VOCABULARY

Ratify –
Federalists –
Anti-Federalists –
Bill of Rights –
The Federalist Papers –
Today's Thinking Focus

What arguments did Americans raise for and against the Constitution?
And the story continues . . .

- The Continental Congress tries to create a new government, but states fight over how it should be structured.
- The Virginia and New Jersey Plans are proposed.
- The Great Compromise created by Roger Sherman finally settles the dispute.
- Northern and southern states begin fighting over slavery. The Three-Fifths Compromise allows slaves to be counted as $\frac{3}{5}$ of a person.
- The Founding Fathers took ideas from the Magna Carta, Locke, Montesquieu, the Mayflower Compact and others to create the U.S. Constitution.
In homes and in town squares across the nation, Americans discussed the new Constitution.

Many supported it, while others did not!

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Rulers being good men . . .

- People who didn’t like the Constitution (critics) worried that it had no **Bill of Rights**!
- In Virginia, Patrick Henry sounded the alarm when he said these words:

  "Show me an age and country where the rights and liberties of the people were placed on the sole chance of their rulers being good men, without the consequent loss of liberty!"
What do you think?

Read the quote from Patrick Henry again and write in your own words what you think he means.

“Show me an age [a time in history] and country where the rights and liberties [freedoms] of the people were placed on the sole chance of their rulers being good men, without the consequent [the end result] loss of liberty!”
Was a bill of rights needed in the Constitution?

Did the Constitution give too much power to the federal government? Would including a bill of rights help?

What is a bill of rights, anyway?

Bill of Rights:
a list of rights guaranteed under the Constitution such as the freedoms of speech, assembly, and worship.
In the fall of 1787, citizens began to debate the document sentence by sentence.

The convention had done its work. Now the states had to decide whether or not to **ratify** (to approve) the new frame of government.

- The Constitution is FINE the way it is!
- The Constitution NEEDS a Bill of Rights!
- Is anyone hungry?
The framers of the Constitution had set up a process for the states to decide on the new government.

At least 9 of the 13 states had to ratify, (approve) the Constitution before it could go into effect.

In 1787 and 1788, voters in each state elected delegates to special state conventions.

These delegates then met to decide whether or not to ratify (approve) the Constitution.
Federalists vs. Anti-Federalists

Supporters of the Constitution called themselves:

Federalists
They believed in the ratification of the new federal Constitution.

Citizens who DID NOT support the Constitution called themselves:

Anti-Federalists
Because they were opposed (anti) to the ratification (passage) of the new federal Constitution.
What did Anti-Federalists believe?

Anti-Federalists did not want to ratify the Constitution. They argued that:

- It gave too much power to the national government at the expense of the state governments.
- There was no bill of rights.
- The national government could maintain an army in peacetime.
- Congress was given too much power!
- The executive branch was given too much power!
How did Federalists respond?

“The federal government is too powerful. Congress is too powerful. The President is too powerful.”

The separation of powers into three independent branches protects the rights of the people and give no one branch too much power.

Each branch represents a different aspect of the people, and because all three branches are equal, no one group can assume control over another.
How did Federalists respond?

“There is no bill of rights.”

A listing of rights can be a dangerous thing.

If the national government were to protect specific listed rights, what would stop it from violating rights other than the listed ones? Since we can't list all the rights, the Federalists argued that it's better to list none at all.
Anti-Federalists respond back.

Although it is impossible to list ALL the natural rights of people, if rights were NOT written into the Constitution it would be easy to ignore them!
Patrick Henry once again stood to voice his concern that the Constitution gave the President too much power.

“This Constitution is said to have beautiful features, but . . . they appear to me horribly frightful . . . Your President may become king . . . If your American chief be a man of ambitions [having dreams and goals] and abilities, how easy is it for him to render himself absolute [totally powerful]?”
Who are these so called Federalists?

An easy way to remember these three Federalists is by their abbreviated last names: **Mad, Ham & Jay**!
The Federalist Papers

- Mad, Ham and Jay secretly wrote a series of essays called, 
  \textit{The Federalist Papers}

- The Federalist Papers defended the Constitution.

- They used secret pen names but most people knew who they were.

\textit{The Federalist Papers} 

a collection of 85 articles and essays written by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay promoting the ratification of the United States Constitution.
The States Vote to Ratify

- One by one, the states voted to ratify the Constitution! Delaware was the first on December, 1787.
- In June 1788, New Hampshire was the 9th.
- Still, without the support of ALL the states, the future of the United States did not seem bright.
- New York and Virginia, two of the largest states, had not yet ratified the U.S. Constitution.
- In both states, Federalists and Anti-federalists continued to battle it out with fiery debates!
If only nine of the thirteen states were needed to pass the new government, why was it important that **ALL** states support the constitution?
In Virginia, Patrick Henry strongly opposed the Constitution. Henry believed that the document gave the government too much power!

“There will be no checks, no real balances in this government,” he cried.

- In the end, however, Washington, Madison and other Virginia Federalists succeeded.
- Although the Constitution already had its nine states to make the Constitution official, it was a great victory when in late June, Virginia approved the Constitution!
In New York, the struggle went on for another month.

At last, in July 1788, the state convention voted to ratify.

North Carolina ratified in November, 1789.

Rhode Island was the last state to approve the Constitution, finally doing so in May, 1790.
The states told the Continental Congress that they would ratify the Constitution if they put a Bill of Rights in it! They agreed!

I thought the states wouldn't ratify the Constitution without a Bill of Rights? So why are they all voting for it without one?

A great question:

A great answer:

The states told the Continental Congress that they would ratify the Constitution if they put a Bill of Rights in it! They agreed!
Throughout the land, Americans celebrated the news that the Constitution was ratified. At sunrise, church bells rang!

The city of Philadelphia celebrated on July 4, 1788. A parade filed along Market Street, led by soldiers who fought in the Revolution. Thousands cheered as horses wore bright ribbons, and bands played popular tunes.
What arguments did Americans raise for and against the Constitution?
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