government would collect taxes and control trade among states and with other countries.</i>

Congress	
Senate <i>Each state would have 2 members called senators.</i>	House of Representatives <i>The number of representatives per state would be based on the population of the state.</i>

Electing the President: <i>The delegates agreed that voters in each state would elect representatives called electors. The number of electors for each state would equal the number of its senators and representatives. These electors would vote for the president.</i>
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The Constitution was completed on September 17, 1787, and delegates to the Constitutional Convention sent their new Constitution to the 13 states for approval. Voters in each state elected people to represent them in state conventions where these representatives debated the pros and cons of the Constitution.

III. Approving the Constitution

<p style="text-align: center;">Federalists:</p> <p><i>People who supported the new Constitution and argued that the new government would provide a better balance between the national and state governments. (They presented their arguments in essays known as The Federalist papers, written by James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay.)</i></p> <p>Which states immediately adopted the Constitution?</p> <p><i>Pennsylvania, Delaware, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Georgia.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Anti-Federalists:</p> <p><i>People who opposed the Federalists and feared that the new Constitution created a central government with too much power. They also pointed out that the Constitution did not have a bill of rights to protect the liberty of individual citizens.</i></p> <p>Which states rejected the Constitution? Why?</p> <p><i>Rhode Island, and North Carolina rejected the Constitution because they wanted to remain independent of the US and avoid an overbearing central government (like the British crown) and protect individual liberties.</i></p>
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On November 21, 1789, North Carolina became the 12th state to approve the Constitution. Rhode Island approved it finally in May, 1790. These states finally approved the Constitution with the addition of the Bill of Rights.

Once the Constitution had been accepted, the Continental Congress asked the states to hold elections for Senators, Representatives, and Electors. The electors would vote for the President. George Washington was elected the first president of the United States on April 30, 1789 (sworn in).

IV. The Bill of Rights, 1791

To gain support of the Anti-Federalists, Federalists had promised to add a Bill of Rights. In 1791, Congress formally added ten amendments, or changes, to protect the basic rights of citizens.

The Bill of Rights (the First Ten Amendments) guarantees rights such as:

Answers may include:

- *Freedom of speech*
- *Freedom of press*
- *Freedom of religion*
- *Trial by Jury*
- *All rights not given to the federal government or denied to the states*

V. Federal system of government

The seven parts of the Constitution, called articles, explain the way government should be set up and how power should be divided.

<p style="text-align: center;">Legislative Branch</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Congress</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Senate House of Representatives</p> <p><i>Article 1 lists the rules and powers of Congress and explains how its members are to be chosen. Congress has the power to make laws and treaties, coin money, and regulate trade.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Executive Branch</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The President and Vice President</p> <p><i>Article 2 lists the president's powers and duties and explains how the president is elected. The president makes sure that the laws are carried out, and with the approval of the Senate, he can appoint government officials and make treaties.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Judicial Branch</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The Supreme Court & other Federal Courts</p> <p><i>Article 3 sets up the national system of courts, with the Supreme Court as the highest court in the land. The Supreme Court is responsible for deciding cases that involve the Constitution.</i></p>
<p>Checks and balances: <i>By setting up 3 branches of government, each with its own duties and limits, the Constitution divided the powers given to the national government. This division not only keeps one branch of government from becoming too powerful but also allows each branch to check on another's actions and decisions. The balancing of power and the checking of one branch over another is known as the system of checks and balances.</i></p>		

James Iredell

You emigrated to Edenton, North Carolina from England in 1767, when you were 17 years old. There, you worked as a deputy collector for the port of Edenton. While working at the customs house, you developed an interest in law and were admitted to the bar in 1771. You feel this success has occurred largely with the help of God, since you are a devout Anglican. Although your job at the port was supplied by the British government, you were a strong supporter of independence and the Revolution. After the Revolution began, you helped organize the court system of North Carolina and were elected a judge of the Superior Court in 1778. Your political career advanced from there.

Most recently, you have become a prominent leader of the **Federalists** in North Carolina, and **you are a strong supporter of the proposed United States Constitution**. In order for the Constitution of the United States to be ratified, 9 of the 13 states must approve it. As a Federalist, and due to your love of your country and the law, you passionately believe that the new government as outlined in the Constitution will provide the perfect balance between the national government and the state governments. It makes no sense to you that anyone would reject the new Constitution, when everyone seemed to agree that the Articles of Confederation created too weak of a national government. If the national government isn't given some kind of power, Congress will always have trouble raising money for defending the United States. Also, how will disputes between the states ever be settled without a national government having the ability to do so? The poor Governor of Massachusetts had a mess on his hands with Shays' Rebellion, and you are surprised everyone hasn't learned the lesson in that. You feel that North Carolina needs to join the states of Pennsylvania, Delaware, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Georgia, who quickly voted to adopt the Constitution.

Today, July 21, 1788, you are attending the North Carolina state convention in Hillsborough, NC, where you hope to convince North Carolina to accept and ratify the Constitution. Your opponent at the debate will be Anti-Federalist Willie Jones.

North Carolina must say YES to avoid a MESS!



Willie Jones

You were born in Northampton County, N.C. and after attending college, became an American planter and statesman in Halifax County, North Carolina. You represented North Carolina as a delegate to the Continental Congress in 1780. For a brief time in 1776, as the head of North Carolina's *Committee of Safety*, you were put in charge of the state's revolutionary government, until Richard Caswell was elected as Governor. Afterwards you served in the North Carolina House of Commons and were elected to the United States Constitutional Convention in 1787, but declined to accept.

Most recently, you have become a prominent leader of the **Anti-Federalists** in North Carolina, and **you are a strong opponent of ratifying the proposed Constitution**. As an Anti-Federalist, you passionately believe that the new Constitution creates a central government with too much power. Giving the federal government too much power might result in a situation as bad as Britain's unfair control over the colonies. The country had to endure a war to overthrow the tyrant King George. Now, the Constitution as it stands can give the federal government that same kind of power, and people are always ready to abuse power! It makes no sense to you why anyone would ratify this document unless they wish to give up their state's rights. Also, you are disturbed by the fact that the Constitution has no bill of rights to protect the liberty of individual citizens.

Today, July 21, 1788, you are attending the North Carolina state convention in Hillsborough, NC, where you must convince delegates to refuse to ratify the Constitution. Your opponent at the debate will be Federalist James Iredell.

North Carolina must say NO to avoid a ROW! (A row is a noisy dispute or quarrel.)

Positions on the Constitution

Anti-Federalists	Federalists
<p>Throughout history, the only places where republican governments had worked had been small communities. In those communities, the people had been about equal in wealth and had held the same values. People who are not too rich or too poor are more likely to possess civic virtue and to agree on what is best for their common welfare. The new nation was so large and diverse that people would not be able to agree on their common welfare.</p>	<p>History has proven that all of the small republics of the past had been destroyed by selfish groups. The civic virtue of the citizens had not been enough to prevent them from seeking their own selfish interests rather than working for the common welfare. A large republic, where the government was organized on the basis of checks and balances, and power was divided between the national and the state governments, would be better. Under such a government, it would be more difficult for special interests to attain their goals and violate the common welfare.</p>
<p>Free government requires the active participation of the people. The national government would be located too far from most people's communities to allow them to participate. As a result, the only way the government would be able to rule would be through the use of military force. The result would be a tyranny.</p>	<p>The national government would be so good at protecting the rights of the people that it would soon gain their loyalty and support. It could not become a tyranny because of the limitations placed on it by the system of checks and balances and separation of powers.</p>
<p>The Constitution gives the national government too much power at the expense of the state governments. It gives the government the power to tax citizens and to raise and keep an army. The supremacy clause means all the national government's laws are superior to laws made by the states. As a result, it would only be a matter of time until the state governments were destroyed.</p>	<p>It is true that the national government would have greater power than it did under the Articles of Confederation. But its powers are limited to tasks that face the entire nation, such as trade, currency, and defense. Experience has shown that a stronger national government is needed to deal with these problems. The Constitution provides adequate protections for the state governments to prevent their being destroyed by the national government.</p>
<p>The necessary and proper clause is too general and, as a result, gives too much power to the national government. It is dangerous not to list the powers of the government in order to put clear limits on them.</p>	<p>The necessary and proper and general welfare clauses are necessary if the national government is to do the things it is responsible for doing.</p>

The Constitution gives too much power to the executive branch of government. It would soon become a monarchy.

A strong executive branch is necessary for the national government to be able to fulfill its responsibilities. The powers of the national government are separated and balanced among the three branches so no one can dominate the others. The Constitution gives the Congress and the Supreme Court ways to check the use of power by the executive branch so it cannot become a monarchy.

The Constitution does not include a bill of rights which is essential for protecting individuals against the power of the national government.

A bill of rights is unnecessary because the powers of the government are limited. A bill of rights would give the impression that the people could only expect protection of those rights that were actually listed.



What slogans might the Federalists and Anti-Federalists be using? Write one of your own.