

TEACHER CRITICAL CONTENT NOTES

BENCHMARK
SS.5.CG.1.2 <i>Explain how and why the U.S. government was created by the U.S. Constitution.</i>
BENCHMARK CLARIFICATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Students will identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation. ■ Students will explain the goals of the 1787 Constitutional Convention. ■ Students will describe why compromises were made during the writing of the Constitution and identify compromises (e.g., Great Compromise, the Three-Fifths Compromise, the Electoral College). ■ Students will identify Federalist and Anti-Federalist arguments supporting and opposing the ratification of the U.S. Constitution.

WHERE STUDENTS HAVE BEEN	
3rd Grade	<p>SS.3.CG.2.4 Recognize symbols, individuals, documents, and events that represent the United States.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students will recognize Mount Rushmore, Uncle Sam, and the Washington Monument as symbols that represent the United States. ● Students will recognize James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, Booker T. Washington, and Susan B. Anthony as individuals who represent the United States. ● Students will recognize the U.S. Constitution as a document that represents the United States. ● Students will recognize the Constitutional Convention (May 1787-September 1787) and the signing of the U.S. Constitution (September 17, 1787) as events that represent the United States.
4th Grade	N/A
WHERE STUDENTS ARE GOING	
Middle School Civics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SS.7.CG.1.7 ● SS.7.CG.1.10 ● SS.7.CG.3.14

TIMING/PACING NOTES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This benchmark may be taught at any point during the school year. ● Every benchmark clarification does not need to be taught at the same time. They may be broken up and taught over the course of the school year.

UNDERSTANDING THE BENCHMARK

→ What to know:

- ◆ Describe and explain can mean: justify, connect, write, or elaborate
- ◆ This benchmark is the first time students are exposed to detailed specifics of the writing of the U.S. Constitution. They will have limited background knowledge, which may require additional instruction and scaffolding support.
- ◆ The historical events listed in the benchmark clarifications are meant to be taught at a surface level in order for students to understand the path to creating and adopting the U.S. Constitution.
- ◆ Be careful to avoid historical misconceptions with overly generic statements such as “slaves counted as 3/5 of a person”
- ◆ A compromise is when a dispute is settled by each side making concessions
- ◆ Ratification refers to the process of formally approving something

→ Main concepts to teach:

- ◆ How and why the U.S. Constitution was created
 - The strengths and weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation
 - The goals of the 1787 Constitutional Convention
 - The role of specific compromises made during the writing of the U.S. Constitution
 - The support and opposition viewpoints regarding the ratification of the U.S. Constitution

→ Examples:

- ◆ Articles of Confederation (1777)
 - Served as the first constitution of the United States
 - Stemming from the colonial experience with the British government, it established more of a “league of friendship” among the 13 colonies with a very weak central government
 - Strengths:
 - states had sovereignty, freedom, and independence; the ability to bring all thirteen states together; established a national Congress with all states represented
 - Weaknesses:
 - weak central government; Congress had no power to tax, regulate trade, or enforce laws; no central leadership (executive branch); no national court system (judicial branch); no ability to raise a national military; changes to the Articles required unanimous consent
- ◆ Goals of the 1787 Constitutional Convention:
 - Revise the Articles of Confederation, provide fair representation for large and small states, address concerns about individual rights, and determine the structure, function, and powers of central and state governments
- ◆ Compromises made while writing the U.S. Constitution:
 - Great Compromise
 - Also known as the Connecticut Compromise
 - Established a bicameral legislature that allowed the upper house (Senate) to have equal representation from each state and the lower house (House of Representatives) would have

- proportional representation based on state population
 - Compromise offered by Connecticut delegates Roger Sherman and Oliver Ellsworth
 - Three-Fifths Compromise
 - Agreement reached between northern and southern states
 - Three-fifths of the slave population would be counted for taxation and representation purposes
 - The Electoral College
 - Found in Article II of the U.S. Constitution; Expanded in 12th & 23rd amendments
 - Process used for electing the U.S. President
 - Compromise between those that wanted Congress to elect the president and those who wanted a popular vote of citizens
 - Popular votes within most states determine who wins that state's electors (Maine and Nebraska exception)
 - The number of electors given to each state is equal to their number of senators and representatives in the U.S. Congress
 - It takes 270 out of the 538 electoral votes possible to win the presidency
- ◆ Federalists:
 - Believed in the necessity of the Constitution, advocated for weaker state governments and a stronger national republic
 - Noteworthy Federalist party members include John Adams, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay
 - The Federalist Papers were authored to urge for ratification of the U.S. Constitution
- ◆ Anti-Federalists:
 - Opposed the ratification of the Constitution, wanted a weaker central government, and the inclusion of a Bill of Rights
 - Noteworthy Anti-Federalist party members include Patrick Henry and George Mason
 - The Anti-Federalist Papers were authored to urge against the ratification of the proposed U.S. Constitution

CONTENT BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

Information on U.S. Constitution compromises:

1. [Britannica: Connecticut Compromise](#)
2. [Constitutional Rights Foundation: Constitutional Convention](#)
3. [National Archives: Articles of Confederation](#)
4. [Britannica: Three-fifths Compromise](#)
5. [National Archives: Electoral College](#)
6. [House of Representatives: Electoral College](#)
7. [National Archives: Distribution of Electoral Votes](#)

Information on Federalists and Anti-Federalists:

1. [Britannica: Anti-Federalists](#)
2. [National Constitution Center: Anti-Federalists](#)

3. [History: Federalist Party](#)
4. [Britannica: Federalist Party](#)

Information on laws/statute regarding the teaching of diverse individuals and groups:

1. [Florida State Statute 1003.42: Required Instruction](#)