

## Federalists v. Anti-Federalists

SSCG3 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the United States Constitution.

- Explain the main ideas in debate over ratification; include those in *The Federalist*

### **Choose one of the following:**

1. Create a poster (with an attention grabbing or persuasive hook/slogan) supporting either the Federalists or the Anti-Federalists views on ratification from the point of view of one of the following:
  - A former British soldier
  - The governor of one of the 13 colonies
  - A merchant in New York
  - A farmer in Maine
  - A slave in Georgia
  - A wealthy, educated woman in Boston
  - A religious leader (minister, priest, rabbi)
  
2. Write a newspaper article comparing the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists views on ratification. Include a related visual (chart, cartoon, picture, etc.) and an attention grabbing headline.
  
3. Write the lyrics to a rap or song comparing the views of the Federalists to the views of the Anti-Federalists on ratification.

### **Your choice must include:**

At least 3 arguments to support your case (use attached documents or find your own)

At least 1 quote from the papers to support your case (use attached documents or find your own)

# ANTIFEDERALISTS VS FEDERALISTS

Objections to the Constitution	Defenses of the Constitution
<p><b>Antifederalists -- states' rights advocates, backcountry farmers, poor farmers, the ill-educated and illiterate, debtors, &amp; paper-money advocates. In general, the poorer classes of society.</b></p>	<p><b>Federalists -- Well educated and propertied class. Most lived in settled areas along the seaboard.</b></p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Articles of Confederation were a good plan.</li> <li>2. Opposed strong central government. Opposed a standing army and a 10 square mile federal stronghold (later District of Columbia).</li> <li>3. Strong national government threatened state power.</li> <li>4. Strong national government threatened rights of the common people. Constitution was created by aristocratic elements. Suspected a sinister plot to suppress liberty of the masses.</li> <li>5. Constitution favored wealthy men and preserved their power. Opposed the dropping of annual elections for representatives.</li> <li>6. Constitution lacked a bill of rights. State governments already had bills of rights but they might be overridden by the Constitution.</li> <li>7. Argued against 2/3 ratification plan. Articles of Confederation required unanimous consent.</li> <li>8. Opposed omitting any reference to God.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Articles of Confederation were weak and ineffective.</li> <li>2. National government needed to be strong in order to function. Powers in foreign policy needed to be strengthened while excesses at home needed to be controlled.</li> <li>3. Strong national government needed to control uncooperative states.</li> <li>4. Men of experience and talent should govern the nation. "Mobocracy" threatened the security of life and property.</li> <li>5. National government would protect the rights of the people.</li> <li>6. Constitution and state governments protected individual freedoms without bill of rights. Since people could take back delegated power to the gov't, there was no risk that the national gov't would overreach.</li> <li>7. In favor of establishing the Constitution with almost any means possible.</li> <li>8. More sympathetic to separation of church and state.</li> </ol>

## Positions on the Constitution

Anti-Federalists	Federalists
<p>Throughout history, the only places where republican governments had worked had been small communities. In those communities, the people had been about equal in wealth and had held the same values. People who are not too rich or too poor are more likely to possess civic virtue and to agree on what is best for their common welfare. The new nation was so large and diverse that people would not be able to agree on their common welfare.</p>	<p>History has proven that all of the small republics of the past had been destroyed by selfish groups. The civic virtue of the citizens had not been enough to prevent them from seeking their own selfish interests rather than working for the common welfare. A large republic, where the government was organized on the basis of checks and balances, and power was divided between the national and the state governments, would be better. Under such a government, it would be more difficult for special interests to attain their goals and violate the common welfare.</p>
<p>Free government requires the active participation of the people. The national government would be located too far from most people's communities to allow them to participate. As a result, the only way the government would be able to rule would be through the use of military force. The result would be a tyranny.</p>	<p>The national government would be so good at protecting the rights of the people that it would soon gain their loyalty and support. It could not become a tyranny because of the limitations placed on it by the system of checks and balances and separation of powers.</p>
<p>The Constitution gives the national government too much power at the expense of the state governments. It gives the government the power to tax citizens and to raise and keep an army. The supremacy clause means all the national government's laws are superior to laws made by the states. As a result, it would only be a matter of time until the state governments were destroyed.</p>	<p>It is true that the national government would have greater power than it did under the Articles of Confederation. But its powers are limited to tasks that face the entire nation, such as trade, currency, and defense. Experience has shown that a stronger national government is needed to deal with these problems. The Constitution provides adequate protections for the state governments to prevent their being destroyed by the national government.</p>
<p>The necessary and proper clause is too general and, as a result, gives too much power to the national government. It is dangerous not to list the powers of the government in order to put clear limits on them.</p>	<p>The necessary and proper and general welfare clauses are necessary if the national government is to do the things it is responsible for doing.</p>

The Constitution gives too much power to the executive branch of government. It would soon become a monarchy.

A strong executive branch is necessary for the national government to be able to fulfill its responsibilities. The powers of the national government are separated and balanced among the three branches so no one can dominate the others. The Constitution gives the Congress and the Supreme Court ways to check the use of power by the executive branch so it cannot become a monarchy.

The Constitution does not include a bill of rights which is essential for protecting individuals against the power of the national government.

A bill of rights is unnecessary because the powers of the government are limited. A bill of rights would give the impression that the people could only expect protection of those rights that were actually listed.



What slogans might the Federalists and Anti-Federalists be using? Write one of your own.

## Federalist & Antifederalist Positions

Issue	Federalists	Antifederalists	Notes
A Constitution establishing a strong central government	Favored	Opposed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The chief worry of the Antifederalists was that the states would lose influence with the growth in the national government's power</li> </ul>
Power of thirteen states	Favored limiting state power. Argued that Senate (with two representatives per state) adequately represented state interests	Strong supported power and influence of states	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local control was key to Antifederalist concept of democracy. This issue would boil up in states' rights fights in 1800s</li> </ul>
Bill of Rights	Not necessary	Supported as essential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The absence of a Bill of Rights in the original Constitution was seen as a real threat to individual citizens' liberties</li> </ul>
Articles of Confederation	Opposed as ineffectual as a governing document. Congress' power was limited to requesting cooperation from states.	Articles needed to be amended, not abandoned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The decision at the Annapolis Convention (1786) to suggest a national convention to modify the Articles proved to be crucial.</li> </ul>
Size of the nation	A large republic was seen as the best protection for individual freedoms	Only a small republic could protect rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No experiment in democracy on a scale of America had ever been attempted.</li> </ul>
Supporters	Large farmers, merchants, artisans	Small farmers, often from rural areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only a few wealthy men (Mason and Randolph of Virginia, Gerry of Massachusetts) joined the Antifederalists.</li> </ul>

\*Based on *The American Journey: A History of the United States* by Goldfield, et al.

<b>Federalist Quotes (for a stronger, regulated central gov)</b>	<b>Anti-Federalists Quotes (wanted states rights and a Bill of Rights)</b>
<p>The accumulation of all powers, legislative, executive, and judiciary, in the same hands, whether of one, a few, or many, and whether hereditary, self-appointed, or elective, may justly be pronounced the very definition of tyranny. — James Madison</p>	<p>I know not what others may choose but, as for me, give me liberty or give me death. — Patrick Henry</p>

<p>The operations of the federal government will be most extensive and important in times of war and danger; those of the State governments, in times of peace and security. — James Madison</p>	<p>The Constitution is not an instrument for the government to restrain the people, it is an instrument for the people to restrain the government - lest it come to dominate our lives and interests. — Patrick Henry</p>
<p>If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. — James Madison</p>	<p>To preserve liberty it is essential that the whole body of people always possess arms and be taught alike, especially when young, how to use them. —Richard Henry Lee</p>
<p>The pride of states as well as men, naturally disposes them to justify all their actions, and opposes their acknowledging, correcting or repairing their errors and offences. — John Jay, No. 3</p>	<p>Six years is a long period for a man to be absent from his home, it would have a tendency to wean him from his constituents. — Brutus</p>
<p>In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself. —James Madison</p>	<p>Thus I consent, Sir, to this Constitution because I expect no better, and because I am not sure that it is not the best. —George Washington</p>
<p>Nothing is more certain then the indispensable necessity of government; and it is equally undeniable, that whenever and however it is instituted, the people must cede to it some of their natural rights, in order to vest it with requisite powers.  — John Jay, No. 2</p>	<p>A people, entering into society, surrender such a part of their natural rights, as shall be necessary for the existence of that society. They are so precious in themselves, that they would never be parted with, did not the preservation of the remainder require it. They are entrusted in the hands of those, who are very willing to receive them, who are naturally fond of exercising of them, and whose passions are always striving to make a bad use of them. —John Dewitt</p>
<p>A feeble executive implies a feeble execution of the government. — Alexander Hamilton</p>	<p>A well governed state is as fruitful to all good purposes as the seven headed serpent is said to have been in evil; when one head is cut off, many rise up in the place of it</p>
<p>That there ought to be one court of supreme and final jurisdiction, is a proposition which is not likely to be contested. — Alexander Hamilton, No. 81</p>	<p>It is to be lamented that the interested ... have availed themselves so successfully of the present crisis, and under the specious pretence of having discovered a panacea for all the ills of the people, they are about establishing a system of government, that will prove more destructive to them than the wooden horse filled with soldiers did in ancient times to the city of Troy. This horse was introduced by their hostile enemy the Grecians, by a prostitution of the sacred rites of their religion; in like manner, my fellow citizens, are aspiring despots among yourselves prostituting the name of a Washington to cloak their designs upon your liberties." — Samuel Bryan</p>
<p>The truth is, after all the declamation we have heard, that the constitution is itself, in every rational sense, and to every useful purpose, A BILL OF RIGHTS. — Alexander Hamilton, No. 84</p>	