

Problems with the Articles of ConfederationEssential Questions:

1. What were the priorities of the United States in the late 18th-century? What were the objectives of the major European nations of France, Great Britain, Spain, and the Netherlands at that time?
2. What problems occurred for the US as a direct result of the Articles of Confederation?
3. What compromises were reached at the Constitutional Convention?

Objectives:

1. Students will recognize the significant factors of international relations during the 1780's. (Lessons 1 and 2)
2. Students will judge the ability of the US Congress under the Articles to participate internationally (Lesson 2)
3. Students answer questions about several primary and secondary source documents concerning politics and economics during the late 18th-century. (Lesson 2)
4. Students will synthesize information from several primary and secondary sources into discussion-question responses. (Lesson 2)
5. Students will detect that the United States could not effectively compete internationally under the Articles of Confederation. (Lesson 2)
6. Students will comprehend basic details about the Constitutional Convention. (Lesson 2)
7. Students will illustrate various political and economic circumstances before, during, and after the Constitutional Convention with political cartoons. (Lesson 2)

SOLS:

- GOVT.1 The student will demonstrate mastery of the social studies skills responsible citizenship requires, including the ability to
- a) analyze primary and secondary source documents;
 - b) create and interpret maps, diagrams, tables, charts, graphs, and spreadsheets;
 - c) analyze political cartoons, political advertisements, pictures, and other graphic media;
- GOVT.3 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the concepts of democracy by
- d) recognizing the necessity of compromise;
- GOVT.4 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the Constitution of the United States by
- a) examining the ratification debates and *The Federalist*;
 - b) identifying the purposes for government stated in the Preamble;
 - c) examining the fundamental principles upon which the Constitution of the United States is based, including the rule of law, consent of the governed, limited government, separation of powers, and federalism;
 - d) illustrating the structure of the national government outlined in Article I, Article II, and Article III;
 - e) describing the amendment process.

- GOVT.15 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the United States market economy by
- f) analyzing global economic trends and the relationship of Virginia and the United States to the global economy.

Content: This lesson focuses on the problems America faced under the Articles of Confederation, and how those problems impacted the significant European powers of France, Spain, Great Britain, and the Netherlands, and in turn the consequences they created for Americans. The lesson also covers the VA and NJ plans proposed at the Constitutional Convention, the Great Compromise, the 3/5 Compromise, Shay's Rebellion, and a basic outline of the Constitution itself. The lesson is based on several primary and secondary source documents. Teachers should familiarize themselves with each letter/excerpt. Summaries of the documents can be found on the attached annotated bibliography. (**Attachment AB**)

Rationale: This lesson is necessary because it allows students to analyze first hand the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation, rather than simply taking notes on them. More importantly, students will explore America's role internationally in the 1780's, and will synthesize the information from the letters and primary sources, actual provisions of the Articles of Confederation, and their knowledge of trade and commerce into one cohesive understanding as to why a new Constitution had to be written.

Materials: Packet of primary and secondary sources (**Attachments 2A-2E**); Analysis chart (**attachment 2F**) for each document; Analysis and Summary Questions worksheet (**attachment 2G**); PowerPoint presentation on Shay's Rebellion, Convention, Federalists and Anti Federalists, and the US Constitution (**attachments PPTA & 2H**); art supplies (crayons, colored pencils, markers, etc); Political cartoon instructions (**attachment 2I**)

Procedures:

1. Do-Now: Students Recall 3 things discussed in the previous lesson on Articles of Confederation
2. Primary and Secondary Source Analysis
 - a. Students will work individually or with a partner, depending on their reading level and independence (teacher determined)
 - b. Each student or partnership will receive a packet of 7 primary and secondary resources, a vocabulary "cheat sheet" (**attachment 2C**) as well as a graphic organizer/chart for document analysis
 - c. Each student will be assigned either a "1" or "2". Group 2 should consist of better and more independent readers. Students should analyze the documents¹ for their group, as follows:
 - i. Group 1—George Washington letter (**attachment 2A**), Vergennes Letter to Luzerne (**attachment 2B**), Madison excerpt (**attachment 2B**), Holton section 1 (**attachment B**) (page 103, the first complete paragraph; page 23, the first 2 full paragraphs), and Holton section 2 (**attachment 2B**) (page 47 into page 48, the first 2 full paragraphs)

¹ All documents are fully cited on the attached Annotated Bibliography

- ii. Group 2—Letter from Luzerne to Vergennes (**attachment 2B**), Letter from Hartley to Fox (**attachment 2B**), letter from William Lee to John Adams, (**attachment 2D**) Letter from Otto to Vergennes (**attachment 2B**), Letter from Jefferson to Covington (**attachment 2B**), *London Gazette* letter (**attachment 2E**), Holton section 3 (**attachment 2B**) (page 28, the first full paragraph), Beard (**attachment 2B**)(page 32, only full paragraph on page)
- d. Students complete graphic organizer based on documents. (**attachment 2F**)
 - i. **NOTE:** Some students, especially struggling readers, will have difficulty deciphering the content of these sources. The provided vocab “cheat sheet” should help, but some students may still need more scaffolding from teachers. The teacher should absolutely help with vocabulary and focus, but should allow the student chances to hypothesize as much as possible. Emphasize that there is not always a “right” answer in history.
 - ii. Only one copy of the chart is attached. Teachers will need two copies per student, and should print as needed.
- e. Class discussion of analysis, with students completing discussion questions together as a class. (**attachment 2G**)
- 3. PowerPoint notes on the Constitutional Convention, Ratification Debates, and the US Constitution
 - a. **Note:** To differentiate, some students may use graphic organizers (**attachment 2H**) to take notes. This depends on the needs of particular students, and should be distributed by teachers who best know their students. As this lesson is for seniors, note-taking skills are vital for college success, and therefore students who can take notes from a lecture should be required to do so.
- 4. Political Cartoon: Students will create a political cartoon depicting life or events either during the Articles of Confederation, the Constitutional Convention, or after the creation of the Constitution. (**attachment 2I**)
- 5. Review

Assessment:

- 1. This lesson affords mostly informal, formative assessments. Teachers should take great care to monitor students' understanding of the primary and secondary sources as they are working on analyses.
- 2. The chart that accompanies the documents will be added to the final portfolio, but serve more as a gauge for teachers on how well students can analyze primary sources and then apply that information to higher order questions.
- 3. The discussion questions, completed through classroom discussion, will demonstrate to students the weaknesses of the Articles, and the inability of America to compete internationally under them.
- 4. Completion of the graphic organizer that accompanies the PowerPoint notes can be turned in for a formal grade, but should be used by teachers summatively to ensure that students understood the Constitutional Convention.

4. The political cartoon is summative and formal, and should be assessed certainly not on students' artistic talents or creativity per se, but rather on the students' ability to illustrate circumstances surrounding the creation of the Constitution. The political cartoon would also be added to the final portfolio.