

Grade 4 History & Geography

Unit 8: The United States Constitution

10 lessons and a unit quiz. Use this pack with the **The United States Constitution Student Reader** (print it, or download it once from the course) to teach the whole unit without the internet.

What is in this pack

- A lesson plan for each chapter: the Big Question, words to know, which pages to read, questions to talk over and the activity pages.
- The unit quiz, ready to print.
- Answers for the teacher at the back: every discussion question and the quiz key.

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Lesson schedule

Two or three lessons a week, about 30 minutes each. Tick each one off as you go.

	Lesson	Reader pages	Activity pages
☐	Chapter 1: The Idea of Self-Rule	PDF pages 8–15	AP 1.1, AP 1.2, AP 1.3
☐	Chapter 2: New Constitutions for the States	PDF pages 16–25	AP 1.1
☐	Chapter 3: The Articles of Confederation	PDF pages 26–33	AP 1.1
☐	Chapter 4: Planning a New Constitution	PDF pages 34–41	AP 4.1, AP 4.2
☐	Chapter 5: Waiting in Philadelphia	PDF pages 42–49	AP 1.1
☐	Chapter 6: Some Major Decisions	PDF pages 50–55	—
☐	Chapter 7: Checks, Balances, and Compromises	PDF pages 56–65	AP 7.1, AP 7.2, AP 7.3
☐	Chapter 8: The Convention Completes Its Work	PDF pages 66–73	AP 8.1
☐	Chapter 9: The States Ratify	PDF pages 74–83	—
☐	Chapter 10: Our Constitution Today	PDF pages 84–91	AP 10.1
☐	Unit quiz	—	—

Page numbers are the PDF page numbers of the Student Reader file, so they match what your PDF reader shows.

Chapter 1: The Idea of Self-Rule

THE BIG QUESTION

What does self-government mean, and why was it such a revolutionary idea?

Words to know

- **self-determination** — the ability of the people in a country to decide their own government *During the American Revolution, the thirteen colonies fought for self-determination.*
- **liberty** — freedom *American colonists thought that British rule threatened their liberty.*
- **right** — a legal promise *The Declaration of Independence states that people have rights that should be protected.*
- **unalienable** — unable to be taken away or denied *Thomas Jefferson argued that not even a king could take away certain unalienable rights.*
- **consent** — approval or agreement *Self-rule is based on the idea that people must give their consent to government.*
- **deliberate** — to think about and discuss issues before reaching a decision *James Madison gathered with other American leaders to deliberate about the type of government they wanted to have.*

Read

Read Chapter 1 in the Student Reader: PDF pages 8–15. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. Who wrote the Declaration of Independence?
2. What did Jefferson mean when he wrote in the Declaration of Independence that “all men are created equal”?
3. What rights did Jefferson consider unalienable?
4. What three important ideas about government did Jefferson write into the Declaration of Independence?
5. What is the idea of limited government?
6. How was the idea of limited government different from the idea of divine right rule?
7. How did the Declaration of Independence use the idea of a social contract?
8. How were Americans engaged in a “great experiment”?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: What does self-government mean, and why was it such a revolutionary idea?
- Use one of today's words in a sentence of your own.

Activity pages

- Activity Page 1.1 — Teacher Guide PDF page 103
- Activity Page 1.2: The Declaration of Independence — Teacher Guide PDF page 104
- Activity Page 1.3: The Great Seal of the United States — Teacher Guide PDF pages 105–106

Chapter 2: New Constitutions for the States

THE BIG QUESTION

What is a republic or a republican form of government?

Words to know

- **trial by jury** — a case of law decided by a group of one's fellow citizens *Citizens have the right to a trial by jury.*
- **assemble** — to gather together *Activists assemble at the courthouse to demand reform.*
- **term** — the length of time for which an elected official serves *During her term in office, the governor oversaw many changes.*
- **republic** — a government in which people elect representatives to rule for them *The United States is a republic because citizens elect the president and lawmakers.*
- **provision** — a condition that is included in an agreement or law *The parties added several provisions to the contract.*
- **conscience** — a sense or belief a person has that a certain action is right or wrong *The student chose to act according to conscience and do what he felt was right.*

Read

Read Chapter 2 in the Student Reader: PDF pages 16–25. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. What kinds of information can be found in a constitution?
2. How is a constitution different from ordinary laws?
3. What does it mean if a law is unconstitutional?
4. Why did states want to write down their constitutions?
5. What rights and freedoms were included in the state constitutions?
6. Why did state constitutions give most power to the legislatures?
7. Why did states adopt republican forms of government rather than direct democracies?
8. What does “freedom of religion” mean?
9. What does “separation of church and state” mean?
10. What does “freedom of conscience” mean?
11. How did the states handle the issue of slavery?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: What is a republic or a republican form of government?
- Use one of today's words in a sentence of your own.

Activity pages

- Activity Page 1.1 — Teacher Guide PDF page 103

Chapter 3: The Articles of Confederation

THE BIG QUESTION

Why did the lack of a central government prove to be a problem?

Words to know

- **delegate** — representative *A delegate speaks on behalf of the people of his or her state.*
- **confederation** — a group of states joined together by a formal agreement *States in a confederation come together around a shared goal or purpose.*
- **treaty** — a formal agreement between two or more groups, especially countries *The treaty set the terms for trade between the two countries.*
- **alliance** — a partnership of different countries, organizations, or people who agree to work together *To protect each other from attack, the nations formed an alliance.*

Read

Read Chapter 3 in the Student Reader: PDF pages 26–33. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. What was the name of the first plan of government created by the Continental Congress?
2. What did the central government created by the Articles of Confederation look like?
3. Under the Articles of Confederation, how were members of Congress chosen? Who did the members of Congress represent?
4. What powers did Congress have under the Articles of Confederation?
5. Why were larger states, such as Virginia, frustrated by the Articles of Confederation?
6. Why was Congress always broke?
7. What other weaknesses did the Articles have?
8. After six years of the Articles of Confederation, what did many people realize?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: Why did the lack of a central government prove to be a problem?
- Use one of today's words in a sentence of your own.

Activity pages

- Activity Page 1.1 — Teacher Guide PDF page 103

Chapter 4: Planning a New Constitution

THE BIG QUESTION

Why did James Madison and Alexander Hamilton think a stronger central government was needed?

Words to know

- **ordinance** — a law or government rule *The city passed a new ordinance to limit off-street parking.*
- **politics** — the activities of leaders running a government *People who want to hold office in government often spend a great deal of time learning about politics.*

Read

Read Chapter 4 in the Student Reader: PDF pages 34–41. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. Who was James Madison?
2. Who was Alexander Hamilton?
3. What belief did Madison, Hamilton, and Washington share?
4. According to Congress, what was the purpose of the special convention?
5. According to Madison and Hamilton, what was the purpose of the special convention?
6. How did Madison want to change the central government?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: Why did James Madison and Alexander Hamilton think a stronger central government was needed?
- Use one of today's words in a sentence of your own.

Activity pages

- Activity Page 4.1: The Articles of Confederation — Teacher Guide PDF page 107
- Activity Page 4.2: Domain Vocabulary: Chapters 1–4 — Teacher Guide PDF page 108

Chapter 5: Waiting in Philadelphia

THE BIG QUESTION

What does the author mean by “they had come to try to give that young nation a more secure future”?

Words to know

- **ambassador** — a person who is an official representative of his or her government in another country *The ambassador went overseas to negotiate a new treaty.*

Read

Read Chapter 5 in the Student Reader: PDF pages 42–49. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. Who was the first delegate from outside of Pennsylvania to arrive? How did he spend his time?
2. Who were two other famous Americans who attended the convention?
3. What was Ben Franklin famous for?
4. Why do you think the presence of George Washington encouraged hope and optimism about the convention?
5. Which colonial leaders did not attend the convention?
6. Patrick Henry did not attend, saying, “I smelt a rat.” What does this statement tell you about his reasons for not attending?
7. Where did the convention take place?
8. Why is the location of the convention significant?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: What does the author mean by “they had come to try to give that young nation a more secure future”?
- Use one of today’s words in a sentence of your own.

Activity pages

- Activity Page 1.1 — Teacher Guide PDF page 103

Chapter 6: Some Major Decisions

THE BIG QUESTION

What was the Virginia Plan, and why might some delegates have objected to it?

Read

Read Chapter 6 in the Student Reader: PDF pages 50–55. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. What were the first two decisions of the convention?
2. Why might Washington have been everyone's first choice for chairman of the convention?
3. How have we learned about the secret discussions that were held?
4. How did the Virginia Plan propose to change government power?
5. How did the New Jersey Plan differ from the Virginia Plan?
6. What decision did the convention delegates finally make?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: What was the Virginia Plan, and why might some delegates have objected to it?

Chapter 7: Checks, Balances, and Compromises

THE BIG QUESTION

What were the main challenges that had to be overcome in order to create a new constitution?

Words to know

- **federal** — relating to a system of government in which the national government shares power with other levels of government, such as states; it can also refer to national government *In a federal system, states have many powers of their own.*
- **legislative** — having the power to make laws *The legislative discussion included several ideas for new laws.*
- **executive** — having the power to carry out and enforce laws *The executive branch of the government, under the president's direction, makes sure that the laws of the country are followed.*
- **judicial** — having the power to decide questions of law *Judges serve in the judicial branch of the government.*
- **compromise** — when each side in a disagreement gives up some of what they want to reach an agreement *To prevent a greater conflict, the parties agreed to a compromise.*

Read

Read Chapter 7 in the Student Reader: PDF pages 56–65. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. What is the aim of a federal system of government?
2. What two balances did the delegates have to keep in mind as they wrote a new constitution?
3. How does the Constitution separate the powers of government?
4. What groups and officials make up the three branches of federal government?
5. What does each branch of government do?
6. How does the Constitution make sure no one branch of government becomes too powerful?
7. What is one way the president can check the power of Congress?
8. What are some ways Congress can check the power of the president?
9. On what significant issues did the delegates compromise?
10. What were the results of the Great Compromise?
11. What were the two compromises related to slavery?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: What were the main challenges that had to be overcome in order to create a new constitution?
- Use one of today's words in a sentence of your own.

Activity pages

- Activity Page 7.1: The Three Branches of Government — Teacher Guide PDF pages 109–110
- Activity Page 7.2: Checks and Balances — Teacher Guide PDF pages 111–112
- Activity Page 7.3: Constitutional Government Match-Up — Teacher Guide PDF pages 113–114

Chapter 8: The Convention Completes Its Work

THE BIG QUESTION

What steps were put in place to ratify the constitution?

Words to know

- **posterity** — descendants, or future generations *The names of those who signed the Constitution were recorded for posterity.*

Read

Read Chapter 8 in the Student Reader: PDF pages 66–73. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. How long is the term of office for someone elected to each branch of Congress?
2. How long is a president's term of office?
3. What needs to happen for an amendment to become part of the Constitution?
4. How does the amendment process for the Constitution differ from that of the Articles of Confederation? Why did the delegates change the process?
5. How was the ratification process an example of social contract theory?
6. Why did the delegates only require nine of thirteen states to ratify the constitution?
7. What does it mean that the Constitution is "the supreme law of the land"?
8. What is meant by "a bill of rights"?
9. What rights would be included in a bill of rights?
10. What is significant about the phrase "We, the People of the United States"?
11. What did the delegates who signed the U.S. Constitution believe that it achieved?
12. Read the statement by Benjamin Franklin at the bottom of page 67. What do you think Franklin meant by these words?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: What steps were put in place to ratify the constitution?
- Use one of today's words in a sentence of your own.

Activity pages

- Activity Page 8.1: Domain Vocabulary: Chapters 5–8 — Teacher Guide PDF page 115

Chapter 9: The States Ratify

THE BIG QUESTION

Why was it considered essential to have a Bill of Rights added to the U.S. Constitution?

Read

Read Chapter 9 in the Student Reader: PDF pages 74–83. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. What three main arguments against the Constitution did AntiFederalists make?
2. How did Anti-Federalists try to delay ratification?
3. What are the Federalist Papers?
4. What was the first state to ratify the Constitution?
5. What compromise was made to win ratification in Massachusetts and Virginia?
6. What is the Bill of Rights?
7. What are some of the rights listed in the Bill of Rights?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: Why was it considered essential to have a Bill of Rights added to the U.S. Constitution?

Chapter 10: Our Constitution Today

THE BIG QUESTION

What are some of the reasons for the success of the Constitution and its survival for more than two hundred years?

Words to know

- **immigration** — the act of moving from one country to another country to live
Immigration encourages an exchange of ideas among peoples from different cultures.
- **impeach** — to bring formal charges against a government official *A president can be impeached if he does something that is not permitted by the Constitution.*

Read

Read Chapter 10 in the Student Reader: PDF pages 84–91. Look at the pictures and maps together.

Talk it over

1. According to the text, how is life in the United States today similar to life in the 1780s?
2. According to the text, why has the Constitution lasted as long as it has?
3. How many times has the Constitution been amended?
4. What are the four guiding principles of the Constitution?
5. What is one important way the Constitution limits the federal government?
6. How does the separation of powers help provide for limited government?
7. What is federalism?
8. What are some powers that only the national government has?
9. What are some powers that only the state governments have?
10. What are some powers that are shared by national and state governments?
11. Why do the federal and the state governments share certain powers under the federal system?

Answers are at the back of this pack.

Check for understanding

- Answer the Big Question in a sentence or two: What are some of the reasons for the success of the Constitution and its survival for more than two hundred years?
- Use one of today's words in a sentence of your own.

Activity pages

- Activity Page 10.1: Three Levels of Government — Teacher Guide PDF page 116

UNIT QUIZ

The United States Constitution

Name: _____ Date: _____

Circle the letter of the best answer.

1. A limited government depends on
 - a) consent of the people.
 - b) power of the king.
 - c) size of the country.
 - d) number of voters.
2. Who wrote the Declaration of Independence?
 - a) Thomas Jefferson
 - b) James Madison
 - c) George Washington
 - d) Edmund Randolph
3. What document did each state write after gaining independence from Britain?
 - a) a declaration
 - b) a constitution
 - c) a will
 - d) a compromise
4. What freedom did most state governments protect under law?
 - a) freedom of speech
 - b) freedom of assembly
 - c) right to a trial by jury
 - d) all of the above
5. Religious freedom means that you
 - a) believe in a god.
 - b) can build churches anywhere.
 - c) have the right to believe as you wish.
 - d) don't have to pay to go to church.
6. What did the Second Continental Congress do?
 - a) write the Constitution and elect the president
 - b) convince Britain to lower taxes and pull out troops
 - c) nominate convention delegates and choose a meeting place
 - d) run the war and write the Articles of Confederation
7. The Articles of Confederation
 - a) allowed people to elect their representatives to the Congress.
 - b) made the president of the Congress too strong.
 - c) gave the central government too little power to be effective.
 - d) failed to provide sufficient protections for states' rights.

- 8.** In 1787, what rights did the Congress guarantee to settlers of the Northwest Territory?
- a) the same rights as people in the thirteen states
 - b) the right to settle all land west of the Mississippi River
 - c) the right to own and trade in enslaved people
 - d) the same rights as Native Americans on reservations
- 9.** What was the stated purpose, according to the Congress, of the Grand Convention of the States in 1787?
- a) to elect a president
 - b) to recommend changes to the Articles of Confederation
 - c) to write a new constitution
 - d) to petition the states for money to pay foreign debts
- 10.** Why didn't Patrick Henry attend the Grand Convention of the States in 1787?
- a) He didn't want to strengthen the central government.
 - b) He didn't have time to attend conventions.
 - c) He was serving as ambassador to England at the time.
 - d) He wasn't elected as a delegate to the convention.
- 11.** What idea in the Virginia Plan caused the most disagreement?
- a) The central government should protect Americans against foreign enemies.
 - b) The central government should protect the liberties of Americans.
 - c) The central government should make laws to govern trade among states.
 - d) The central government should have higher powers than the states in certain areas.
- 12.** A federal system of government is a system in which
- a) power is divided between different levels of government.
 - b) the states have more power than the central government.
 - c) the central government holds all legislative power.
 - d) power is concentrated in one nationally elected leader.
- 13.** What was the Great Compromise?
- a) Southern states would be allowed to import enslaved people for twenty more years.
 - b) The national government would share power among three branches.
 - c) One house of Congress would base membership on state population while the other would grant the same number of members to each state.
 - d) Presidential and vice presidential candidates would be nominated from two political parties.
- 14.** How many states had to ratify the Constitution for it to become law?
- a) seven
 - b) nine
 - c) eleven
 - d) thirteen

- 15.** Which objection did the Anti-Federalists NOT make?
- a) The Constitution gives too much power to the central government.
 - b) The Constitution provides for a weak, ineffective chief executive.
 - c) The delegates to the Constitutional Convention did more than they were supposed to do.
 - d) The Constitution lacks a bill of rights to protect civil liberties.
- 16.** Who led the fight for a bill of rights after the Constitution took effect?
- a) Thomas Jefferson
 - b) Benjamin Franklin
 - c) Alexander Hamilton
 - d) James Madison
- 17.** Which statement most accurately describes the Constitution of 1787?
- a) It provides a framework for government.
 - b) It gives detailed rules for every aspect of government.
 - c) It has proven nearly impossible to amend.
 - d) It has become dated and obsolete today.
- 18.** Which power DOES NOT belong to the federal government of the United States?
- a) the power to make marriage and divorce laws
 - b) the power to levy and collect taxes
 - c) the power to print currency
 - d) the power to declare war and peace

Answers

Chapter 1: The Idea of Self-Rule

- 1. Who wrote the Declaration of Independence?**
Thomas Jefferson
- 2. What did Jefferson mean when he wrote in the Declaration of Independence that “all men are created equal”?**
He meant that each person is born with the same rights as every other person.
- 3. What rights did Jefferson consider unalienable?**
“life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”
- 4. What three important ideas about government did Jefferson write into the Declaration of Independence?**
Government exists to protect the rights of the people; the people have the right to get rid of a government that does not protect their rights and create another one; governments get “their just powers from the consent of the governed.”
- 5. What is the idea of limited government?**
It is the idea that people should have the right to limit, or restrict, the power of their government.
- 6. How was the idea of limited government different from the idea of divine right rule?**
Limited government meant government could not do whatever it wanted because of limits placed on it by the people. Divine right rule meant government could do whatever it wanted because rulers got their power from God. The people did not matter.
- 7. How did the Declaration of Independence use the idea of a social contract?**
The Declaration of Independence said that the king and Parliament had broken their contract with the colonists because of all the things they had done wrong. Because the contract was broken, the colonists were free of Great Britain and could create their own government.
- 8. How were Americans engaged in a “great experiment”?**
They were doing something that had never been done before: creating a brand new government for themselves.

Chapter 2: New Constitutions for the States

- 1. What kinds of information can be found in a constitution?**
The constitution says what powers the government will have and will not have, what the parts of the government will be, and what duties and responsibilities each part of government will have.
- 2. How is a constitution different from ordinary laws?**
The constitution is like a fundamental law. All ordinary laws have to follow, or agree with, the fundamental law of the constitution.

3. **What does it mean if a law is unconstitutional?**

It means the law does not follow the constitution, so people no longer have to obey that law.

4. **Why did states want to write down their constitutions?**

They wanted to make their plans for government firm contracts between the new governments and the people. This way everyone would understand what the laws or rules were.

5. **What rights and freedoms were included in the state constitutions?**

The state constitutions included the right to a trial by jury, the right to assemble peaceably, the right to ask and even demand action on the part of the government, and freedom of speech.

6. **Why did state constitutions give most power to the legislatures?**

Before independence, the colonists had depended on their elected assemblies and distrusted their governors, who were loyal to the king. After independence, the colonists made their assemblies into legislatures but still did not want to give just one person, such as the governor, too much power.

7. **Why did states adopt republican forms of government rather than direct democracies?**

Bringing together the many people in a large territory like a state to discuss and vote on laws directly would be more difficult than having them elect representatives to govern for them.

8. **What does “freedom of religion” mean?**

It means the government cannot interfere in any way with the religious beliefs of its citizens.

9. **What does “separation of church and state” mean?**

It means the government has no power to establish an official state religion.

10. **What does “freedom of conscience” mean?**

It means the government cannot tell people what church they should belong to or what they should believe.

11. **How did the states handle the issue of slavery?**

Some states passed laws that ended slavery right away. Some states decided to free their slaves gradually. Some Southern states made it easier for owners to free their enslaved workers.

Chapter 3: The Articles of Confederation

1. **What was the name of the first plan of government created by the Continental Congress?**

The Articles of Confederation

2. **What did the central government created by the Articles of Confederation look like?**

The central government was a lawmaking body called Congress. It had limited powers.

3. **Under the Articles of Confederation, how were members of Congress chosen? Who did the members of Congress represent?**

They were appointed by state governments. Members of Congress represented the states—not the people.

4. **What powers did Congress have under the Articles of Confederation?**

Congress could declare war, make peace, create an army and navy, send representatives to foreign countries, borrow money, establish a system of weights and measures, establish post offices, print money, and settle conflicts between states.

5. **Why were larger states, such as Virginia, frustrated by the Articles of Confederation?**

They had the same number of votes—one—as smaller states, even though they had many more people.

6. **Why was Congress always broke?**

Congress could not collect taxes, even though it needed to pay back money that it had borrowed. Congress could only ask states to contribute a certain amount of money. The states never paid the full amounts they were asked to, and Congress had no way of forcing them to pay more than they did.

7. **What other weaknesses did the Articles have?**

All thirteen states had to agree in order to amend, or change, the Articles. Congress could declare war, but it could not raise an army. There was no head of government. The states could—and did—do their own thing.

8. **After six years of the Articles of Confederation, what did many people realize?**

They realized they had created a central government that did not have enough power.

Chapter 4: Planning a New Constitution

1. **Who was James Madison?**

He was one of Virginia's delegates to Congress. He helped write Virginia's state constitution.

2. **Who was Alexander Hamilton?**

He was one of George Washington's aides during the Revolutionary War. He was one of New York's delegates to Congress.

3. **What belief did Madison, Hamilton, and Washington share?**

All three leaders believed that the Articles were too weak to be effective. They wanted to change the Articles in some way.

4. **According to Congress, what was the purpose of the special convention?**

Congress said the purpose of the convention was to improve the Articles of Confederation. Many of the ideas in the new constitution came from James Madison.

5. **According to Madison and Hamilton, what was the purpose of the special convention?**

Madison and Hamilton wanted to replace the Articles of Confederation.

6. **How did Madison want to change the central government?**

Like Hamilton, Madison wanted the central government to have power and not be dependent on the states. Madison recognized, in particular, that the central government should be able to raise money and make sure there were enough soldiers in the army.

Chapter 5: Waiting in Philadelphia

1. **Who was the first delegate from outside of Pennsylvania to arrive? How did he spend his time?**

James Madison was the first from outside of Pennsylvania to arrive. He spent the time meeting with his fellow delegates from Virginia and drawing up a plan to present.

2. **Who were two other famous Americans who attended the convention?**

George Washington and Ben Franklin

3. **What was Ben Franklin famous for?**

He was known for showing that lightning was electricity, for founding the first lending library, and for starting a university. He was also the oldest delegate at the convention.

4. **Why do you think the presence of George Washington encouraged hope and optimism about the convention?**

Washington had successfully led the Patriots to victory in the American Revolution. Many considered him a hero—and a leader—not just of one state but of the United States. He was admired and well-liked, so the affection and trust that many people had in him probably encouraged them to also trust in the convention and its purpose.

5. **Which colonial leaders did not attend the convention?**

Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Patrick Henry, Sam Adams, and John Hancock

6. **Patrick Henry did not attend, saying, “I smelt a rat.” What does this statement tell you about his reasons for not attending?**

Henry did not trust the convention and its purpose. This statement suggests that he was a strong supporter of the rights of states and was not in favor of a stronger central government. He suspected that some of the delegates meant to expand the power of the central government at the expense of the states.

7. **Where did the convention take place?**

The convention took place in the State House in Philadelphia, also known as Independence Hall.

8. **Why is the location of the convention significant?**

The Second Continental Congress had met in that same location to draft and sign the Declaration of Independence. That’s where the nation began, so the delegates as well as the public probably considered the location symbolic and inspiring. The setting itself likely motivated them to do their best to revise the Articles and strengthen the nation.

Chapter 6: Some Major Decisions

1. **What were the first two decisions of the convention?**

The first two decisions were to make George Washington president of the convention and to keep the discussions that were held secret.

2. **Why might Washington have been everyone's first choice for chairman of the convention?**

Washington was respected by all the states and all of the people because of his role in the American Revolution.

3. **How have we learned about the secret discussions that were held?**

Delegates, particularly James Madison, took notes on the discussions.

4. **How did the Virginia Plan propose to change government power?**

It proposed giving the central government more power and making it the supreme power, instead of giving the states supreme power as they had under the Articles of Confederation.

5. **How did the New Jersey Plan differ from the Virginia Plan?**

The New Jersey Plan called for amendments to the Articles of Confederation, while the Virginia Plan called for replacing the Articles entirely.

6. **What decision did the convention delegates finally make?**

They decided to write a brand-new constitution that created a stronger central government instead of trying to change the Articles of Confederation.

Chapter 7: Checks, Balances, and Compromises

1. **What is the aim of a federal system of government?**

The aim is to give each level of government (e.g., national and state) the jobs that each can do best.

2. **What two balances did the delegates have to keep in mind as they wrote a new constitution?**

They had to balance the power shared between state and national levels of government so that neither held too much or too little power. They also had to balance the power of the central government so that people's liberties were protected.

3. **How does the Constitution separate the powers of government?**

It separates the powers among three branches: the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.

4. **What groups and officials make up the three branches of federal government?**

Congress makes up the legislative branch. The president of the United States heads the executive branch. The Supreme Court and other federal courts make up the judicial branch.

5. **What does each branch of government do?**

The legislative branch, or Congress, makes laws for the country. The executive branch, or president, makes sure laws are carried out, runs the government, deals with other countries, and serves as commander in chief. The judicial branch, the

Supreme Court, settles arguments about the law, including the Constitution and laws made by Congress.

6. **How does the Constitution make sure no one branch of government becomes too powerful?**

It separates the powers of government and creates a system of checks and balances.

7. **What is one way the president can check the power of Congress?**

The president has the power to veto laws passed by Congress.

8. **What are some ways Congress can check the power of the president?**

Congress can override a veto by the president. The president can make a treaty with another country, but the treaty only goes into effect if the Senate approves it. The president is commander in chief of the armed forces, but only Congress can declare war.

9. **On what significant issues did the delegates compromise?**

They compromised on whether there would be one or two houses in Congress, as well as on the issue of representation in Congress for big and small states. They also compromised on the issue of whether to count enslaved persons when determining population and representation. Finally, the delegates compromised on the continuation of the slave trade.

10. **What were the results of the Great Compromise?**

The Great Compromise meant that representation in one house of Congress would be based on state population and representation in another house of Congress would be equal. So, in the House of Representatives, states with more people would have more representatives and more votes. Meanwhile, in the Senate, all states, regardless of size, would have two senators and two votes.

11. **What were the two compromises related to slavery?**

The Three-Fifths Compromise said that five enslaved workers counted as three people when figuring the number of representatives for the House of Representatives. The other compromise said the slave trade could continue, but only for another twenty years.

Chapter 8: The Convention Completes Its Work

1. **How long is the term of office for someone elected to each branch of Congress?**

The term of office for the House of Representatives is two years. The term of office for the Senate is six years.

2. **How long is a president's term of office?**

A president's term of office is four years.

3. **What needs to happen for an amendment to become part of the Constitution?**

Two-thirds of each house of Congress and three-fourths of all the states must approve the amendment.

4. **How does the amendment process for the Constitution differ from that of the Articles of Confederation? Why did the delegates change the process?**

The Articles of Confederation required all the states to approve a change. The new Constitution required fractions of Congress and the states to approve changes. The delegates changed the process because they wanted amending the Constitution to be more difficult than making an ordinary law, but they did not want it to be impossible.

5. **How was the ratification process an example of social contract theory?**

The delegates put the question of whether to adopt the new constitution directly to the people. The people would vote for representatives to attend a special state ratifying convention. The one job of those representatives would be to vote for or against the constitution based on what the voters wanted.

6. **Why did the delegates only require nine of thirteen states to ratify the constitution?**

They worried that requiring all thirteen states to ratify the constitution would take too long, and they were not sure all the states would approve it.

7. **What does it mean that the Constitution is “the supreme law of the land”?**

It means that whatever the Constitution says, goes. If a state law or state constitution says something different, that law or constitution needs to be changed to follow the U.S. Constitution.

8. **What is meant by “a bill of rights”?**

A bill of rights is a list of citizens’ rights that the government cannot interfere with.

9. **What rights would be included in a bill of rights?**

A bill of rights would include freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, and the right to trial by jury.

10. **What is significant about the phrase “We, the People of the United States”?**

These words make clear that the U.S. Constitution is an example of self-government, created by the people to set up a government for themselves.

11. **What did the delegates who signed the U.S. Constitution believe that it achieved?**

They believed it was a vast improvement over the Articles of Confederation.

12. **Read the statement by Benjamin Franklin at the bottom of page 67. What do you think Franklin meant by these words?**

Franklin’s words are hopeful. He believes that the sun is rising on a new nation, full of promise.

Chapter 9: The States Ratify

1. **What three main arguments against the Constitution did AntiFederalists make?**

The convention was supposed to revise the Articles, not replace the document. The Constitution gave the federal government too much power. The Constitution did not have a bill of rights.

2. **How did Anti-Federalists try to delay ratification?**

They tried to get states to put off their ratifying conventions and called for another national convention.

3. **What are the Federalist Papers?**

They were a collection of eighty-five newspaper articles, or essays, written by Federalists James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay to explain and defend the Constitution. The Federalist Papers set out to explain the ideas behind the creation of the U.S. Constitution.

4. **What was the first state to ratify the Constitution?**

Delaware

5. **What compromise was made to win ratification in Massachusetts and Virginia?**

Federalists promised the Anti-Federalists that if the Constitution was ratified, the Federalists would work to add a bill of rights after ratification.

6. **What is the Bill of Rights?**

The Bill of Rights is the first ten amendments to the Constitution.

7. **What are some of the rights listed in the Bill of Rights?**

The Bill of Rights includes freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of the press, and freedom to assemble peaceably. It also makes sure people have the right to a fair trial and protection against the government illegally entering and searching people's houses.

Chapter 10: Our Constitution Today

1. **According to the text, how is life in the United States today similar to life in the 1780s?**

Today, we still have the Constitution, we choose our own representatives, we meet publicly to have a say about laws we will live under, and we exercise our rights to free speech and free press.

2. **According to the text, why has the Constitution lasted as long as it has?**

It does not try to do too much. It created a framework of government but did not include lots of details that could become out-of-date.

3. **How many times has the Constitution been amended?**

It has been amended twenty-seven times: the Bill of Rights plus seventeen other amendments.

4. **What are the four guiding principles of the Constitution?**

The principles are consent of the governed, limited government, separation of powers, and federalism.

5. **What is one important way the Constitution limits the federal government?**

Possible responses: It lists what the government can do. It lists what the government cannot do. It has a Bill of Rights that guarantees rights and freedoms.

6. **How does the separation of powers help provide for limited government?**

It makes sure that each branch of government checks and balances the powers of the

other branches.

7. **What is federalism?**

It is the system of dividing powers between the national government and the states.

8. **What are some powers that only the national government has?**

The national government can admit new states, declare war, make peace, create a military, control trade between states, control trade with other countries, print and coin money, and make laws about citizenship.

9. **What are some powers that only the state governments have?**

State governments conduct elections, set qualifications for voting, control trade inside the state, set up local governments, make laws for marriage and divorce, and set up public schools.

10. **What are some powers that are shared by national and state governments?**

Both national and state governments collect taxes, borrow money, set up courts, and make laws about public health and safety.

11. **Why do the federal and the state governments share certain powers under the federal system?**

Part of the federal system is giving each level of government the jobs that it can do best. Some jobs of government, like raising taxes, are important for both national and state governments to exercise.

Unit quiz key

1. a 2. a 3. b 4. d 5. c 6. d 7. c 8. a 9. b 10. a 11. d 12. a 13. c 14. b 15. b 16. d 17. a 18. a