

Historical Literacy Project Model Unit Gallery Template

Unit Title: Articles of Confederation vs. The Constitution

Designed by: Melisa Stilwell, Heather Patricco

District: Appoquinimink

Content Area: History

Grade Level(s): 4-5

Summary of Unit Throughout this unit, students will learn about the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution. They will participate in activities that describe the changes between the two documents to show change over time.

Stage 1 – Desired Results

What students will know, do, and understand

Delaware Content Standards

History Standard Two 4-5b: Students will examine historical materials relating to a particular region, society, or theme; chronologically arrange them, and analyze change over time.

Big Idea(s)

Students will analyze and review the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution to ascertain what changes took place over time and discuss possible reasons for those changes.

Unit Enduring Understanding(s)

Students will understand that historical documents can be analyzed to show change over time.

Unit Essential Questions(s)

How can historical documents be used to show change over time?

Knowledge and Skills

Students will be able to compare historical documents to analyze change over time.

Stage 2 – Assessment Evidence

(Design Assessments To Guide Instruction)

Suggested Performance/Transfer Task(s) Students will complete an exit ticket to reinforce their understanding of this lesson.

Essential Question Addressed –

How can we use historical documents to show how ideas and documents can change over time?

Prior Knowledge –

Students will have learned about the Articles of Confederation and its strengths and weaknesses. Additionally, students will have learned about the Constitution, including the reason it was written, its purpose and the differences between it and the Articles of Confederation.

Final Product –

"H" Diagram (similar to Venn) comparing and contrasting the Articles of Confederation and the C Constitution

Rubric(s)

4	H Diagram is a complete and thorough comparison of the two documents. It includes 8 or more of the characteristics of each document, including specific details.
3	H Diagram is a complete comparison of the two documents. It includes 5-7 of the characteristics of each document, including details.
2	H Diagram is a comparison of the two documents. It includes 3-4 of the characteristics of each document, including details.
1	H Diagram is an incomplete comparison of the two documents. It includes less than 3 characteristics of each document.
0	H Diagram is inaccurate and does not demonstrate any understanding of the two documents.

Other Evidence Students will complete the H diagram, an exit ticket, and participate in group discussions.

Student Self-Assessment and Reflection Students will have an opportunity to go back and add necessary items to their H diagram after discussions.

Stage 3 – Learning Plan

(Design learning activities to align with Stage 1 and Stage 2 expectations)

Lesson # 1 Vocabulary Introduction

Melisa Stilwell and Heather Patricco

Lesson Description: Students will be introduced to unit vocabulary and use this vocabulary in context.

Time Required: One 45-minute class period

Essential Question Addressed: What are some key vocabulary terms students need to know to understand the language in the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution?

Enduring Understanding: Students will understand the rich vocabulary used in writing the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution.

Materials: vocabulary cards(printed on index cards), vocabulary cartoon supplies(construction paper, colored pencils/markers) (see last page for example), student made concentration cards, crossword puzzle(attached)

Procedures: VOCAB:

- **Levy:** an imposing or collecting, as of a tax, by authority or force
- **Federal:** pertaining to or of the nature of a union of states under a central government distinct from the individual governments of the separate states
- **Regulation:** a law, rule, or other order prescribed by authority, esp. to regulate conduct.
- **Amend:** to alter, modify, rephrase, or add to or subtract from (a motion, bill, constitution, etc.) by formal procedure
- **Interstate:** connecting or involving different states
- **Commerce:** an interchange of goods or commodities, esp. on a large scale between different countries (**foreign commerce**) or between different parts of the same country
- **Sovereignty:** supreme and independent power or authority in government as possessed or claimed by a state or community

After the teacher shows and pronounces each word, the students will repeat the word. The teacher will define each word for the class and each word and definition will be placed in a pocket chart. Students will then complete the crossword puzzle, referring to the pocket chart as necessary. As time permits students will complete the word search and differentiated activities. To differentiate the lesson the teacher will have students complete vocabulary cartoons for the given words or use student made “concentration” cards to practice matching words and definitions.

Debrief: Have students been exposed to key vocabulary terms needed to understand the language in the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution?

Formative Assessment (“Check for Understanding”): Exit/3-2-1 Ticket

Resources and Teaching Tips

- **What text/print/media/kit/web resources best support this unit?**
 - www.socialstudiesforkids.com
 - www.bensguide.gpo.gov

- **What tips to teachers of the unit can you offer about likely rough spots/student misunderstandings and performance weaknesses, and how to troubleshoot those issues? Be especially mindful to identify any misconceptions that students are likely to have as they enter this unit and that might interfere with their learning.**
 - Students may have some difficulty finding a definition to match the vocabulary word as it pertains to this unit.
 - Additionally, students may have a difficult time visualizing a “cartoon” to match certain particular vocabulary words.

Lesson # 2 Compromise

Melisa Stilwell and Heather Patricco

Lesson Description: Students will recognize the “Great Compromise” of the Constitutional Convention and what it historically accomplished.

Time Required: One 45-minute class period

Essential Question Addressed: Why did the delegates at the Constitutional Convention agree to compromise in terms of allowing for just representation of each state in our government?

Enduring Understanding: Students will understand the reasoning and outcome of “The Great Compromise” of the Constitutional Convention.

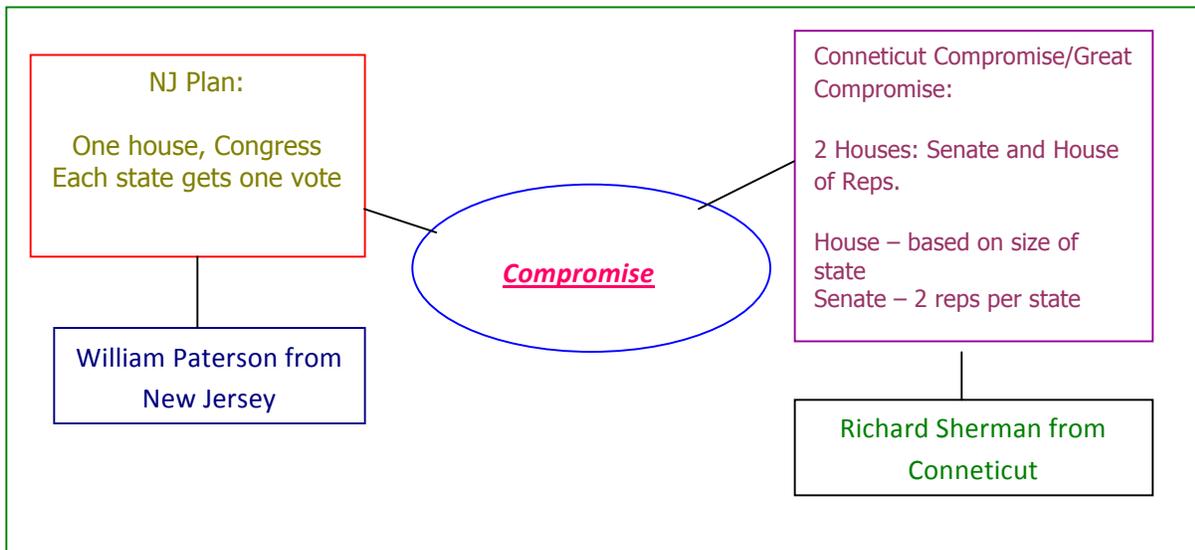
Materials: Paper and Colored Pencils

Procedures:

1. The class will be divided into 4 or 5 groups with an uneven number of students in each group. Groups should be of various sizes, including one large group of six or seven students, another of four or five, and several smaller ones of two or three.
2. The group will play a game called “Circle of Knowledge,” where the teacher will name a category and, given a specified time limit, the group will list as many items to fit that category as possible. One person in each group must record the responses.

3. The challenge given to the groups is to compile the most correct answers after the teacher designates a specific number of lists to be offered. The group with the most correct answers at the end of the activity may win a small prize to be determined by the teacher.
4. Let the activity begin and pay attention to the protests of the smaller groups as the activity begins and continues. Finding a teachable moment, at this point, engage the class in a discussion of the justness of the grouping. Ask students what could be done to make more class members happy and make them feel they've been treated fairly.
5. The teacher will connect this activity to the Constitutional Convention and the unfairness some delegates felt regarding the unequal representation of the federal government.
6. Details regarding "The Great Compromise" will be discussed and analyzed.
7. With teacher modeling, students will create a "mind map" of the information being discussed using colored pencils. (See Example)
8. Students will discuss the reasons for the amendments, which include details regarding the branches of government and the method for determining fair representation of the states.

Mind Map:



Debrief: Why did the delegates at the Constitutional Convention agree to compromise in terms allowing for just representation of each state in our government? What was "The Great Compromise?"
You might also suggest activities or questions one might pose to encourage and/or promote transfer.

Formative Assessment ("Check for Understanding"):
 Completed student mind maps and discussion.

Resources and Teaching Tips (Consider the two questions below when completing this section.)

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- **What tips to teachers of the unit can you offer about likely rough spots/student misunderstandings and performance weaknesses, and how to troubleshoot those**

issues? Be especially mindful to identify any misconceptions that students are likely to have as they enter this unit and that might interfere with their learning.

**Lesson # 3
Reader's Theater**

Melisa Stilwell and Heather Patricco

Lesson Description: Students will participate in a reader's theater activity entitled "A More Perfect Union".

Time Required: One 45-minute class period

Essential Question Addressed: How did the delegates of the Constitutional Convention decide the important details to be included in the Constitution?

Enduring Understanding: Students will understand the specific details of each amendment of the Constitution.

Materials: Paper and Pencils

Procedures:

1. Divide students into small groups of 6.
2. Assign the following parts to students in small groups: narrator, articles, framer 1, framer2, small state, and large state
3. Set the stage: discuss and revisit the feelings and arguments generated by the small groups during the Compromise activity. Talk about how the groups may have been changed to make things fair. Discuss situations to which the ideas of size and equality have a direct impact on individuals.
4. Allow students to complete the reader's theater activity.
5. Discuss how the small state and large state felt during this activity.
6. Discuss weaknesses students observe in the Articles as brought out in this activity.
7. Ask for student suggestions for how the Articles could have been improved.
8. Distribute copy of Articles vs. Constitution sheet. Discuss the actual changes that were made and consider how those changes would impact the people.

**Reader's Theater
A More Perfect Union
By Phyllis Naegeli**

Cast: Narrator, Articles, Framer 1, Framer 2, Small State, Large State

NARRATOR: In the summer of 1787, fifty-five men called Framers...

FRAMER 1: I'm a Framer.

FRAMER 2: So am I!

NARRATOR: ...went to Philadelphia to begin working a on a new Constitution. For six years, America had a weak central government created by the Articles of

Confederation.

- ARTICLES:** (weakly) What's wrong with me? I was O.K. when I was written.
- FRAMER 1:** You are too weak. We need a strong central government.
- FRAMER 2:** (Patting ARTICLES on the back) It's O.K. You did the job we needed, but now we need something else.
- ARTICLES:** (Slouching) I do feel rather weak.
- NARRATOR:** The men met all summer long. The weather was hot and so were the arguments.
- FRAMER 1:** (powerfully) We need to protect states' rights!
- NARRATOR:** Under the Articles of Confederation, each state was like its own little country. Each made its own laws. Each had its own currency.
- FRAMER 2:** We need to protect states' rights, but we also need to be a "more perfect union."
- NARRATOR:** America needed to be more united. It needed one currency. It needed to be able to protect the people of the United States.
- FRAMER 1:** This Constitution must "establish justice" and "insure domestic tranquility."
- FRAMER 2:** It must also "provide for the common defense" and "promote the general welfare."
- NARRATOR:** The Framers got to work. They wanted to make sure that they had a strong leader who would not be a king.
- SMALL STATE:** No king! No king!
- LARGE STATE:** We need a strong leader.
- FRAMER 1:** A president is what we will need. A president will lead our country. He will sign laws or veto them. The president will work on foreign policy. He will be in charge of the armed forces.
- FRAMER 2:** This will be the Executive Branch.
- NARRATOR:** The first part of the government was decided. But, an argument arose during the meetings over representation of the people.
- SMALL STATE:** I want to be represented equally.
- LARGE STATE:** But I have more people than you do! How will we work this out?
- FRAMER 1:** We need to compromise.
- FRAMER 2:** I have an idea!
- NARRATOR:** The Great Compromise was put in place. This formed the Legislative Branch of our government. It is called "Congress."
- FRAMER 1:** Our Legislature will have two houses. One will be the House of Representatives.
- LARGE STATE:** The House of Representatives is based on population. That makes me happy.
- FRAMER 2:** The other will be the Senate.
- SMALL STATE:** Two senators from each state. I like that.
- NARRATOR:** Now, the Framers needed to put together the Judicial Branch. This branch of the

government would make sure the laws lined up with what the Constitution says.

FRAMER 1: This highest court in the land will be the Supreme Court.

FRAMER 2: That's a great idea. We need to keep checks and balances on all the branches of government.

NARRATOR: Things were shaping up. The new government was set. The Constitution would replace the Articles of Confederation. One Article set up cooperation among the states. They would have to get along. The states had to obey the central government.

SMALL STATE: I'm glad we'll be working together now.

LARGE STATE: (shaking SMALL STATE'S hand) It will be much better this way.

NARRATOR: The new Constitution also had a way it could be changed. It wouldn't be easy to make a change. But the Framers knew it would be necessary someday. They didn't want to have to start over again. This made the document a "Living Document." Once approved, it would be the highest law in the land. All the other laws would have to agree with the Constitution.

FRAMER 1: It's time to send this on to the states.

SMALL STATE: I like it! I'll approve.

NARRATOR: Nine states would need to approve the Constitution. But there was a small catch.

LARGE STATE: Hmm. There's nothing in here about people's rights. I think I'll send a letter to the Congress.

FRAMER 2: It's a good thing we added in the part about changing the Constitution.

NARRATOR: The Congress agreed that the rights of the people needed to be added. They promised the states that they would form a Bill of Rights for the people. Soon the Constitution was approved, and the Bill of Rights was added. A strong government was in place...

ALL: ... for the United States of America.

Articles of Confederation vs. the Constitution

	Articles	Constitution
Levying taxes	Congress could request states to pay taxes	Congress has right to levy taxes on individuals
Federal courts	No system of federal courts	Court system created to deal with issues between citizens, states
Regulation of trade	No provision to regulate interstate trade	Congress has right to regulate trade between states
Executive	No executive with power. President of U.S. merely presided over Congress	Executive branch headed by President who chooses Cabinet and has checks on power of judiciary and legislature
Amending document	13/13 needed to amend Articles	2/3 of both houses of Congress plus 3/4 of state legislatures or national convention

Representation of states	Each state received 1 vote regardless of size	Upper house (Senate) with 2 votes; lower house (House of Representatives) based on population
Raising an army	Congress could not draft troops, dependent on states to contribute forces	Congress can raise an army to deal with military situations
Interstate commerce	No control of trade between states	Interstate commerce controlled by Congress
Disputes between states	Complicated system of arbitration	Federal court system to handle disputes
Sovereignty	Sovereignty resides in states	Constitution the supreme law of the land
Passing laws	9/13 needed to approve legislation	50%+1 of both houses plus signature of President

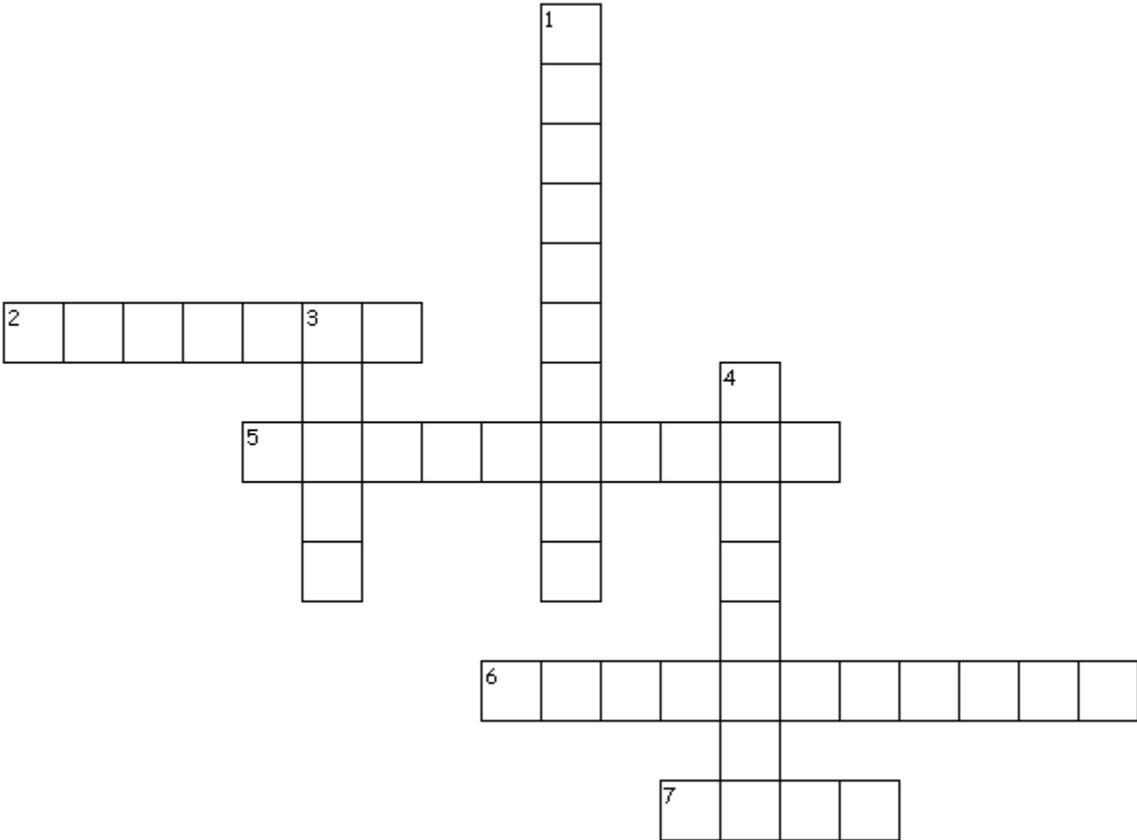
Debrief: How did the delegates of the Constitutional Convention decide the important details to be included in the Constitution?

Formative Assessment (“Check for Understanding”): Students will complete an H diagram (similar to a Venn) comparing and contrasting the Articles and the Constitution. Students can simply draw the H on a piece of loose leaf paper.

Resources and Teaching Tips (Consider the two questions below when completing this section.)

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Articles vs. Constitution



Across

- 2. central government
- 5. a law or rule
- 6. authority possessed by states
- 7. to impose a tax

Down

- 1. involving different states
- 3. to change or modify
- 4. exchange of goods or services

FATHOM
(FATH um)
to understand fully;
to penetrate the meaning of

Link: FAT THUMB



"Doctors could never **FATHOM** the reason for Larry's **FAT THUMB**."

- Her friends thought they had **FATHOMED** the reason Estelle applied for entrance in an all-boys college.
- The jury found it hard to **FATHOM** how the defendant could commit such a terrible crime.
- FATHOM** in nautical terms also means six feet of water depth.

SUBJECT WORD

PHONETIC PRONUNCIATION

DEFINITION

ASSOCIATION LINK WORD:
A rhyming word or phrase that "sounds like" the subject word and links them together.

MNEMONIC CARTOON:
A bizarre easy-to-remember cartoon that reinforces the subject word to the link word in a picture.

CARTOON CAPTION:
Further reinforcement of subject and link word in a sentence which describes the action portrayed in the cartoon.

SAMPLE SENTENCES:
Three sample sentences which use the subject word in different contexts.

Vocabulary Cartoons works on the principle of mnemonics. A mnemonic is a device that helps you remember something by associating what you are trying to remember with something you already know. A mnemonic device could be in many different forms like; rhymes, songs, pictures to name a few. For example, "Columbus sailed the ocean blue in fourteen hundred ninety-two" is a classic mnemonic rhyme which helps you remember when Columbus discovered America.

Following the mnemonic principle of association, Vocabulary Cartoons link together an auditory (rhyming) word association and a visual association in the form of a humorous cartoon. These powerful mnemonics help students retain the meanings of words longer and with less effort than trying to memorize definitions straight out of a dictionary.

In the example below, the new word FATHOM is associated (linked with) the rhyming word FAT THUMB, which in turn is then presented visually as a humorous cartoon. The more outrageous and bizarre the cartoon, the easier it is to remember.