

Final Project
Christopher Brenner
TAH
Constitution Unit Lesson Plan
Text: The Americans; McDougal-Littell

Unit Objective

To examine the domestic challenges faced by the young Republic; to understand American beliefs and principles reflected in the U.S. Constitution.

SECTION 1 Experimenting with Confederation

1. Explain the differing ideas of republicanism.
2. Identify three basic issues debated in drafting the Articles of Confederation.
3. Describe the political and economic problems faced by the Confederation.

SECTION 2 Drafting the Constitution

1. Identify events that led nationalist leaders to call for a convention to strengthen the government.
2. Summarize the key conflicts at the Constitutional Convention and explain how they were resolved.
3. Describe the form of government established by the Constitution.

SECTION 3 Ratifying the Constitution

1. Contrast Federalist and Ant federalist arguments over ratification of the Constitution.
2. Explain how and why the Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution.

Time	Activity	Reference
Day 1 25 min.	Brainstorm activity: Students write informational bullets on what they already know about the U.S. Constitution. They share their answers during a class discussion that follows.	<i>The Americans</i>
20 min.	Cooperative learning: Jigsaw-Within small groups, students survey assigned sections of the text and generate six questions for homework reading.	Student Edition Ch 5, Sects 1,2
Homework	Reading: Students read Chapter 5, Sec 1, 2, answering questions as applicable.	
Day 2 20 min.	Cooperative learning: Jigsaw review-members of the group share question/findings with class as a whole.	Student Ed., Ch 5, Sec 1,2
20 min.	Drawing conclusions: Students read selected correspondence of the founding fathers and create and answer questions on the same.	Founding fathers letters of correspondence (Franklin, Coxe, <i>Publius</i>) Classzone.com
Homework	Reading: Students read Chapter 5, Section 3, Selected letters	
Day 3 30 min.	Lecture: Students take notes on the ratification of the Constitution. They view Segment 6 of the series <i>Liberty</i> and discuss key points/reflections in small groups.	Student Ed., Ch 5 Sec 3 Documentary: <i>Liberty</i>
15 min.	Summary: Group leaders share main points of breakout discussions.	
Homework	Reading/notes: Students read excerpts from assigned authors Berkin (p 169-181), Bernstein (p 55-80), Staloff (p194-203) and Maier(189-201).	

Day 4

15 min.

Discussion: Students share reflections on selected readings.

30 min.

Review: Students participate in Jeopardy-style knowledge competition* in small groups. Categories include: *Winning the Revolutionary War, Experimenting with Confederation, Drafting the Constitution, and Ratifying the Constitution.*

Homework

Students review all notes/readings in preparation for formal assessment.

Day 5

30 min.

Formal assessment: Students complete the Chapter 5 test from the McDougal/Litell Generator.

15 min.

Cooperative learning: Working in pairs, students create *rhyming primers* on the Constitution. **

Homework
of the Constitution.

Reading: Students read the Preamble and Article 1

*Review game entitled 'Constitution Bowl'. Questions are valued at 1, 2, and 3 points respectively. Students are grouped into four teams with a designated captain. Notes on Chapter 5 in the text are required for the competition. If a question is missed by the initial group, other groups may attempt to answer the same and earn the respective point value. A copy of the questions is provided herein.

**Rhymes on the Constitution feature two-lined verses on key terms of content. An example of the same is provided herein.

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List of references

1. *The Americans*; McDougal-Littell, Chapter 5, website: ClassZone.com
2. Berkin, Carol; *A Brilliant Solution: Inventing the American Constitution*; Hardcourt, Inc., 2002
3. Maier, Pauline; *American Scripture: Making the Declaration of Independence*; Knopf, 1997
4. Staloff, Darren; *Hamilton, Adams, Jefferson: The Politics of Enlightenment and the American Founding*; Hill and Wang, 2005
5. PBS; *Liberty*; 2004

Constitution Bowl categories and questions for review:

Winning the Revolutionary War

One-point value questions:

A: This Virginia town was the scene of the formal British surrender after a three-week siege. (Yorktown)

B: This agreement confirmed U.S. independence and set the boundaries of the new nation. (Treaty of Paris)

Two-point value questions:

A: Describe one issue that was left unresolved at the end of the war? (No British provision for protection of land interests of Native American allies, No end date as to when British would evacuate their American forts)

B: Name one exception to the spirit of egalitarianism that arose after the war? (Applied only to white males, no new political rights to women, most Africans in America still enslaved)

C: Approximately, what percent increase in the number of free blacks did Maryland and Virginia experience after the war? (500%--from 4,000 to 20,000)

Three-point value questions:

A: What was the motto chosen by the Continental Congress for the reverse side of the Great Seal of the United States of America? ('a new order of the ages')

B: What English potter designed an anti-slavery cameo featuring an African on bended knee in chains with the engraving "Am I not a man and a brother?" (Josiah Wedgwood)

Experimenting with Confederation

One-point questions

A: This type of government-one in which citizens rule through their elected representatives-was favored by Eighteenth-century Americans. (Republic)

B: This system of belief maintained that governments should be based on the consent of the people. (Republicanism)

Two-point questions

A: Name one of two ancient cities that were revered by American leaders for democratic political achievements. (Athens and Rome)

B: What did the Continental Congress decide on the issue of representation by population or by state? (For the time being, each state would have one vote, regardless of population)

C: Action by this European country in 1784 deprived Western farmers of a means of shipping crops to Eastern markets. (Spain-closing the Mississippi River to American navigation)

Three-point questions

A: What weakness in the Confederation government was highlighted by the actions of Rhode Island? (Articles could be amended only if ALL states approved)

B: What was the basic difference between the Land Ordinance of 1785 and the Northwest Ordinance of 1787? (Economic-Survey and sale vs Political-statehood rules)

Drafting the Constitution

One-point questions

A: This protest in 1786-1787 cause panic and dismay throughout the nation (Shay's Rebellion)

B: Delegates at the Annapolis Convention in 1786 decided to call for another meeting the following year in what city? (Philadelphia)

Two-point questions

A: In May of 1787, delegates from every state except _____ gathered at what became known as the Constitutional Convention. (Rhode Island)

B: He was elected president of the Convention by a unanimous vote. (Washington)

C: What did Roger Sherman's Connecticut or Great Compromise offer on the issue of state representation in national government? (Bi-cameral Congress, equal rep. in upper house Senate, population size determined lower house rep)

Three-point questions

A: Name one check on power that the Judicial Branch was given over the Executive Branch. (Appointed for life, federal judges free of executive control, can declare actions unconstitutional)

B: Congress was given the power to regulate trade but was prevented from interfering with the slave trade for at least how many years? (20)

Ratifying the Constitution

One-point question

A: Define *ratification*: Official approval

B: Supporters of the Constitution called themselves _____. (Federalists)

Two-point questions

A: This was the series of 85 essays defending the Constitution. (The Federalist)

B: This was the pseudonym that Hamilton, Madison and Jay wrote under in the 85 essays. (Publius)

C: Name a leading Anti-federalist from Virginia. (Patrick Henry, Richard Henry Lee)

Three-point questions

A: New York finally ratified on July 26, 1788, by a majority of how many votes? (3, 30-27)

B: In the crucial process of adding a Bill of Rights to the Constitution, what number of amendments was originally submitted by Congress to the state legislatures for ratification? (12---10 were ratified)

Questions compiled by Christopher Brenner

Source for questions: *The Americans*

Constitution Primer

Directions: Fill in the missing word that best completes the rhyme. Prepare to discuss each answer in context with the United States Constitution's history and purpose.

War with Britain came to be
identified with _____. (ideal, natural right of freedom)liberty
America dawned new and free;
born as a _____. (government by the people)..democracy
On, republic, proud and great-
who, yet, should _____. (take part)?...participate
'Of the people' was the choice-
Could all people have a _____? (mechanism for being heard)..voice
Each state sought to keep station,
Set above a central _____. (group of people united politically, socially,
economically)..nation
Most states stressed men's liberty
Rather than _____. (level rank)..equality
State laws differed, one should note,
Over who would get to _____. (elect leaders)..vote
Representative debate-
Stand for people or for _____. (former colony)?....state
Power question to decide..
Was it something to _____.? (split between two levels)..divide
Confederation had the floor-
Government in peace and _____. (national conflict)..war
Articles would help the cause;
Just one branch to make the _____. (legal rules)..laws
Other issues tied their hands-
Who would get the western _____.? (territories)..lands
Ordinance would get it straight;
Laws to bring in each new _____. (national political entity)..state
Problems reared up as they moved:
Change was good if ALL _____. (assented)..approved
Population: more of note;
Still, each still had just one _____. (political yea or nay)..vote
On this men were most afraid-
Congress could not settle _____. (commerce)..trade
Debtors' protests drew their gaze
led by angry Daniel _____. (Shays)..as is
Annapolis reception chilly-
One year on, they'd meet in _____! (PA seaport)..Philly
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Get the idea? Now, try to rhyme a key Constitutional term as designated!!
(Assign one term for students as applicable. Compile works on board when ready.)

