

A CONFEDERATION...

I. Unitary System

- A. Political power is concentrated in a strong central government.
- B. It was based on the English government.
- C. Most Americans were suspicious of this form of government.
 - 1. They wanted to divide power among the states.
 - 2. They took steps to eliminate the ideas of a monarchy.

II. Articles of Confederation - 1777

- A. **Confederation** - Loose association of independent states bound together for a particular purpose.
- B. It joined the 13 separate states.
 - 1. They stress the idea of being separate because they want to keep their identity.
- C. This established the idea of a Congress as a meeting place for the states.
- D. It gave Congress the following powers:
 - 1. They could make peace and war.
 - 2. They could make treaties and alliances.
 - 3. They could coin money.
 - 4. They could regulate trade with the Native Americans.
 - 5. They could borrow money.
 - 6. They could establish a postal system.

III. The Positives and the Negatives

- A. 1781-1789 - "The Critical Period"
 - 1. This period in the young country's history was either going to make it or break it.
- B. Positives
 - 1. They had waged a successful war with England.
 - a. They had acquired the Northwest Territory.
 - 2. The Northwest Ordinance - 1787

a. This set up requirements for statehood.

C. Negatives

1. It limited the powers of Congress.

a. They could not tax or regulate trade.

- They could not pay off debts.

- This caused a loss of confidence.

- They could not prevent tariffs between states.

b. They could not prevent states from printing their own currency.

c. It kept them from gaining the majority of votes to pass a law.

2. There was never a provision for an Executive Branch.

IV. Shays' Rebellion - 1786

A. Daniel Shays led a rebellion of angry farmers who were upset about the raising of taxes.

B. This really showed the ineffectiveness of the Articles of Confederation because it showed how a decentralized government can be just as bad as a centralized. The colonies were not acting in the best interests of the "country".

Name _____
Participation in Government

Date _____
Per. _____

Articles of Confederation *Weaknesses*

Using your textbook and the abbreviated copy of the Articles of Confederation (attached), study the list of weaknesses of the Articles as our first government. Choose one, and then either write a letter regarding the weakness, which discusses it with a person from another state (humorous or serious), or write a letter regarding the weakness, which discusses it with a person from another nation (humorous or serious).

WEAKNESSES

1. Each state delegation has only one vote in Congress.
2. Delegates vote as their state legislatures direct them.
3. The Confederation has no Executive Branch (President).
4. The Confederation asks states for money to support the federal government.
5. The central government has little power over foreign trade.
6. The Confederation has no power to enforce treaties.
7. The Confederation has no effective military force.
8. At least nine states are required to decide major issues.
9. The financial system is confusing (coins and paper money are different in each state).
10. There was no national court system.
11. Changes in The Articles of Confederation require a unanimous vote of the thirteen states.

ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

(abbreviated version)

ARTICLE I

The name of this confederacy shall be the United States of America.

ARTICLE II

Each state shall retain its sovereignty, freedom and independence, and every power, jurisdiction and right which is not by this confederation expressly delegated to the United States.

ARTICLE III

The said states hereby severally enter into a firm league of friendship with each other, for their common defense, the security of their liberties, and their mutual and general welfare...

ARTICLE IV

The better to secure and perpetuate mutual friendship . . . among the people of the different states the free inhabitants of each of these states, paupers, vagabonds and fugitives from justice excepted, shall be entitled to privileges and immunities of all citizens in the several states.

ARTICLE V

For the more convenient management of the general interests, delegates shall be annually appointed in such manner as the legislature of each state shall direct, to meet in Congress on the first Monday in November in every year. . . .

In determining questions in the United States each state shall have one vote.

Freedom of speech and debate in Congress shall not be impeached or questioned in any court or place out of Congress...

ARTICLE VI

No state shall without the consent of Congress: send or receive Ambassadors; enter into any treaty; lay any imposts or duties which may interfere with stipulations of treaties, keep any vessel of war in time of peace, engage in any war without the consent of Congress.

ARTICLE VII

Officers of the land forces under the rank of colonel shall be appointed by the legislature of the state by whom such forces shall be raised.

ARTICLE VIII

All charges of war, and all other expenses for the common defense or general welfare . . . , shall be defrayed out of a common treasury. . . .

ARTICLE IX

The United States Congress assembled: shall have exclusive power of determining peace and war. shall be the last resort in all disputes between the states. shall have sole right to regulate the

alloy and value of coins struck by their own authority. shall have authority to appoint civil officers and committees as may be necessary for managing their affairs. shall have power to adjourn to any time within the year.

ARTICLE X

The committee of the states, or any nine of them, shall be authorized to execute in the recess of Congress...

ARTICLE XI

Canada is entitled to join the Confederation.

ARTICLE XII

All bills of credit, monies borrowed and debts contracted by, or under the authority of Congress shall be deemed and considered as a charge against the United States.

ARTICLE XIII

Each state shall abide by the determination of the United States in Congress assembled.