Wanted: A Just Right Government

Time Needed: One class period
Materials Needed:
Student worksheets
Power Point and projector -or- overhead transparencies

Copy Instructions:
Guided notes worksheet (2 pages; class set)
Crossword review (1 page; class set)

Learning Objectives. Students will be able to:

- Describe how the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation led to the writing of the Constitution.
- Compare the Virginia plan with the New Jersey plan.
- Compare the Articles of Confederation with the Constitution.

STEP BY STEP

☐ ANTICIPATE with a quick poll of the class. Ask students, “Imagine we were going to have a class ice cream party and we could only have one kind of ice cream. How many people would want chocolate? Strawberry? Rocky Road?” After the poll, ask students whether they think it would be possible to get everyone to agree. What about if the class could have two flavors? Three? Would it be possible to at least satisfy everyone, even if they don’t get their very favorite flavor? Tell students they are going to learn how the U.S. government was created, and that a lot of the process had to do with getting people to agree on things.

☐ DISTRIBUTE one guided notes worksheet to each student.

☐ READ the introduction paragraph on the guided notes worksheet with the class.

☐ WORK THROUGH the guided notes worksheet using either the Power Point presentation or the overhead transparencies. If you are using overhead transparencies, follow the teacher’s guide and use to guide your instruction.

☐ DISTRIBUTE one crossword worksheet to each student.

☐ ALLOW time for students to complete the crossword.

☐ REVIEW the answers with the class if you wish.

☐ CLOSE by asking students to silently recall one problem with the Articles of Confederation that the Constitution solved. Conduct a check for understanding by having students write down or share their answers.
Starting From Scratch

After the American colonists declared independence from Great Britain, the first thing they had to decide was what kind of government to have. The colonists were tired of living under British control. The British government had treated them unfairly, and the colonists set out to make sure their new government would be much, much better!

The First Attempt: The _______________ of ______________________________________

A confederation is a ______________ of individuals ______________ together for a ________________.

- Each state was _______________ and had its own ________________.
- Each state sent _________________ to the “Congress of the Confederation.”
- The Congress was the only ______________ government. There was no ________________.
- In Congress, each state got __________ vote.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hey, this sounds great!</th>
<th>Wait! Not so fast...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>States get to keep their ___________ and _________________.</td>
<td>Congress had no way to ______________ its laws!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No _________________ telling states what to do.</td>
<td>Congress had no power to collect __________ to pay for the military!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress had the power to create a ________________ to ________________ all the states.</td>
<td>The Articles could only be ______________ if ______ the states agreed!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A New Idea

- **States had different** _______________. For example, some states depended on ______________, while others mostly grew ________________.

- **States had different** _______________. Some states had _____________ people and some had ____________.

- **People had different** _______________. Some people ________________ a central government, while others thought a central government was _________________.

### A New Idea

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION</th>
<th>NEW IDEA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government has _____ branch:</td>
<td>Government has _____ branches:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Legislative: ______ laws</td>
<td>✓ Legislative: ______ laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Executive: ______ laws</td>
<td>✓ Executive: ______ laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Judicial: ______ laws</td>
<td>✓ Judicial: ______ laws</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BUT WAIT!** How many ______ should each state get in the legislature?

- **Virginia Plan**
  - Number of votes depends on ________________
  - _____________ states would have more power

- **New Jersey Plan**
  - Each state gets ______ vote
  - _____________ states would have more power

**The Constitution Solution!**

Divide the legislature into ______ houses:
- Senate: Each state gets ______ votes
- House of Representatives: Number of votes depends on ________________

### More Constitution Solutions

- The Constitution requires each state to treat _____________ of other states the _______ as it treats its own citizens.
- The Constitution can be changed by _____ of the members of Congress and _____ of the states.
- The Constitution says that the laws passed by Congress are _______________ to laws passed by the ______________.
Across
3. Fraction of states that must agree to change the Constitution
5. Under the Virginia Plan, these states would have more power
7. The branch that makes laws
9. States must treat their own citizens and other states’ citizens this way
12. The branch that interprets laws
13. The document that replaced the Articles of Confederation
16. One problem was that states charged these on goods from other states
17. Under the Articles of Confederation, congress could not do this to its laws, so states could just ignore laws
19. The Articles let Congress create this but not pay for it
20. States send these to Congress
22. Under the Articles, America did not have one of these

Down
1. Early Americans had something in common with this fictional character!
2. These were the “individuals” in the “confederation” created by the Articles
4. Under the New Jersey plan, these states would have more power
6. The branch that carries out laws
8. In the House of Representatives, the number of votes a state gets depends on this
9. The chamber of Congress where each state gets two votes
10. A group of individuals united together for a purpose
11. The Articles of Confederation was America’s first plan for _____.
14. One of two things people were afraid states might lose
15. The Articles of Confederation created a government that had only one of these
18. The Constitution says laws passed by Congress are ___ to state laws.
21. One of two things people were afraid states might lose
Across
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WANTED

A government that:

. Has enough ________________ to do its job.
. Doesn’t give anyone too ____________ power.
. Considers the needs of all ________________
. Lets people have a ________________
. Protects individual ________________

much     say     states
power     rights
The First Attempt:

The ___________ of ________________

Wait! What’s a *confederation*??

A *confederation* is a ___________ of individuals ________________ together for a ________________.

Under the Articles of Confederation:

- Each state was ________________ and had its own ________________.
- Each state sent ________________ to the “Congress of the Confederation.”
- The Congress was the only ________________ government. There was no ________________.
- In Congress, each state got _______ vote.
The First Attempt:
The Articles of Confederation

States get to keep their _____________ and
_______________________.
No _________________ telling states what
to do.
Congress had the power to create a
___________________ to _____________ all the
states.

Congress had no way to
___________________ its laws!
Congress had no power to collect __________
to pay for the military!
The Articles could only be _________________
if ___________ the states agreed!

Hey, this sounds great!

Wait! Not so fast...
The Articles of Confederation had problems. But people could not agree on what kind of government this new country needed! There was no easy solution because...

- **States had different _________.**
  For example, some states depended on __________ while others mainly grew __________.

- **States had different _________.**
  Some states had __________ people and some had __________.

- **People had different _________.**
  Some people __________ a central government, while others thought a central government was ____________.
**Articles of Confederation**

_____ branch

Legislative: ________ laws

**New Idea!!**

_____ branches

Legislative: ________ laws

Executive: ____________ laws

Judicial: ____________ laws

**BUT WAIT!** How many ________________ should each state get in the legislature?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Virginia Plan</strong></th>
<th><strong>New Jersey Plan</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>• Legislature has ___ chamber</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Number of votes depends on ____________</td>
<td>• Each state gets ______ vote.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ____________ states would have more power.</td>
<td>• ____________ states would have more power.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Constitution Solution!**

Divide the legislature into _____ chambers:

• Senate: Each state gets _____ votes
• House: Number of votes depends on ______________

**More Constitution Solutions**

• The Constitution requires that each state treat __________ of other states the ________ as it treats its own citizens.

• The Constitution can be changed if ______ of the members of Congress and _____ of the states agree.

• The Constitution says that the laws passed by Congress are ____________ to laws passed by the ______________.
## Final Review!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Under the Constitution...</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Laws are made by the _____ branch.</td>
<td>executive</td>
<td>legislative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. States must treat people from other states _____.</td>
<td>the same</td>
<td>differently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Laws passed by Congress are _____ to state laws.</td>
<td>inferior</td>
<td>superior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Congress has ____.</td>
<td>one chamber</td>
<td>two chambers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Each state gets two votes (representatives) in the _____.</td>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. In the _____, the number of votes each state gets is based on its population.</td>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. A change to the Constitution must be approved by _____.</td>
<td>All states</td>
<td>3/4 of states</td>
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**TRANSPARENCY GUIDE**

If using transparencies, use the teacher’s guides at the end of the lesson to fill in the blanks and insert the following mini-quizzes as a check for understanding.

PROJECT transparency #1. Allow students to complete the cloze activity in their notes and then review the correct answers as a class.

**AFTER completing transparency #3,** read the following statements aloud to students and let them give a thumbs up or thumbs down response based on whether the statement is true or false.

**Mini-Quiz #1: True or False?**

1. There would be a President to lead the country. (F)
2. States would still be independent. (T)
3. The Articles were easy to change. (F)
4. The more people a state had, the more votes it got in Congress. (F)
5. Congress did not have the power to collect taxes. (T)
6. Congress could pass laws that the states had to obey. (F)
7. The Articles of Confederation created the first American government. (T)

**AFTER completing transparency #4,** read the following statements aloud to students and let them give a thumbs up or thumbs down response based on whether the statement is true or false.

**Mini-Quiz #2: True or False?**

1. Everybody thought the central government should have more power. (F)
2. Some people were afraid states might lose their independence. (T)
3. Different states had different needs for government to meet. (T)
4. The states all got along with each other. (F)
5. The government created by the Articles of Confederation had everything under control between the states. (F)

**PROJECT transparency #6.** Preface each statement with “Under the Constitution...” and allow students to vote for the term in column A or column B.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Laws are made by the _____ branch.</th>
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<td>3/4 of states</td>
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WANTED

A government that:

. Has enough **POWER** to do its job.
. Doesn’t give anyone too **MUCH** power.
. Considers the needs of all **STATES**
. Lets people have a **SAY**
. Protects individual **RIGHTS**

much     say     states

power     rights
The First Attempt:

The ___________ of ________________

Wait! What’s a confederation??

A **confederation** is a **group** of individuals **united** together for a **purpose**.

Under the Articles of Confederation:

• Each state was **independent** and had its own **government**.

• Each state sent **representatives** to the “Congress of the Confederation.”

• The Congress was the only **central** government. There was no **President**.

• In Congress, each state got **1** vote.
The First Attempt:

The Articles of Confederation

States get to keep their ___power___ and ___independence___.

No ___government____ telling states what to do.

Congress had the power to create a ___military____ to ___protect____ all the states.

Congress had no way to ___enforce____ its laws!

Congress had no power to collect ___taxes____ to pay for the military!

The Articles could only be ___changed____ if ___all____ the states agreed!

MINI QUIZ #1: Pause to give Mini Quiz #1 (found on the teacher guide). Read each True/False question out loud. Have the class answer as a chorus or show “thumbs up” for true and “thumbs down” for false.
The Articles of Confederation had problems. But people could not agree on what kind of government this new country needed! There was no easy solution because...

- **States had different **needs**.**
  
  For example, some states depended on **fishing** while others mainly grew **crops**.

- **States had different **sizes**.**
  
  Some states had **many** people and some had **few**.

- **People had different **opinions**.**
  
  Some people **feared** a central government, while others thought a central government was **necessary**.

**MINI QUIZ #2:** Pause to give Mini Quiz #2 (found on the teacher guide). Read each True/False question out loud. Have the class answer as a chorus or show “thumbs up” for true and “thumbs down” for false.
A New Idea

**Articles of Confederation**

1 branch

Legislative: Makes laws

**New Idea!!**

3 branches

Legislative: Makes laws

Executive: Carries out laws

Judicial: Interprets laws

BUT WAIT! How many votes should each state get in the legislature?

**Virginia Plan**

- Legislature has 1 chamber
- Number of votes depends on the state’s population.
- Larger states would have more power.

**New Jersey Plan**

- Legislature has 2 chambers
- Each state gets 1 vote.
- Smaller states would have more power.

The Constitution Solution!

Divide the legislature into 2 chambers:

- Senate: Each state gets 2 votes
- House: Number of votes depends on population

More Constitution Solutions

- The Constitution requires that each state treat citizens of other states the same as it treats its own citizens.
- The Constitution can be changed if 2/3 of the members of Congress and 3/4 of the states agree.
- The Constitution says that the laws passed by Congress are superior to laws passed by the states.

**FINAL REVIEW:** Project the Final Review transparency. Uncover each question one by one. Have the class answer “A” or “B” as a chorus (answers are on your teacher guide). Pause to discuss the correct/incorrect answers, then move to the next question.