

Excerpts from the U.S. Constitution - **Sample Answers**

Directions: Below are six excerpts from the U.S. Constitution. In your small groups, summarize the excerpts in your own words. Then, identify how the excerpt relates to one of the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation.

Article 1, Section 8: “The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.”

Summary

Congress can have the people pay taxes to pay for military and general things that need to be taken care of to run a successful government. In order to tax, they must be the same throughout all of the states.

How does the excerpt relate to one of the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation?

Congress had no power to tax

Article 1, Section 8: “The Congress shall have Power... To regulate Commerce foreign Nations, and among the several States”

Summary

Congress has the power to trade with other countries and to regulate trade between the states.

How does the excerpt relate to one of the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation?

Congress had no power to regulate trade

Article II, Section 3: “...he shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed...”

Summary

The president is in charge of the executive branch to enforce laws.

How does the excerpt relate to one of the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation?

Congress had no power to enforce its laws

Article III, Section 1: “The judicial Power of the United States, shall be vested in one supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish.”

Summary

The judicial branch has a court system with the Supreme court at the top, making the final decision.

How does the excerpt relate to one of the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation?

The national government lacked a national court system (judicial branch)

Article II, Section 1: “The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America.”

Summary

The top of the executive branch is the President.

How does the excerpt relate to one of the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation?

There was no central leadership (executive branch)

Article V: “The Congress, whenever two thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose Amendments to this Constitution...”

Summary

In order to make a change to an Amendment, the government needs two thirds to vote for the change to happen.

How does the excerpt relate to one of the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation?

Changes to the Articles required unanimous consent of the 13 states.