

Table of Contents

UNIT NARRATIVE..... 1

CONTENT STANDARDS 2

UNDERSTANDINGS, QUESTIONS..... 3

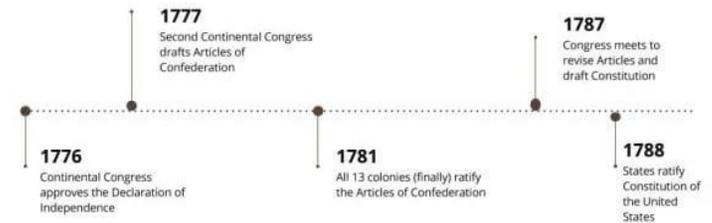
UNIT NARRATIVE

In this unit, students will explore how the U.S. Constitution became the foundation of American government by examining the historical roots, major debates, and compromises that shaped it. From the failures of the Articles of Confederation to the ratification process, students will analyze why a new system of government was necessary and how leaders like James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and others worked to build it. A close look at key debates, such as the Great Compromise and the Three-Fifths Compromise, will help students understand how the framers addressed representation, slavery, and federal power in a new republic.

Students will also examine how Enlightenment thinkers and earlier documents—like the Magna Carta, the Mayflower Compact, and the English Bill of Rights—influenced American ideas of liberty, justice, and limited government. Through engaging with primary sources, such as the Federalist and Anti-Federalist Papers, learners will debate the balance of power between the federal government and the states, and the need for a Bill of Rights. These foundational ideas will be connected to modern concepts of individual rights, civic duty, and democratic principles.

By the end of the unit, students will not only understand how and why the Constitution was written, but also how its principles still shape American society today. They'll be challenged to think critically about the responsibilities of citizenship and how democracy is protected by both institutions and the people.

Creating the Constitution



CONTENT STANDARDS

Below are the standards **taught** and **assessed** in this unit.

The Constitution		Connected Knowledge and Skills: 8.4, 8.7, 8.16, 8.17, 8.18, 8.19, 8.21, 8.25
8.15 Government: The student understands the American beliefs and principles reflected in the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and other important historic documents.		
STAAR	Readiness Standards	Supporting Standards
7-8 Items	<p>8.1A: identify the major eras in U.S. history through 1877, including ...creation and ratification of the Constitution, ...and describe their causes and effects.</p> <p>8.4D: analyze the issues of the Constitutional Convention of 1787, including the Great Compromise and the Three-Fifths Compromise.</p> <p>8.6A: explain how the Northwest Ordinance established principles and procedures for orderly expansion of the United States;</p> <p>8.7C: analyze the impact of slavery on different sections of the United States.</p> <p>8.10C: analyze the effects of physical and human geographic factors, such as...transportation, and communication on major historic events in the United States.</p> <p>8.15A: identify the influence of ideas from historic documents, including the Magna Carta, the English Bill of Rights, the Mayflower Compact, and the Federalist Papers on the U.S. system of government.</p> <p>8.15C: identify colonial grievances listed in the Declaration of Independence and explain how those grievances were addressed in the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights.</p> <p>8.15D: analyze how the Constitution reflects the principles of limited government, republicanism, checks and balances, federalism, separation of powers, popular sovereignty, and individual rights.</p> <p>8.16A: summarize the purposes for amending the U.S. Constitution.</p> <p>8.17A: analyze the arguments of the Federalist and Anti-Federalists, including those of Alexander Hamilton, Patrick Henry, James Madison, and George Mason.</p> <p>8.19A: define and give unalienable rights. examples of</p> <p>8.19B: summarize rights guaranteed in the Bill of Rights.</p> <p>8.25C: analyze the impact of the First Amendment guarantees of religious freedom on the American way of life.</p>	<p>8.1B: Explain the significance of the following dates: ...1787, writing of the U.S. Constitution;...</p> <p>8.15B: summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation.</p> <p>8.18A: identify the origins of judicial review.</p> <p>8.19C: identify examples of responsible citizenship, including obeying rules and laws, staying informed on public issues, voting, and serving on juries.</p> <p>8.21A: identify different points of view of political parties and interest groups on important historical issues.</p> <p>8.21B: describe the importance of free speech and press in a constitutional republic.</p> <p>8.21C: summarize historical events in which compromise resulted in a resolution.</p> <p>8.23C: identify ways conflict between people from various racial, ethnic, and religious groups were addressed</p> <p>8.25A: trace the development of religious freedom in the United States.</p>

UNDERSTANDINGS, QUESTIONS

Key Questions

- What is a confederation and what caused the Founding Fathers to create one?
- What powers did the government have under the Articles of Confederation?
- How is Shays' Rebellion an indicator of problems with the Articles of Confederation?
- Who was at the Constitutional Convention in 1787? Who wasn't? Where did it take place? What was the atmosphere like?
- What were the stated goals of the Constitutional Convention?
- What were the compromises made at the Constitutional Convention? Which ones are still in place today and why?
- What groups were competing for power at the Constitutional Convention?
- Why does the Constitution start with the words "We the People?"
- Why does our government have three branches? What are they and what do they each do?
- What are checks and balances? How does it work? Why did the Founding Fathers create checks and balances?
- What is federalism? Why was it so important to the Founding Fathers?
- Who were the Federalists and Anti-Federalists and what were they arguing about?
- What rights to American citizens have?
- Where did the Founding Fathers get their ideas for the Constitution?
- How did the Founding Fathers use their experiences with the British government to guide them in creating the Constitution?

Unit 3 Lesson Break Down	
Lesson 01	The Articles of Confederation and the Northwest Ordinance
Lesson 02	Shay's Rebellion and the Need for a New Government
Lesson 03	The Constitutional Convention – Day 1
Lesson 04	The Constitutional Convention – Day 2
Lesson 05	The Federalist and Anti-Federalist Debates
Lesson 06	The Amendment Process and the Electoral College
Lesson 07	Foundations of the Constitution – Philosophical Influences
Lesson 08	The Seven Principles – Popular Sovereignty
Lesson 09	The Seven Principles – Republicanism
Lesson 10	The Seven Principles – Separation of Powers
Lesson 11	The Seven Principles – Checks and Balances
Lesson 12	The Seven Principles – Federalism
Lesson 13	The Seven Principles – Limited Government and Individual Liberties
Lesson 14	The Seven Principles – The Bill of Rights and Individual Liberties
Lesson 15	Putting it All Together – Colonial Grievances addressed in the U.S. Government
Flex Day	
Unit 3 Exam – 60 minutes	

