

SS8H4ab

# Georgia's History: Ratification of the U.S. Constitution



# Standards

**SS8H4 The student will describe the impact of events that led to the ratification of the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights.**

- a. Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of both the Georgia Constitution of 1777 and the Articles of Confederation and explain how weaknesses in the Articles of Confederation led to a need to revise the Articles.
- b. Describe the role of Georgia at the Constitutional Convention of 1787; include the role of Abraham Baldwin and William Few, and reasons why Georgia ratified the new constitution.

SS8H4a

# Georgia's Constitution and the Articles of Confederation

# Georgia Constitution

- Georgia's provincial congress met after the Declaration of Independence was adopted to create a new government.
- In 1777, a new state constitution was implemented that defined separate executive, legislative, and judicial branches.
- The constitution also listed basic rights, outlined election process for governor (one-year term) and other state officials, created a superior court for each county, and gave the state's power to the unicameral legislature.

# Georgia Constitution

- The Georgia Constitution of 1777 did a good job of separating the government branches and protecting basic rights of the citizens.
- However, it put too much power in the hands of the legislature.
- Also, the legislature was unicameral so there was no check on its power.
- Georgia's constitution was not ratified by a vote from its people, so it did not fully represent their interests.

# Articles of Confederation

- America's first written constitution was not the Constitution that we have in place today.
- After the Revolutionary War ended, Congress began writing the Articles of Confederation with a strong central government in mind.
- Many states opposed this because they did not want a monarchy and their goal was to give as much power as possible "to the people".





## Drafting the Articles of Confederation

# Articles of Confederation

- The Articles of Confederation went into effect on March 1, 1781.
- The Articles set up a republican democracy where citizens elect people to represent them.
- Unfortunately, the Articles created an extremely weak central government that gave states a lot of power over their own affairs.



ARTICLES  
OF  
Confederation  
AND  
Perpetual Union  
BETWEEN THE  
STATES  
OF

NEW HAMPSHIRE, MASSACHUSETTS BAY, RHODE ISLAND, AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS,  
CONNECTICUT, NEW YORK, NEW JERSEY, PENNSYLVANIA, DELAWARE, MARYLAND,  
VIRGINIA, NORTH CAROLINA, SOUTH CAROLINA, AND GEORGIA.

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WILLIAMSBURG:

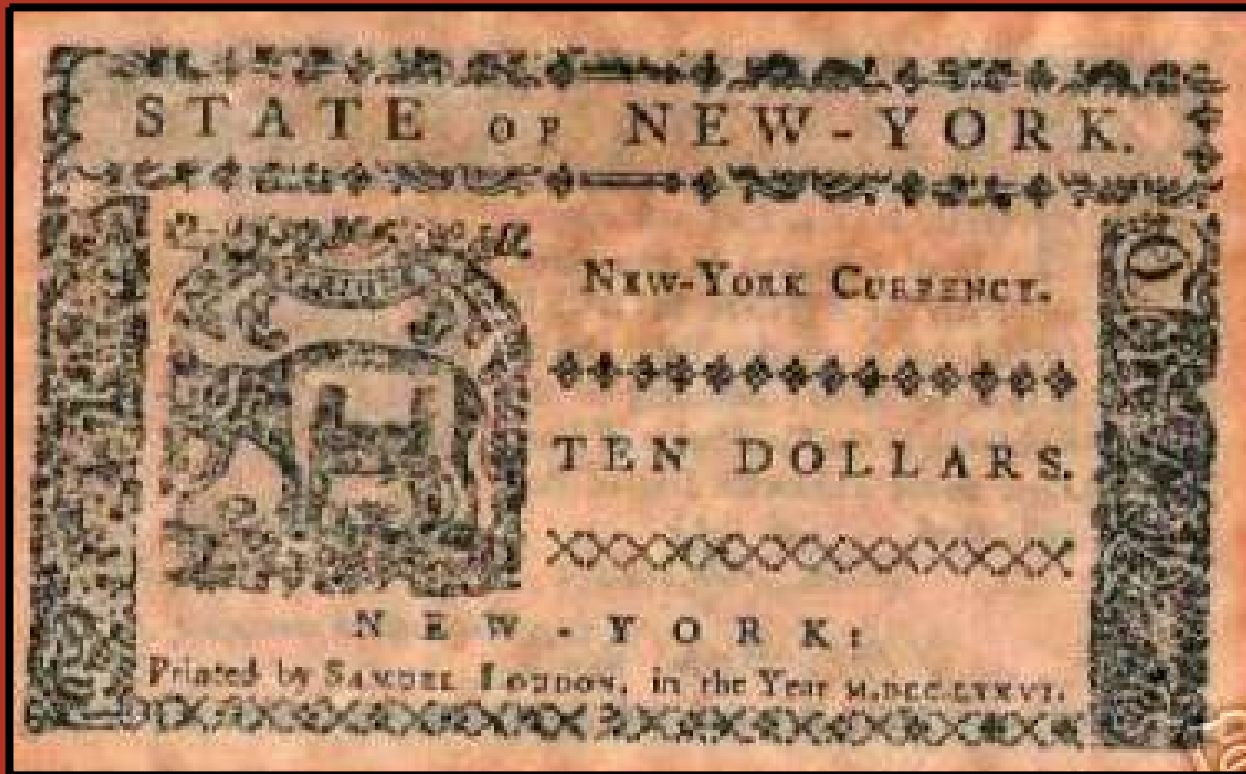
Printed by ALEXANDER PURDIE.

# Weaknesses

- The Articles could not levy taxes to fund the government (making it impossible to pay debts or soldiers).
- It could not regulate trade among the states (could put tariffs on each other).
- It provided for no judicial or executive branch, only a legislative branch.

# Weaknesses

- Congress could make laws, but not force states to comply with them.
- Each state only received 1 vote, regardless of its population.
- All 13 states had to approve a law for it to pass.
- Each state had its own currency.



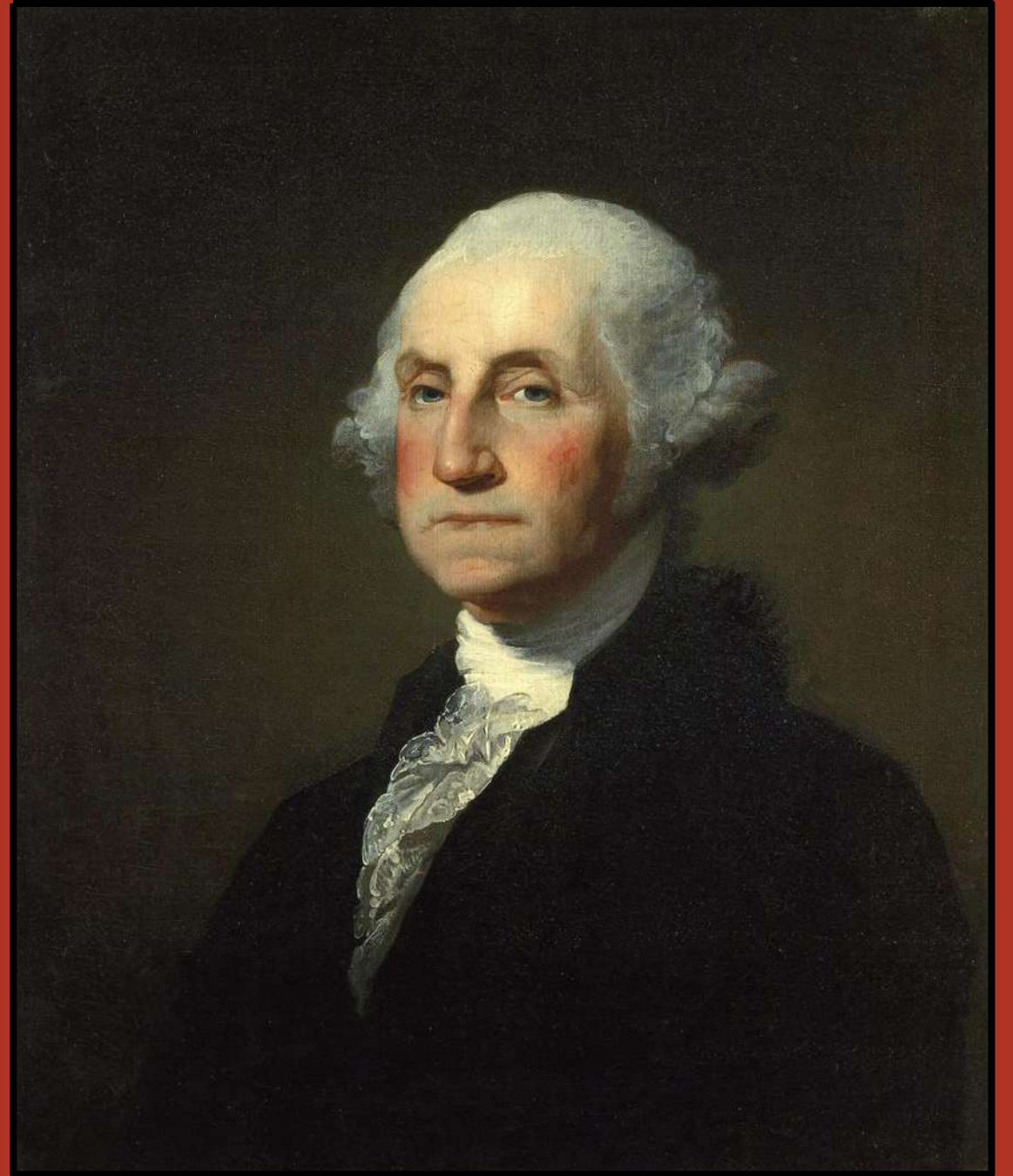
The United States did not have a common currency under the Articles of Confederation.



# Time for Change

- It soon became apparent that the Articles had to be revised.
- The states argued over borders and trade, and Congress had no power to stop them.
- Foreign governments did not know if they were dealing with 1 country or 13 different ones.
- The country's economy worsened.

George Washington called the Articles of Confederation “a half-starved, limping government”.





SS8H4b

# Constitutional Convention

Ratification of the  
New Constitution



# Convention

- The founders realized that the Articles of Confederation were too weak to effectively govern the country and had to be revised.
- In May 1787, delegates from all 13 states met in Philadelphia with the intent to change the Articles.
- The members ended up discarding the Articles and writing a completely new document.
- This meeting became known as the Constitutional Convention.



Independence Hall,  
Philadelphia



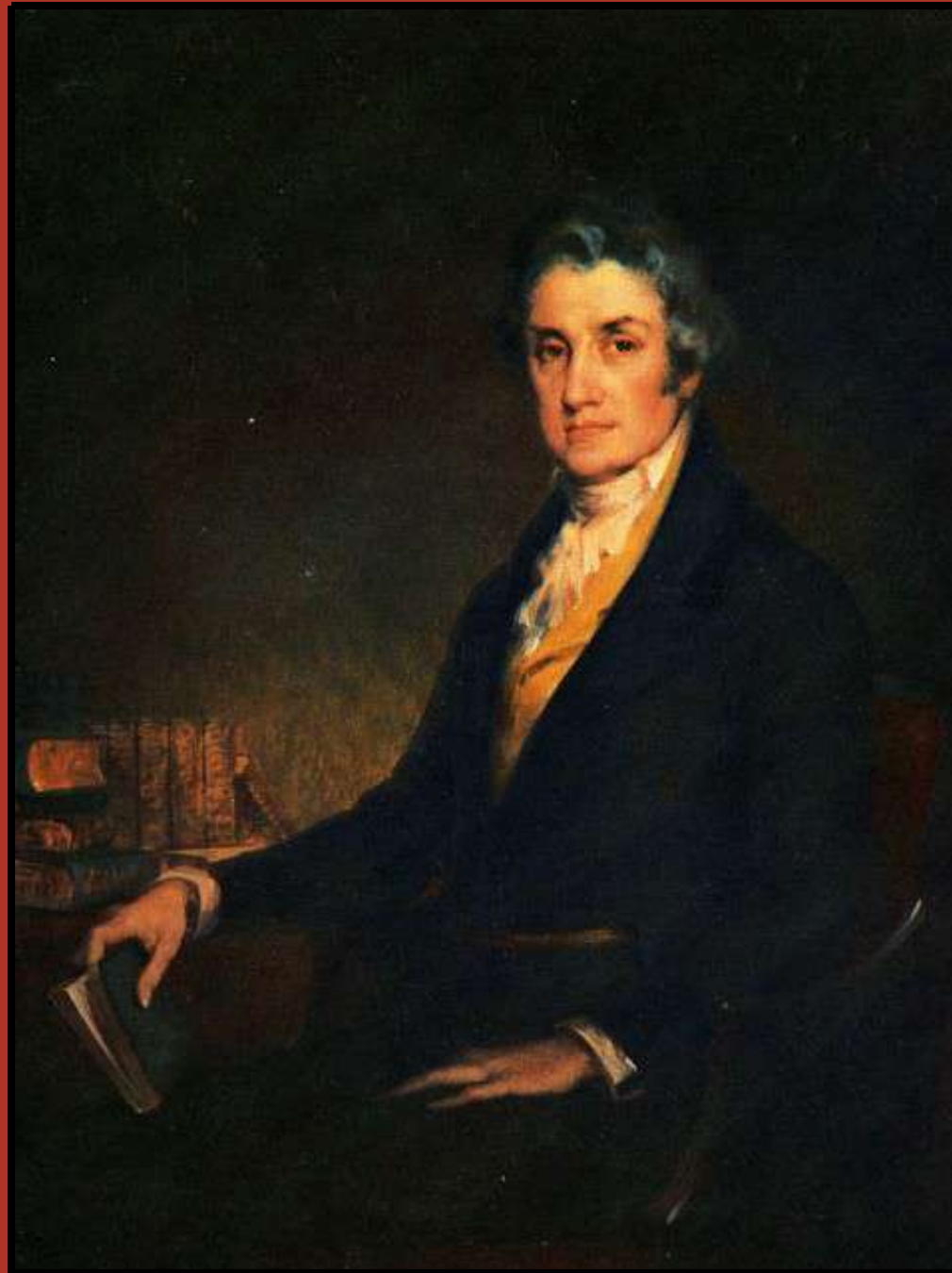


## Constitutional Convention 1787

# Abraham Baldwin

- Georgia had two delegates that signed the Constitution, Abraham Baldwin and William Few.
- Abraham Baldwin was a native of Connecticut and a graduate of Yale University.
- During the American Revolution, he served as a chaplain in the U.S. Army.
- In 1784, he moved to Georgia and became a successful politician.

# Abraham Baldwin



# Representation

- During the Constitutional Convention, Baldwin was involved in debates over the issue of representation.
- With the Virginia Plan, small states were worried that they would be outnumbered by large states.
- Baldwin changed his vote to side with the smaller states, and his vote forced a tie.

# Great Compromise

- To solve the representation issue, Baldwin helped develop the Great Compromise.
- This created a bicameral legislature where each state had two members in the Senate, but representation in the House of Representatives was based on the state's population.
- The compromise pulled the convention out of a complete deadlock.





# William Few

- In 1787, most Georgians supported a strong central government.
- Georgia's other delegate to the convention, William Few, represented Georgians well by voting in favor of the national government during critical times at the convention.
- He worked diligently to make sure that the Constitution was ratified.

William Few





# We the People

of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquillity, provide for the common Defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

## Article I.

Section 1. All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

Section 2. The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, and the Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.

No Person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the Age of twenty five Years, and seven Years a Citizen of the United States, and when elected, he shall not be an Inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen.

Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and including indentured Servants, three fifths of all other Persons. The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of the years, in such Manner as they shall be directed. The Number of Representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty Thousand, and each State shall have at least one Representative, and each Representative shall have the Qualification of Electors in that State. The Electors in each State shall have the Qualification of Electors in that State. The Electors in each State shall have the Qualification of Electors in that State.

When vacancies happen in that Representation from any Cause, they shall be filled up in such Manner as the Legislature of each State may direct.

Section 3. The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen for six Years, and each Senator shall have one Vote.

Immediately after they shall be assembled in Congress, they shall be divided as equally as may be into three Classes. In each Class, one Senator shall be chosen for the first Term, one for the second Term, and one for the third Term. In the first Class, one Senator shall be chosen for the first Term, one for the second Term, and one for the third Term. In the second Class, one Senator shall be chosen for the first Term, one for the second Term, and one for the third Term. In the third Class, one Senator shall be chosen for the first Term, one for the second Term, and one for the third Term.

No Person shall be a Senator who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty Years, and been seven Years a Citizen of the United States, and who, when elected, shall not be an Inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen.

The Vice President of the United States shall be President of the Senate, but shall have no Vote, unless they be equally divided. The Senate shall choose their other Officers, and also a President pro tempore, in the Absence of the Vice President, or when he shall exercise the Office of President of the United States.

The Senate shall have the sole Power to try all impeachments. When sitting for that Purpose, they shall be on Oath. When the President of the United States is tried, the Chief Justice shall preside. And no Person shall be removed from Office, unless by the Concurrence of two thirds of the Senate.

Impeachment in Cases of Impeachment shall not extend further than to removal from Office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any Office of Honor, Trust, or Profit under the United States; but the Party impeached shall nevertheless be liable to Suit and redress, to Judgment, Trial, and Punishment according to Law.

Section 4. The House Representatives and Members of both Houses shall be elected by the People of the several States, in such Manner as they shall direct. The Electors in each State shall have the Qualification of Electors in that State.

The Congress shall assemble at least once in every Year, and such Meetings shall be on the first Monday in December, unless they shall by Law appoint a different Day.

Section 5. Each House shall be the Judge of the Elections, Returns, and Qualifications of its own Members, and a Majority of each shall constitute a Quorum to do Business, if a smaller Number may agree to adjourn from day to day, and may be authorized to compel the Attendance of absent Members, in Person, or by their Deputies, as each House may determine.

Each House may determine the Rules of its Proceedings, punish its Members for disorderly Behavior, and, with the Concurrence of two thirds, expel a Member.

Each House shall keep a Journal of its Proceedings, and from time to time publish the same, excepting such Parts as may in their Judgment require Secrecy; and the Yeas and Nays of the Members of either House on any Question shall, at the Desire of one fifth of that House, be entered on the Journal.

Neither House, during the Session of Congress, shall, without the Consent of the other, adjourn for more than three Days, nor to any other Place than that in which the two Houses shall be sitting.

Section 6. The Senators and Representatives shall receive a Compensation for their Services, to be ascertained by Law, and paid out of the Treasury of the United States. They shall in all Cases, except Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors, be privileged from Arrest during their Attendance at the Session of that House, and in going to and returning from the same, and for any Speech or Debate in either House; they shall not be questioned in any other Place.

No Senator or Representative shall, during the Time for which he was elected, be appointed to any civil Office under the Authority of the United States, which shall have been created, or the Emoluments whereof shall have been increased during such Term; and no Person holding any Office under the United States shall be a Senator or Representative during the Continuance of his Office.

Section 7. All Bills for raising Revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with Amendments as to the Matter of the same. Every Bill which shall have passed by a Majority of each House, shall before it becomes Law, be presented to the President of the United States; and if he approve, he shall sign it, and it shall become Law; or if he disapprove, he shall return it, with his Objections, to the House of Representatives, by which it shall be decided whether to pass the Bill or not.

Page 1 of the Original  
Copy of the U.S.  
Constitution

# Georgia

- On January 2, 1788, Georgia was the 4<sup>th</sup> state to ratify the U.S. Constitution.
- Many Georgians favored a strong national government that could protect them from Native Americans and the Spanish in Florida.
- Georgians in coastal regions also hoped that the central government would improve trade regulations.

# Teacher Directions – Georgia Delegate's Voicemail

- Have the students imagine that they called one of the GA delegates (Baldwin or Few) during the Constitutional Convention.
- Why would this man not be able to answer the phone? What would he be doing at the time?
- The students will create a possible voicemail message that includes actual facts and details about the person's role at the Constitutional Convention.

# Teacher Directions – New Constitution Birth Announcement

- Have the students create a card to announce the “birth” of the new U.S. Constitution.
- The card should include a description of why and how the constitution was created (Articles of Confederation, Constitutional Convention, Great Compromise, etc.), an illustration of the event, and a commentary about how people in GA felt about the new document.



# New Constitution Birth Announcement

**Directions:** Create a card to announce the “birth” of the new U.S. Constitution. 1. Write a description about how and why it was formed (include reasons, people, events, etc.). 2. Draw an illustration to represent the event. 3. Write a commentary about how most people in Georgia feel about the formation of the new constitution.

It's a \_\_\_\_\_!

Date of Birth:

Place of Birth:

1.

2.

3.

# Teacher Info – Venn Diagram

- Have the students compare and contrast the Articles of Confederation and the United States Constitution.
- When finished, discuss answers as a class.

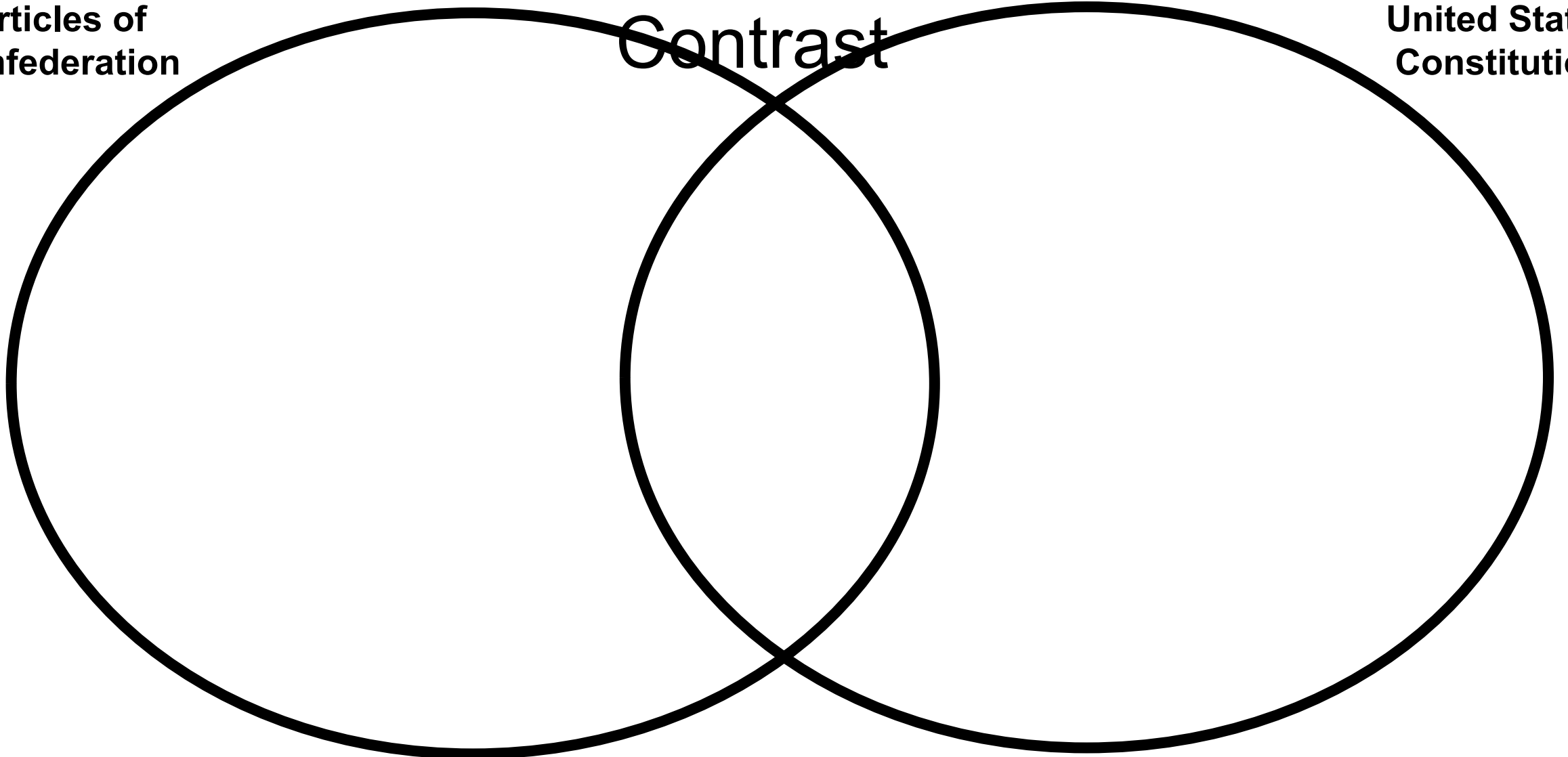
# United States' Government

Compare and

Contrast

Articles of  
Confederation

United States  
Constitution



## Teacher Info – 3.2.1. Ticket Out the Door

Have students write down 3 facts about the lesson, 2 important vocabulary words, and 1 question that they have. You can quickly read all of the questions at night and go over them the next day.

3. 2. 1.

3 Interesting Facts:

2 Key Vocabulary Words:

1 Question You Still Have:

3. 2. 1.

3 Interesting Facts:

2 Key Vocabulary Words:

1 Question You Still Have:

# Thank You!

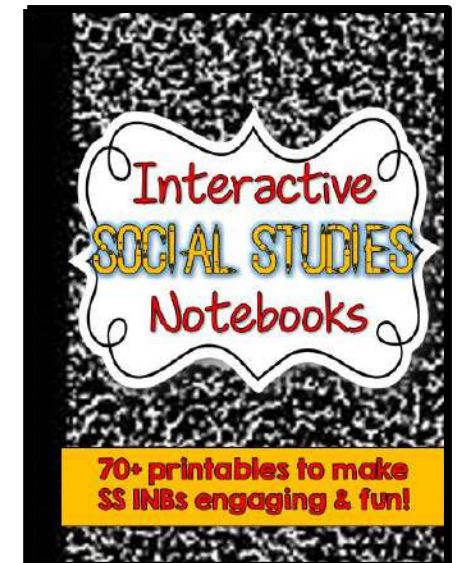


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