

Creation of U.S. Government

Governmental Structure: Structure and Function of Government:

Activity # 7066

INTRODUCTION

In this lesson, you will learn about the Constitution of the United States. Some feel that it is an amazing document written by men of great vision. After completing this unit, you will be able to make your own decision regarding the historic value of this document.

ASSIGNMENTS

Answer the following questions.

1. Why do you think it was important to the writers of the Constitution that the powers of government were divided between the federal and state governments?

2. The writers of the constitution put a great deal of thought into the powers they designated as federal, state and concurrent. Identify and explain the common elements in the powers of the federal government.

3. What reasons do you think the writers of the Constitution might have had for making some powers concurrent? Remember, concurrent powers are powers that are shared by the federal and state governments. The following are the concurrent powers outlined in the Constitution: maintain law and order, collect taxes, borrow money, establish courts, build roads and provide for the public welfare.

4. Create a cartoon that shows an argument between a Federalist and an Anti-Federalist regarding the Constitution. The following chart will help you to identify the difference to focus on in your cartoon.

Federalist	Anti-Federalists
They felt the Constitution provided a good balance between national unity and state independence.	They wanted more power for the independent states.
They believed a strong central government was necessary.	They were worried the new government would be too much like England's government.
They also felt that with a strong central government there would be less fighting and confusion between the states.	They feared a strong national government and were worried that it would impose taxes they would be unable to pay.
Federalists were primarily wealthy lawyers, merchants and planters.	They came from rural areas and tended to be poor. They feared wealthy citizens would have more power than poor citizens.
They felt that rights were already recognized and understood.	They wanted to add a Bill of Rights.

5. Do you think it was important to include the Bill of Rights in the Constitution? Be sure to explain reasons for your opinion.

6. The Constitution created a three-branch government and ensured that a system of checks and balances was in place. Complete the chart below, detailing the system of checks and balances that maintain the balance of power.

Branch	Checks on Judicial	Checks on Legislative
Executive: President carries out the law.		
Branch	Checks on Executive	Checks on Judicial
Legislative: Congress makes the law.		
Branch	Checks on Executive	Checks on Legislative
Judicial: Supreme Court interprets the law.		

10. **YOU DECIDE**

Create an amendment to the Constitution based on a modern day problem (for example; women's rights, rights for minors, discrimination based on sexual orientation, environmental protection and the banning of abortion). Write a five-paragraph essay to persuade your state legislature to vote in favor of ratifying this amendment.

Paragraph One: In this paragraph, you should introduce your amendment and ask for the support of your state legislature.

Paragraph Two: In this paragraph, you should give one reason why your state legislature should ratify your amendment. You must provide details that support your position.

Paragraph Three: In this paragraph, you should give the second reason why your state legislature should ratify your amendment. You must provide details that support your position.

Paragraph Four: In this paragraph, you should give the third reason why your state legislature should ratify your amendment. You must provide details that support your position.

Paragraph Five: In this paragraph, you should restate your position and summarize the reasons for your position. Don't forget your closing sentence.

RUBRIC

4	Essay is complete and includes the three reasons for supporting amendment. Reasons for supporting amendment are clearly stated and convincing. Correct grammar and spelling are used in essay.
3	Essay is complete and includes the three reasons for supporting amendment. Reasons for supporting the amendment are clearly stated and convincing. Mostly correct grammar and spelling are used in the essay.
2	Essay is complete and includes only two reasons for supporting amendment. Reasons for supporting amendment are clearly stated and convincing. Poor grammar and spelling are used in the essay.
1	Essay is incomplete; the three reasons for supporting amendment are not stated. Reasons for supporting amendment are unclear. Poor grammar and spelling are used in the essay.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

Final Project

In the United States, the Constitution outlines the structure and function of our government. Some people in the United States feel the constitutional government established by the Founding Fathers is the best type of government. However, there was great debate over the Constitution by the Founding Fathers. If you had lived during the late 1700s, would you have supported or opposed the Constitution? How would you have convinced others to support your position?

Write a play in which delegates to a state convention need to decide whether to ratify the new Constitution. The main character in the play should be either a Federalist or Anti-Federalist. The main point of the play is to convince society to support the position of your main character.

Your play must include the following:

- ✓ At least one Federalist or Anti-Federalist character.
- ✓ Dialogue discussing your character(s) viewpoint.
- ✓ A description or graphical presentation of the scenes, including location, backdrop and props.
- ✓ Must be based on historical information.

Format:

- ✓ Write a script that could be used for a performance.
- ✓ Perform your play for the class.

RUBRIC

4	Position of the main character is clear and accurately reflects Federalist or Anti-Federalist beliefs. Arguments are rational and convincing. Play is representative of the time period.
3	Position of the main character is clear and accurately reflects Federalist or Anti-Federalist beliefs. Arguments are rational and convincing. Play is not representative of the time period.
2	Position of the main character is clear and accurately reflects Federalist or Anti-Federalist beliefs. Arguments are rational but not convincing. Play is not representative of the time period.
1	Position of the main character is clear but does not accurately reflect Federalist or Anti-Federalist beliefs. Arguments are not rational or convincing. Play is not representative of the time period.