



**FLORIDA JOINT CENTER  
FOR CITIZENSHIP**

**FEDERALISTS, ANTI-FEDERALISTS AND THE CONSTITUTION**

**SS.7.C.1.8** Explain the viewpoints of the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists regarding the ratification of the Constitution and inclusion of a bill of rights.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**Lesson Summary.....2**

**Suggested Student Activity Sequence .....3**

**Student Activity Sheets & Reading Materials.....4**

**Sources.....8**

**Answer Keys.....9**

**Civics Content Vocabulary.....11**

**Essential Teacher Content Background Information.....12**

## Lesson Summary

### Essential Questions

What were the viewpoints of the Federalists and Anti-Federalists regarding the ratification of the Constitution?  
What were the Anti-Federalists' reasons for the inclusion of a bill of rights?

### NGSSS Benchmark

SS.7.C.1.8 Explain the viewpoints of the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists regarding the ratification of the Constitution and inclusion of a bill of rights.

### Florida Standards

LAFS.68.RH.1.1      LAFS.68.RH.1.2      LAFS.68.RH.2.6      LAFS.68.WHST.1.2  
LAFS.68.WHST.4.10      LAFS.7.SL.1.1      LAFS.7.SL.1.3

### Overview

In this lesson, students will identify and compare the viewpoints of the Federalists and Anti-Federalists regarding the ratification of the Constitution.

### Learning Goals/Benchmark Clarifications

- Students will identify the viewpoints of the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists about the ratification of the U.S. Constitution.
- Students will compare the viewpoints of the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists about the ratification of the U.S. Constitution.
- Students will recognize the Anti-Federalists' reasons for the inclusion of a bill of rights in the U.S. Constitution.

### Benchmark Content Limits

- Items will not require students to identify Federalist and Anti-Federalist viewpoints on issues other than ratification of the U.S. Constitution.

### Civics EOC Reporting Category

Reporting Category 1 – Origins and Purposes of Law and Government

### Suggested Time Frame

- Two 45-50 minute class periods

### Civics Content Vocabulary

- Anti-Federalist Papers, Anti-Federalists, Bill of Rights, Federalist Papers, Federalists, ratification

### Instructional Strategies

Close reading of complex text      Compare and contrast      Inquiry with primary sources

### Materials

Student activity sheets:

- Artwork Viewing Guide
- Federalists and Anti-Federalists
- Comparing Viewpoints: Anti-Federalists and Federalists

Student reading materials:

- Federalists and Anti-Federalists

### Lesson Activities and Daily Schedule

Please use the chart below to track activity completion.

Day	Task #	Steps in Lesson	Description	Completed? Yes/No
Day One	Task 1	1-4	Hook Activity	
	Task 2	5-9	Federalists and Anti-Federalists Reading	
Day Two	Task 3	10-14	Comparing Viewpoints Activity	
	Task 4	15	Checking for Understanding	

## *Suggested Student Activity Sequence*

1. To begin this lesson, project the following link to “Washington as Statesman at the Constitutional Convention” painting by Junius Brutus Stearns: <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/convention/stearns/>.
2. Pass out the “Artwork Viewing Guide” student activity sheet.
3. Review the activity sheet as a whole class and provide students with time to identify evidence and write answers in complete sentences for each question.  
Teacher note: If your students require additional direction for analyzing this painting please use the National Archives Photograph Analysis Worksheet:  
[http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/photo\\_analysis\\_worksheet.pdf](http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/photo_analysis_worksheet.pdf)
4. Discuss with students the following key points about the painting:
  - This painting was the first to portray the activities of the Constitutional Convention.
  - The painting portrays 39 delegates in attendance at the Convention with George Washington at the center.
  - During the summer of 1787, between May and September, the delegates agreed to replace the Articles of Confederation with the Constitution.
  - In order for the Constitution to officially replace the Articles of Confederation, nine of thirteen states had to vote in favor of the new Constitution. After the conclusion of the convention, delegates needed to convince the state legislatures (or their conventions) to agree that this was a good document and that they should support it.
5. Pass out the “Federalists and Anti-Federalists” reading and student activity sheet. Explain to students that they will read to understand the debate that occurred over the ratification of the Constitution.
6. Place the students into pairs and review the guiding questions as a whole class.
7. Provide time for students to complete the reading and activity sheet.
8. Pose the following questions for discussion and to assess student understanding of the reading: “What were the viewpoints of the Federalists and Anti-Federalists concerning the ratification of the Constitution? Why did the Anti-Federalists want to include a bill of rights? How did the Federalist Papers and the Anti-Federalist Papers play a role in this debate?”
9. Pass out the “Comparing Viewpoints: Anti-Federalists and Federalists” student activity sheet.
10. Explain to students that they will look more closely at the arguments made by the Anti-Federalists against the Constitution and the responses from the Federalists in order to compare the views of both groups.
11. Read aloud the first set of viewpoints and work, as a whole class, to summarize each viewpoint.
12. Pose the following questions for discussion: “How do these viewpoints compare? What evidence in the text led you to your answer?” Instruct students to take notes on their activity sheet.
13. Instruct students to work with their partner to complete the rest of the activity sheet.
14. Review as a whole class.
15. Checking for Understanding (Formative Assessment):  
Instruct students to write a well-crafted informative response using one of the following prompts:  
Prompt 1  
Using what you have learned from the reading and activity sheets, explain the viewpoints of the Federalists and Anti-Federalists regarding the ratification of the Constitution. As part of your response, explain why the Anti-Federalists found it necessary to include a bill of rights.  
Prompt 2  
During the ratification process, Anti-Federalist Patrick Henry made the following statement: *“As long as we can preserve our ... rights, we are in safety.”* Explain how this statement is related to the Anti-Federalists’ reason for including a bill of rights in the Constitution.

Extension Suggestion: Provide students with time to play the “Who were the supporters and critics of the Constitution? game” from Texas Law-Related Education & Law-Focused Education:  
[https://texaslre.org/games\\_eng/Federalists](https://texaslre.org/games_eng/Federalists)

**Washington as Statesman at the Constitutional Convention**  
**Artwork Viewing Guide**

<b>Artwork</b>	<b>Specific Evidence from the Painting</b>	<b>Complete Sentence</b>
What do you think is going on in this painting?		
What is the issue on which it is focusing?		
What is the action that is taking place?		
Do you see any familiar people or objects?		
<b>Painting – Additional Notes/Evidence from Group Discussion</b>		

## Federalists and Anti-Federalists

During the period from the drafting and proposal of the Constitution between May and September, 1787, to its ratification in 1788 there was an intense debate on ratification. During this period, people basically divided into two groups, the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists.

People opposed to the ratification of the Constitution were called the Anti-Federalists. They were concerned that the Constitution gave too much power to the federal, or national, government at the expense of the state governments. They were also concerned that, within the federal government, the legislative and executive branches were too powerful. Specifically, the Anti-Federalists were concerned that the “necessary and proper” clause in Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution, which allows Congress to do what it believes is “necessary and proper” in order to carry out its other responsibilities, was too broad and would give Congress too much power.

Anti-Federalists were also concerned that the Constitution lacked a specific listing of rights. They believed that a bill of rights was essential to protect the people from the federal government. The Revolutionary War had just been fought because the American people needed to defend their rights. With the war experience still in mind, the Anti-Federalists did not want a powerful national government taking away those rights. The lack of a bill of rights became the focus of the Anti-Federalist campaign against ratification. To communicate their concerns, Anti-Federalists such as Patrick Henry wrote essays and newspaper articles to spread their point of view and these writings became known as the Anti-Federalist Papers.

The supporters of the proposed Constitution called themselves Federalists. For the Federalists, the Constitution was necessary in order to protect the liberty and independence that was gained from the American Revolution. The main arguments in favor of ratifying the Constitution were stated in a series of essays published in newspapers written by James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay called the Federalist Papers.

They believed that the three branches of the national government separated the powers and protected the rights of the people. Each branch represents a different aspect of the people, and because all three branches are equal, no one group can assume control over another. They also believed that a listing of rights can be a dangerous thing. If the federal government were to protect specific listed rights, what would stop it from violating or abusing rights that were not listed? Since they cannot list all the rights, the Federalists argued that it is better to list no rights at all.

Overall, the Federalists were more organized in their efforts. By June of 1788, the Constitution was close to ratification. Nine states had voted to ratify it (eight voted “yes” and New York at first voted “no”), and only one more (New Hampshire) was needed. To achieve this, the Federalists agreed that once Congress met, it would draft a bill of rights. Finally, New York and Virginia approved, and the Constitution was a reality. Interestingly, the Bill of Rights was not originally a part of the Constitution, and yet it has proved to be highly important to protecting the rights of the people.

Adapted from: <http://www.ushistory.org/us/16b.asp>, <http://www.thefederalistpapers.org/anti-federalist-papers> and <http://library.thinkquest.org/11572/creation/framing/feds.html>, Accessed May 16, 2013

## Federalists and Anti-Federalists Guiding Questions

Directions: Read Federalists and Anti-Federalists in order to answer the following questions, by identifying evidence and writing responses in complete sentences.

<b>Guiding Question</b>	<b>Evidence from text</b>	<b>Answer in Complete Sentences</b>
<b>What was the viewpoint of the Anti-Federalists concerning the ratification of the Constitution?</b>		
<b>What were the Anti-Federalist Papers?</b>		
<b>Why did the Anti-Federalists want to include a bill of rights in the Constitution?</b>		
<b>What was the viewpoint of the Federalists concerning the ratification of the Constitution?</b>		
<b>What were the Federalist Papers?</b>		
<b>Additional Notes from Class Discussion:</b>		

## Comparing Viewpoints: Federalists and Anti-Federalists

	<b>Anti-Federalists Arguments</b>	<b>Federalists Responses</b>
<b>1.</b>	Under the Constitution as written, too much power is given to the federal government, and too much power is taken away from the states.	The only tasks the federal government may address are those that affect the nation as a whole, such as defense, trade, and currency. A strong central government is necessary in order to complete those tasks. The Constitution will protect the governments of the individual states.
Write a summary in your own words.		
How do these viewpoints compare?		
<b>2.</b>	There is no list of rights held by the people and states in the Constitution. Such a list is necessary to protect the people from abuses by the federal government.	There is no need for a list of rights guaranteed to the individual and the states. The powers of the federal government are limited, and to include such a listing would suggest that the individual can only expect to have those rights listed protected.
Write a summary in your own words.		
How do these viewpoints compare?		
<b>3.</b>	The Necessary and Proper (elastic) Clause is too vague, and can be interpreted in too many ways. This clause gives too much power to the federal government – there are many dangers of the federal government using this clause to gain more power over the states and individuals.	The Necessary and Proper (elastic) Clause is needed, so that the federal government is able to address the tasks for which it is responsible.
Write a summary in your own words.		
How do these viewpoints compare?		

Adapted from: <http://const4kids.forums.commonground13.us/?p=72%20-%20compare%20and%20contrast> Accessed May 18, 2013

### ***Sources***

Washington as Statesman at the Constitutional Convention painting by Junius Brutus Stearns:

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/convention/stearns/>

Federalists and Anti-Federalists: Adapted from, <http://www.ushistory.org/us/16b.asp>,

<http://www.thefederalistpapers.org/anti-federalist-papers> and

<http://library.thinkquest.org/11572/creation/framing/feds.html>, Accessed May 16, 2013

Comparing Viewpoints: <http://const4kids.forums.commonground13.us/?p=72%20-%20compare%20and%20contrast>, Accessed May 18, 2013

Patrick Henry Quote: <http://www.constitution.org/afp/borden04.htm>

## Federalists and Anti-Federalists Guiding Questions – **Sample Answers**

Directions: Read Federalists and Anti-Federalists in order to answer the following questions, by identifying evidence and writing responses in complete sentences.

<b>Guiding Question</b>	<b>Evidence from text</b>
<b>What was the viewpoint of the Anti-Federalists concerning the ratification of the Constitution?</b>	People opposed to the ratification of the Constitution were called the Anti-Federalists. They were concerned that the Constitution gave too much power to the national government at the expense of the state governments. They were also concerned that, within the national government, the legislative and executive branches were too powerful. Anti-Federalists were also concerned that the Constitution lacked a specific listing of rights.
<b>What were the Anti-Federalist Papers?</b>	To communicate their concerns, Anti-Federalists such as Patrick Henry wrote essays and newspaper articles to spread their point of view and these writings became known as the Anti-Federalist Papers.
<b>Why did the Anti-Federalists want to include a bill of rights in the Constitution?</b>	Anti-Federalists were also concerned that the Constitution lacked a specific listing of rights. They believed that a bill of rights was essential to protect the people from the federal government. The Revolutionary War had just been fought because the American people needed to defend their rights. With the war experience still in mind, the Anti-Federalists did not want a powerful national government taking away those rights. The lack of a bill of rights became the focus of the Anti-Federalist campaign against ratification.
<b>What was the viewpoint of the Federalists concerning the ratification of the Constitution?</b>	The supporters of the proposed Constitution called themselves Federalists. For Federalists, the Constitution was necessary in order to protect the liberty and independence that was gained from the American Revolution. They believed that the three branches of the national government separated the powers and protected the rights of the people. They also believed that a listing of rights can be a dangerous thing.
<b>What were the Federalist Papers?</b>	The main arguments in favor of ratifying the Constitution were stated in a series of essays written by James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay called the Federalist Papers which were published in newspapers.

## Comparing Viewpoints: Federalists and Anti-Federalists – **Sample Answers**

	Anti-Federalists Arguments	Federalists Responses
<b>1.</b>	Under the Constitution as written, too much power is given to the federal government, and too much power is taken away from the states.	The only tasks the federal government may address are those that affect the nation as a whole, such as defense, trade, and currency. A strong central government is necessary in order to complete those tasks. The Constitution will protect the governments of the individual states.
Write a summary in your own words.	The federal government has too much power and too much of the states' power is taken away.	A strong central government is necessary and the Constitution will protect the state governments.
How do these viewpoints compare?	They disagree. The Anti-Federalists believe that the Constitution gives the federal government too much power and the states with not enough power. The Federalists believe that the a strong central government is necessary, but the Constitution will protect the state governments.	
<b>2.</b>	There is no list of rights held by the people and states in the Constitution. Such a list is necessary to protect the people from abuses by the federal government.	There is no need for a list of rights guaranteed to the individual and the states. The powers of the federal government are limited, and to include such a listing would suggest that the individual can only expect to have those rights listed protected.
Write a summary in your own words.	A list of rights is necessary to protect people and states from the federal government.	A list of rights is not necessary because the federal government's powers are limited
How do these viewpoints compare?	Both agree that rights are important. Anti-Federalists believe that a list of rights is necessary to include in order to protect the rights. Federalists believe that a list of rights will limit the amount of rights protected.	
<b>3.</b>	The Necessary and Proper (elastic) Clause is too vague, and can be interpreted in too many ways. This clause gives too much power to the federal government – there are many dangers of the federal government using this clause to gain more power over the states and individuals.	The Necessary and Proper (elastic) Clause is needed, so that the federal government is able to address the tasks for which it is responsible.
Write a summary in your own words.	The Necessary and Proper Clause will give too much power to the federal government.	The Necessary and Proper Clause is necessary so that the federal government can do its job.
How do these viewpoints compare?	They disagree. Anti-Federalists believe the clause will lead to the federal government to have too much power. The Federalists believe that it is necessary.	

Adapted from: <http://const4kids.forums.commonground13.us/?p=72%20-%20compare%20and%20contrast>

### *Civics Content Vocabulary*

<b>Word/Term</b>	<b>Part of Speech</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Anti-Federalist Papers</b>	proper noun	a series of essays written to oppose and defeat the proposed U.S. Constitution
<b>Anti-Federalists</b>	proper noun	a group of people in the early United States who opposed ratification of the U.S. Constitution because they feared a strong national government and a lack of protection for individual rights
<b>Bill of Rights</b>	proper noun	the first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution
<b>Federalist Papers</b>	proper noun	a series of essays written to explain and defend the proposed U.S. Constitution
<b>Federalists</b>	proper noun	a group of people in the early United States who favored the establishment of a strong national government and who worked for ratification of the U.S. Constitution
<b>ratification</b>	noun	the process of formally approving something; ratification of the U.S. Constitution

## *Essential Teacher Content Background Information*

**This section addresses the following issues:**

1. The Federalists, Anti-Federalists and the Bill of Rights
2. Key Arguments Favoring the New Federal Constitution
3. Key Arguments Opposing the New Federal Constitution
4. The addition of the Bill of Rights as compromise

### **1. The Federalists, Anti-Federalists and the Bill of Rights**

It is a common misconception that the Framers of the U.S. Constitution were united in their efforts and desires to move past the Articles of Confederation and form a federal system that protected the nation from foreign and internal aggressors, and united the nation in their efforts to experience representative democracy, separation of powers, checks and balances and federalism.

In fact, those who attended the 1787 Constitutional Convention were divided along three dimensions in their opinion as to the best direction for government to take. The dominant perspective sought to retain the Articles of Confederation with some modification to address the concerns that weakened the Articles of Confederation. The year before the Constitutional Convention, in 1786, the Annapolis Convention included 12 delegates from five states (New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Virginia) that unanimously called for a constitutional convention. That convention, which began in May 1787 and ended the following September 17, was originally called the “Meeting of Commissioners to Remedy Defects of the Federal Government.” Most of those who attended the May 1787 convention did so because they wanted to “remedy defects” and not restructure the government. A second, smaller (and, at first, secret) group were those who supported a restructuring of government that would shift power from the states to a shared power system between the national and state governments. This second group was led by Virginia delegate James Madison who was soon joined by fellow Virginian, General George Washington and Alexander Hamilton, the New York delegate who drafted the resolution calling for the constitutional convention in the first place. This third, and smallest group, were those who supported returning to status as British subjects. Their memories of the stability they experienced living under British rule were fresh enough that they preferred returning to a known system than pursuing an unknown system (proposed federal system) or fixing an unworkable system (Articles of Confederation).

The dominant conflict at the convention was between the Federalists (those supporting a new federal system) and the Anti-Federalists (those who wanted to retain the structure of the Articles of Confederation). One of the key dimensions of conflict was whether the new federal constitution should include a listing of rights that protected individuals from government abuse of power. The resolution of this conflict, discussed in detail below, was achieved with the Bill of Rights.

### **2. Key Arguments Favoring the New Federal Constitution**

The group that favored the new federal Constitution was the Federalists. They made the following arguments favoring the new federal Constitution:

- a) The separation of powers and checks and balances system protected the people. No one group could control the other two.
- b) The Constitution lacked a specific enumeration of rights. This approach actually protected the people because a list of protected rights might suggest that rights that were not on the list could then be violated.
- c) The Constitution would more closely unite the states as one nation.
- d) A strong central government would foster the commercial growth of the new country.

### **3. Key Arguments Opposing the New Federal Constitution**

The group that opposed the new federal Constitution was called the Anti-Federalists. They made the following arguments against the new federal Constitution.

- a) The Constitution gave too much power to the national government at the expense of the state governments.
- b) The Constitution lacked a specific enumeration of rights which was needed in order to protect the people from the national government.
- c) The Constitution would allow the national government to maintain an army in peacetime.
- d) The “necessary and proper” clause (also called the “elastic clause”) gave too much power to Congress. The “necessary and proper” clause is found in Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution. It allows Congress to do what it believes is “necessary and proper” in order to carry out its other responsibilities.
- e) The executive branch held too much power.
- f) The new constitution created a new and untested form of government
- g) The method selected for ratifying the Constitution violated the Articles of Confederation (the decentralized, state-centered government in place at the time that the Constitution was being debated)
- h) A country as large as the United States could not be controlled by one national government

### **4. The addition of the Bill of Rights as compromise**

The most effective argument presented by the Anti-Federalists was the lack of a specific enumeration of rights. The American Revolution, in which the American people fought to defend their rights, had ended just 10 years earlier, and remained fresh in the minds of Americans. Americans feared that the newly formed and empowered national government might withhold those rights. The lack of a bill of rights became the centerpiece of the Anti-Federalists’ arguments against the new federal Constitution.

Article VII of the new constitution required that nine of the existing 13 state legislatures (or their conventions) ratify the document. This meant that several state governments, elected under a state-centered political system, had to be convinced that a shift in power to a shared system was in their best interests. The Anti-Federalists could take advantage of these circumstances, as it was the original purpose of the Second Continental Congress that began in May 1787, to retain the Articles of Confederation (provided that some fixes were made). However, the result of that process was a federal system. Put another way, most current state legislators expected that the Articles of Confederation would be retained, and likely supported

the decentralized system, at least in principle. Anti-Federalists could capitalize on these state legislators' concerns.

Concerns about a shared power system were especially experienced by farmers and tradesmen who were less likely to be a part of the wealthy elite that was overrepresented at the Second Continental Congress (A convention of representatives from the original 13 colonies that met beginning 1775 soon after the Revolutionary War began. The Second Continental Congress disbanded in 1781). The most vocal Anti-Federalists included Patrick Henry, the American Revolutionary War hero best known for the phrase "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death" who later served as Governor of Virginia, and George Mason, another Virginian and American Revolutionary War hero who later served as a delegate to the U.S. Constitutional Convention.

While the first nine states ratified the new Constitution in 1788, within the first nine months of its completion in September 1787, it was not until 1790 that Rhode Island agreed to support the new document. Still, the Anti-Federalists' concerns did have an impact, as in 1791, state legislatures voted to add the first 10 amendments to the Constitution. These 10 amendments are, together, called the Bill of Rights. Together, this means that the new federal Constitution was ratified without a bill of rights; soon after all states ratified the document, and not just the minimum nine needed per Article VII of the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution. Both the Federalists' desires for a federal system, and the Anti-Federalists' concerns about the absence of a bill of rights, were both addressed by 1791. The Bill of Rights represents a compromise between the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists in that it enumerated the specific protections that the Anti-Federalists were so concerned were missing from the Constitution. The Bill of Rights also demonstrates that the Federalists kept their promise to the Anti-Federalists by insuring that the new Congress of the federal government considered enumerating specific protections.

The Bill of Rights was intended to protect the people from the federal government abusing its power, specifically as to the rights of political expression, the rights and protections accorded individuals accused of crimes, private property protection, and the rights of the people as they relate to federal and state laws. The original Bill of Rights had 17 amendments. These 17 amendments were voted on by the first House of Representatives. The first Senate voted on the amendments on June 8, 1789, but ratified 12 of these on September 25, 1789. The 12 amendments were reduced to 10 after Congress' vote. The 13 states voted on these provisions between November 1789 and December 1791 at which time the Bill of Rights was formally added to the U.S. Constitution.

The first word of the Bill of Rights, "Congress", speaks to the focus of the Bill of Rights on the federal government. Under the Bill of Rights, citizens are guaranteed the right to free speech and religious exercise, assembly, and the right to petition the government. Citizens are also guaranteed that Congress will not establish a religion, which is a right related to, though different from, freedom of religious exercise. The Bill of Rights also protects those accused of a crime in that they are entitled to due process of law, and are protected from incriminating themselves, "cruel and unusual" punishment, unreasonable search and seizure and being tried twice for committing the same crime. The concept of "due process" also includes the right to legal representation in criminal trials, the right to face one's accuser, and the right to trial by jury. The Bill of Rights also protects property rights in that citizens may not be forced to house military personnel during peacetime and only during wartime by an act of Congress. Further, citizens' property may only be taken with "just compensation".