

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.

A R T I C L E S

O F

Confederation

A N D

Perpetual Union

B E T W E E N T H E

S T A T E S

O F

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

W I L L I A M S B U R G :

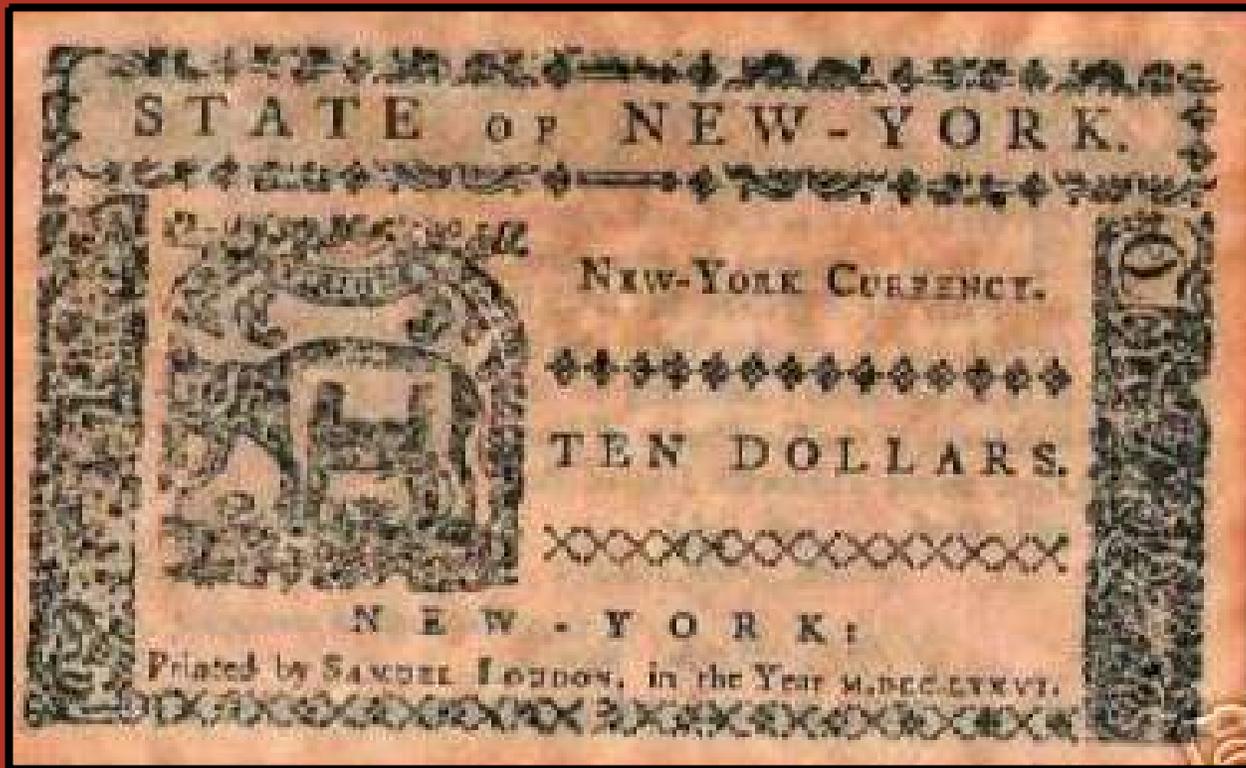
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Weaknesses

- 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.

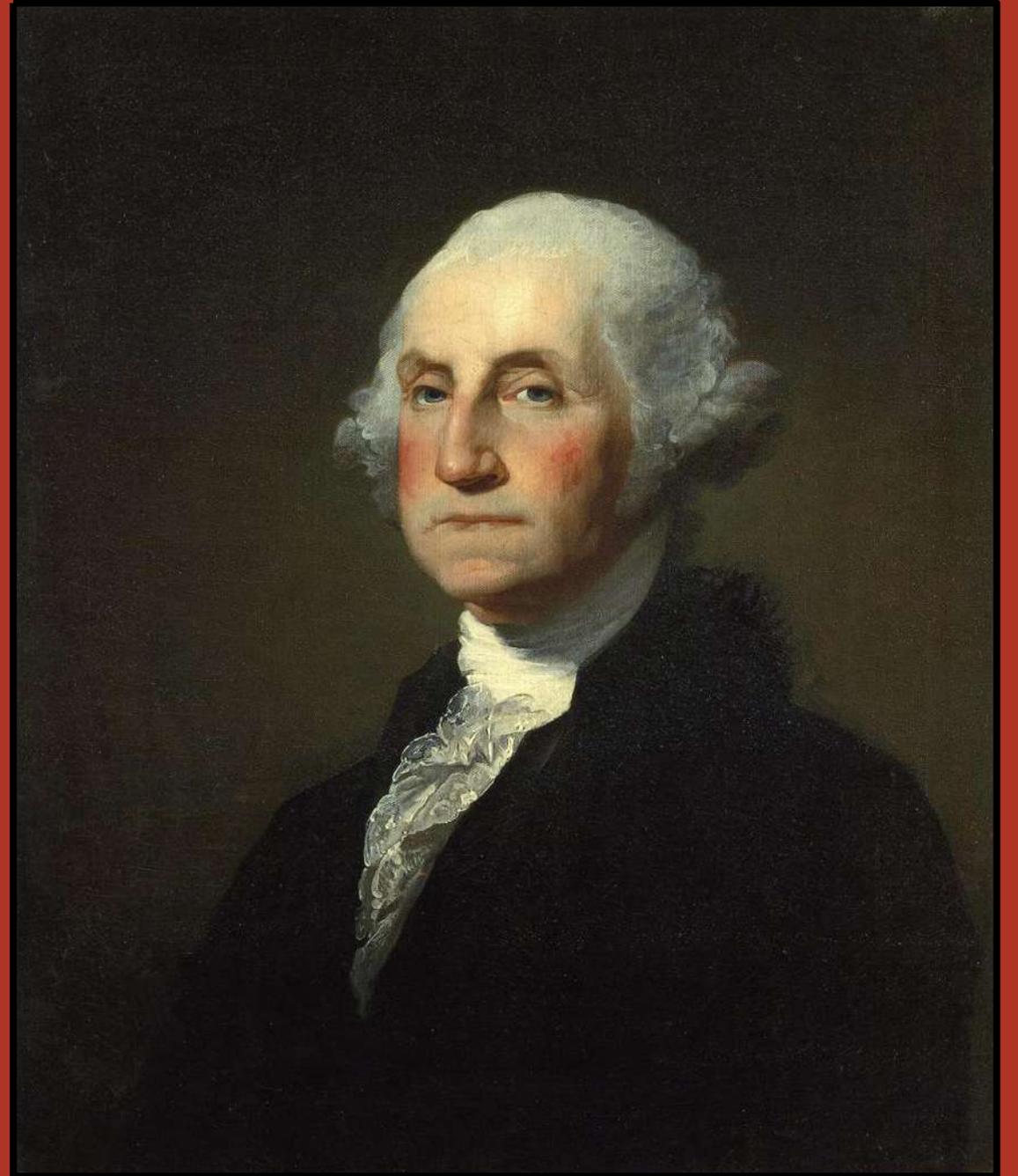


The United States did not have a common currency under the Articles of Confederation.

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

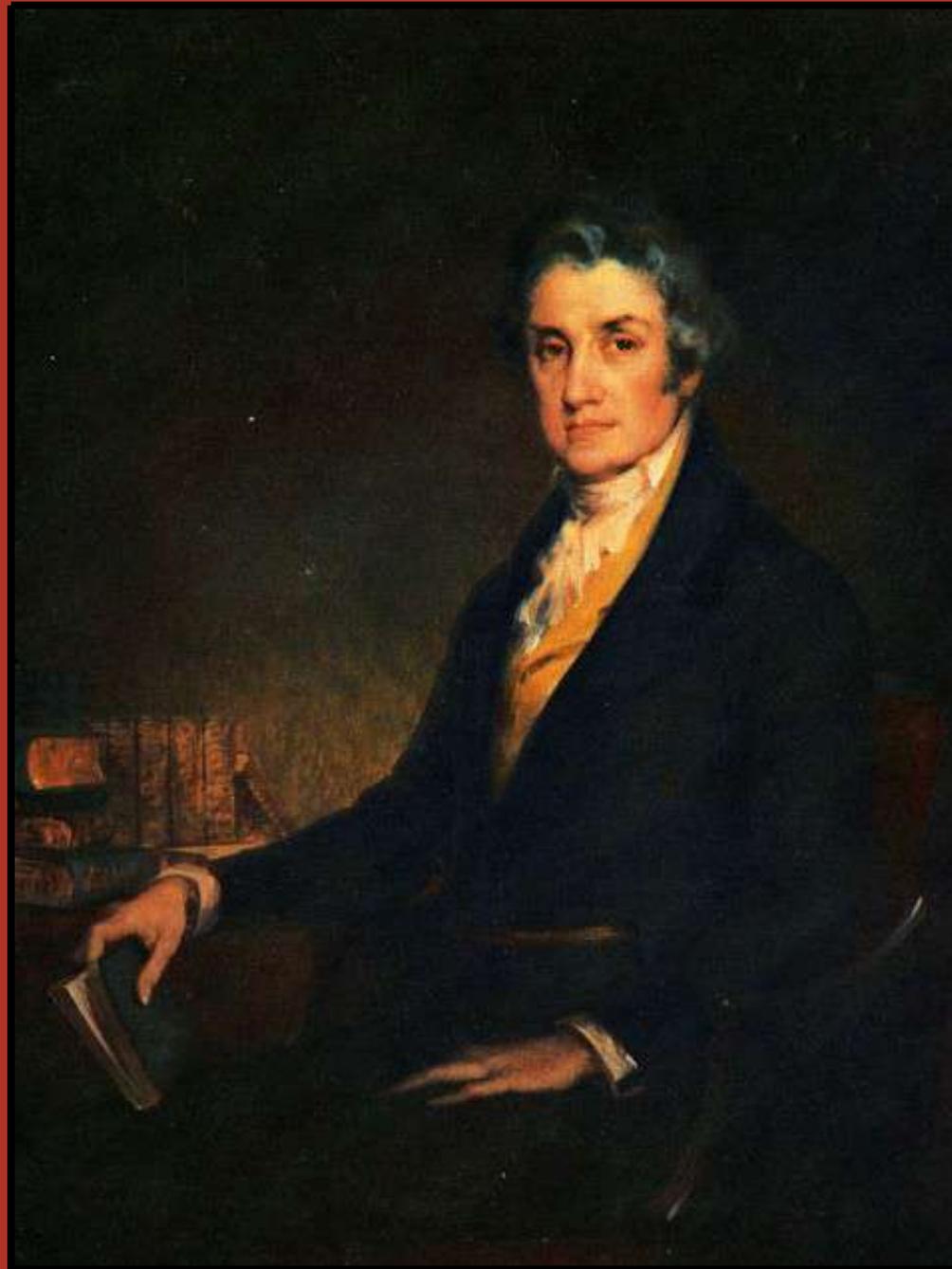


Constitutional Convention 1787

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.



Howard Chandler Christy
1846-1917

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



Georgia

- On January 2, 1788, Georgia was the 4th 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.

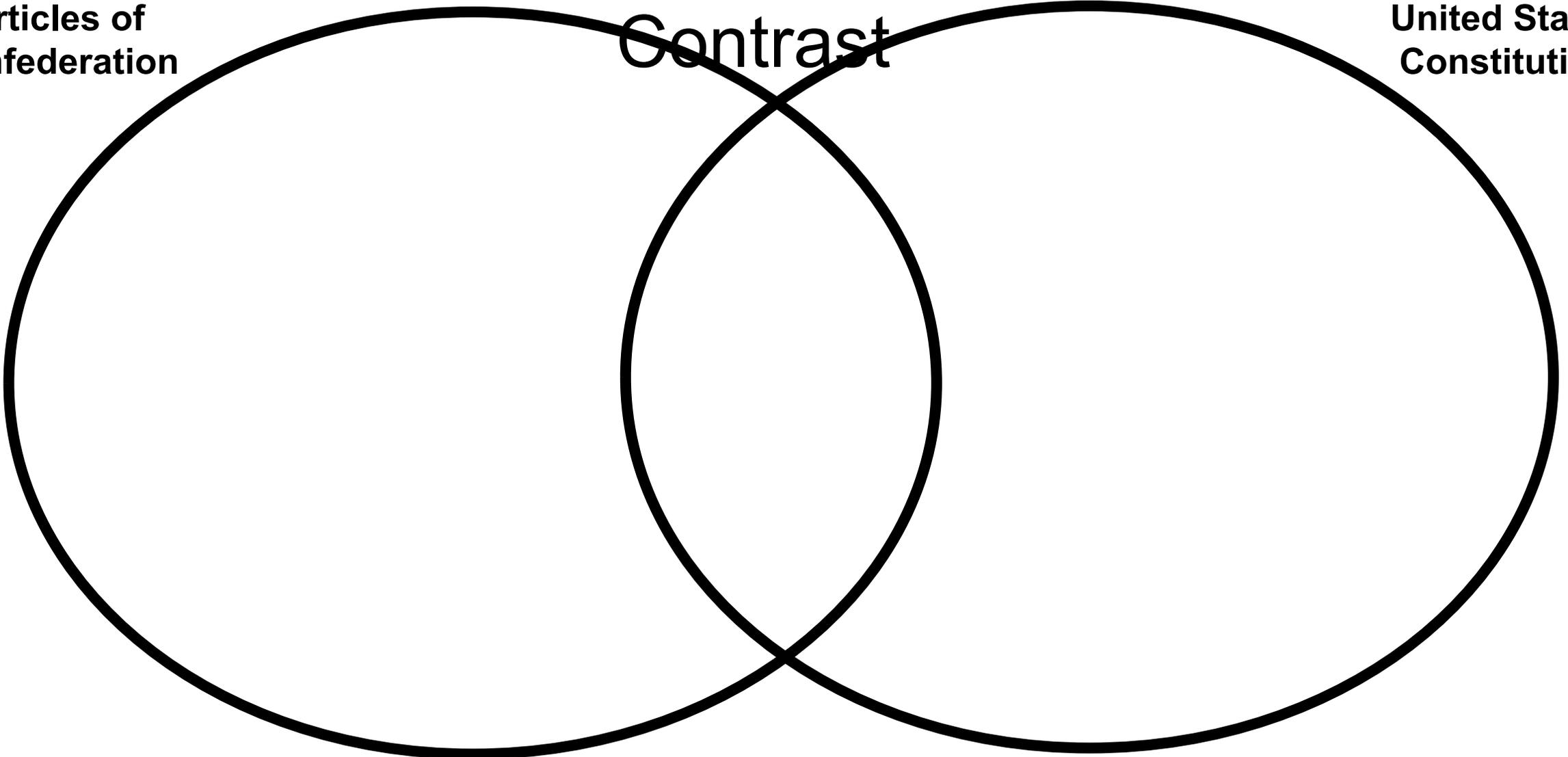
United States' Government

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:

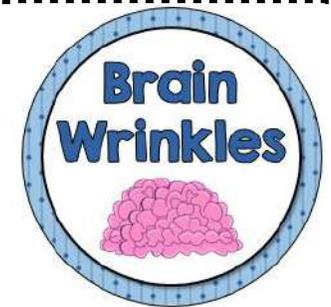
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3 Interesting Facts:

2 Key Vocabulary Words:

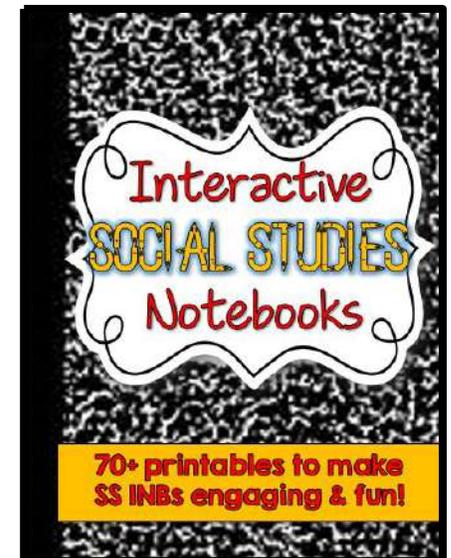
1 Question You Still Have:

Thank You!



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Ansley at Brain Wrinkles

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