

# Unit 01: A New Nation - Constitutional Convention

Content Area: **Social Studies**  
Course(s): **Social Studies 8**  
Time Period: **Quarter 1**  
Length: **15 Days**  
Status: **Published**

## Standards

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### 6.1 U.S. History: America in the World by the End of 8th Grade

6.1.8.HistoryUP.3.c: Analyze how the terms of the Treaty of Paris affected United States relations with Native Americans and with European powers that had territories in North America from multiple perspectives.

6.1.8.HistoryCC.3.d: Compare and contrast the Articles of Confederation and the United States Constitution in terms of the decision-making powers of national government.

6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.d: Use data and other evidence to determine the extent to which demographics influenced the debate on representation in Congress and federalism by examining the New Jersey and Virginia plans.

### 6.3 Active Citizenship in the 21st Century by the End of 8th Grade

6.3.8.CivicsPI.2: Evaluate the extent to which different forms of government reflect the history and values of various societies (e.g., monarchy, democracy, republic, dictatorship).

6.3.8.CivicsPR.1: Analyze primary sources to explain how democratic ideas in the United States developed from the historical experiences of ancient societies, England, and the North American colonies.

## Unit Summary

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This unit looks at the United States after the Revolutionary War and the task of forming an independent government that faced Americans. It covers the issues with the first plan of government, the Articles of Confederation, and looks at the need for a Constitutional Convention. Students will experience the issues debated at the Convention and determine the role compromise played in creating the U.S. Constitution. Other topics include U.S. policies developed for settling western lands, the United States' relationship with Britain and Spain, and the economic difficulties faced by U.S. farmers that led to Shays's Rebellion.

## Student Learning Objectives

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- Students will learn the Articles of Confederation were the first plan of government for the United States.
- Students will learn the Articles of Confederation were too weak to address the nation's problems.
- Students will learn the documents, ideas, and people that influenced the creation of the Constitution.
- Students will learn the compromises that were made in the Constitution's creation.

- Students will learn the debate that took place over whether the Constitution should be adopted.

## **Essential Questions**

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- How well did the Articles of Confederation address the nation's issues following the Revolutionary War?
- What role did compromise play at the Constitutional Convention?

## **Enduring Understandings**

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- Students will understand that the nation's first plan of government, the Articles of Confederation, failed to address the nation's issues.
- Students will understand that debate and compromise allowed the founding fathers to form a more perfect union.

## **Application**

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- Students will be able to independently use their learning to engage in a mock Constitutional Convention and debate the issues the founding fathers grappled with while creating the Constitution.

## **Skills**

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Students will be skilled at:

- Identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation.
- Comparing and contrasting the strengths and weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation to those of the new Constitution.
- Identifying and evaluating the sources, plans, and compromises for the Constitution and the balance of power in the government.
- Identifying the points of view of the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists.
- Comparing and contrasting arguments supporting and opposing the adoption of the Constitution.