

# Stark County Teaching American History Grant

Stark County Educational Service Center  
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Canton, Ohio 44709

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## The Fight for the Bill of Rights: Federalists vs. Antifederalists



Created by

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**Grade Level:** AP U.S. History (may be adapted for 8th grade)

**Duration:** 1-2 days

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## **Overview**

This lesson will examine the argument between the Federalists and Anti-Federalists over the issue of including a Bill of Rights in the Constitution and should only be completed after examining the Constitutional Convention, principles of government established by the Constitution, and the ratification struggle. Students will examine excerpts from primary sources written by our Founding Fathers arguing for and against a Bill of Rights to be included in the Constitution. The students will conclude this lesson by writing an essay on the compromise that resulted in the Bill of Rights and ratification of our Constitution.

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## **Ohio & Advanced Placement Academic Content Standards**

### **AP US History Standards**

Themes of American Identity and Politics and Citizenship, as listed in the Course Description as “the Federal Constitution”, a subtopic under “The American Revolutionary War”.

### **Ohio Academic Content Standards (Current for 8<sup>th</sup> grade)**

**Standard:** History

**Benchmark F:** Explain the political and economic challenges faced by the United States after the Revolutionary War and the actions that resulted in the adoption of the U.S. Constitution.

**Indicator 6:** Explain the challenges in writing and ratifying the U.S. Constitution including:

- a. Issues debated during the convention resulting in compromises (i.e., the Great Compromise, the Three-Fifths Compromise and the compromise over the slave trade);
- b. The Federalist/Anti-Federalist debate;
- c. The debate over a Bill of Rights.

**Standard:** Government

**Benchmark B:** Explain how the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, including the Bill of Rights, and the Northwest Ordinance have provided for the protection of rights and the long-term future of a growing democracy.

**Indicator 6:** Explain how specific provisions of the U.S. Constitution, including the Bill of Rights, limit the powers of government in order to protect the rights of individuals with emphasis on:

- a. Freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly and petition;
- b. Right to trial by jury and the right to counsel;
- c. Due process and equal protection of the laws.

## **Revised Ohio Academic Content Strands (8<sup>th</sup> grade)**

**Strand:** History

**Topic:** A New Nation

**Content Statement:** Problems arising under the Articles of Confederation led to debate over the adoption of the U.S. Constitution.

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## **Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions**

### **Enduring Understandings:**

- Tensions arise in representative governments over powers delegated to the national and the state governments versus the rights of the people.

### **Essential Questions:**

- How does the government balance the powers between the federal government, state governments, and the people?
- How must citizens in a representative democracy compromise to create a functional government that balances the powers of the federal government and state governments, with the rights of the people?

## **Historical Background**

The Constitutional Convention was called in 1787 with the purpose of amending the Articles of Confederation. Under the Articles of Confederation, the Federalists felt that the national government was too weak to effectively carry out its purpose and were pushing for the creation of a new, stronger government. Although many of the Anti-Federalists supported the Articles of Confederation and only wanted to see minor modifications, the Federalists eventually gain enough support in the Constitutional Convention and a new constitution was written.

As the Constitution was being written, there was much debate on how much power the new national government should have. Federalists argued that in order to create an effective national government, the states and the people would have to give up certain powers. Our Founding Fathers were faced with a difficult proposition of strengthening the national government without creating another tyrannical government similar to the one we had just gained our independence from.

With debates raging in the Convention, two factions emerged with radically different views on how much power this new government should have. Although the Federalists were a diverse group, many

were wealthy individuals, large farmers, merchants, and artisans from the Northeast, believed a strong national government was needed to control the individual interests of the states. They believed that states' powers needed to be limited and that the Senate adequately represented the states' interests. They also saw a large republic as the best for protecting the individual freedoms of the people. Some of the more prominent Federalists included George Washington, Ben Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, and John Adams.

The Anti-Federalists, many of whom were small farmers from the South and rural areas, along with some wealthy individuals that were concerned with protecting their own interests, believed that states' rights must be preserved and that local control was a key concept to democracy. They felt that the states would lose influence as the national government's power grew and that only a small republic could adequately protect individual liberties. Some of the more prominent Anti-Federalists included Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, and George Mason.

After the Constitution was approved by the Constitutional Convention and sent to the states for ratification, the real battle between the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists began. Anti-Federalists began to write letters to newspapers across the country arguing against ratification of the Constitution. The Federalists responded with a series of essays by James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay, known as *The Federalist Papers*, expressing the virtues of the new government.

Several states immediately ratified the Constitution, but a growing number of states threatened to reject the Constitution if it did not include a Bill of Rights. Anti-Federalists were very concerned that individual freedoms and basic human rights would not be protected by this new government. Many Federalists such as James Madison and Alexander Hamilton did not believe a Bill of Rights to be necessary because people did not give up these rights in accepting the Constitution. In fact, they opposed a Bill of Rights because they believed that listing people's rights in the Constitution would imply that only the rights mentioned would be protected.

Ultimately, the Federalists began to promise that they would seek a Bill of Rights to be added to the Constitution in the first session of Congress, if the Anti-Federalists would vote to ratify the Constitution. This argument finally persuaded Anti-Federalists to support ratification and the Constitution was finally ratified in 1788.

States began to submit a long list of proposed amendments to be included in the Bill of Rights. James Madison put together a list of 20 of the over 200 proposed amendments he thought would have the widest support and presented them to the first Congress. Congress approved 12 of these amendments and they were sent to the states for ratification. The states approved 10 of these and these amendments make up our Bill of Rights today.

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## Instructional Strategies

1. Prior to this lesson, students should have already learned about the Constitutional Convention, the basic structure and principles of the federal government in the Constitution, and about the struggle for ratification. This will put the Federalist and Antifederalist debate in its historical context and prepare the students for a deeper understanding of the issues over the Bill of Rights.
2. Begin class with a brief discussion about the Enduring Understanding and Essential Questions. You can ask the students to respond to these questions to help understand the background knowledge they have about the Federalists and Antifederalist viewpoints and the battle over the Bill of Rights.
3. Pass out Federalist vs. Anti-Federalist Chart. (Appendix A - copies needed for each student)
4. Begin class with a 10-15 minute lecture on the views of the Federalists and Anti-Federalists and have the class complete the chart as you are covering the material. The completed chart will help guide the lecture (Appendix B). Be sure the class has completed the chart correctly before moving on.
5. Break students up into three groups however you choose.
6. Randomly assign each group 1 of the 3 primary sources documents to read – Federalist Paper #84 (Appendix D – enough copies needed for one group) , Thomas Jefferson’s Letter to James Madison (Appendix F – enough copies needed for one group) , and James Madison’s Letter to Thomas Jefferson (Appendix H – enough copies needed for one group).
7. Give each group 10-15 minutes to read the documents and complete the APPARTS document analysis (Appendix C). APPARTS is intended to help students understand a primary source document. You may also use any other document analysis tool that your students are familiar with.
8. Once all groups have completed the document analysis, each group will briefly present their analysis to the rest of the class. The rest of the class should take notes on the relevant information from the other documents – especially the author, date, main idea, and significance. Be sure to guide the student presentations so that they understand the pertinent information. Sample APPARTS responses are in Appendices E, G and I.
9. As homework, or as an in class assignment the next day, have students write a response to the FRQ Question (copies of essay needed for each student):

“The political battle over ratification of the Constitution between Federalists and Antifederalists led to a compromise that resulted in the creation of the Bill of Rights. Assess the validity of this statement.”

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# Classroom Materials Needed

## Resources

General information used from [www.constitution.org](http://www.constitution.org) and <http://www.billofrightsinsitute.org/>, [www.TeachingAmericanHistory.org](http://www.TeachingAmericanHistory.org)

### Federalist Paper #84 (Appendix D) – full article

Hamilton, Alexander. "Certain General and Miscellaneous Objections to the Constitution Considered and Answered." Independent Journal, July 16, July 26, August 9, 1788.

<http://www.constitution.org/fed/federa84.htm> (accessed February 21, 2012)

### Letter to James Madison (Appendix F)

Jefferson, Thomas. "Letter to James Madison." December 20, 1787. Paris

[www.TeachingAmericanHistory.org/library/index.asp?documentprint=306](http://www.TeachingAmericanHistory.org/library/index.asp?documentprint=306) (accessed February 21, 2012)

### Letter to Thomas Jefferson (Appendix H) – full article

Madison, James. "The Question of a Bill of Rights." October 17, 1788

[http://constitution.org/jm/17881017\\_bor.htm](http://constitution.org/jm/17881017_bor.htm) (accessed February 21, 2012)

## Appendices

1. Appendix A – Federalists vs. Antifederalists Viewpoints Chart (copies needed for entire class)
2. Appendix B – Federalists vs. Antifederalists Viewpoints Chart completed
3. Appendix C – APPARTS document analysis (copies needed for entire class)
4. Appendix D - Alexander Hamilton's Federalist Paper #84 Excerpts (copies needed for 1 group)
5. Appendix E – APPARTS analysis for Alexander Hamilton's Federalist Paper #84
6. Appendix F – Thomas Jefferson Letter to James Madison, December 20, 1787 Excerpts (copies needed for 1 group)
7. Appendix G – APPARTS analysis for Thomas Jefferson Letter to James Madison, December 20. 1787
8. Appendix H - James Madison's Letter to Thomas Jefferson, October 17, 1788 Excerpts (copies needed for 1 group)
9. Appendix I – APPARTS analysis for James Madison's Letter to Thomas Jefferson, October 17, 1788
10. Appendix J – FRQ Essay question (copies needed for entire class)
11. Appendix K – FRQ Essay Rubric
12. Appendix L – FRQ Essay question sample responses

Appendix A

**Federalists vs. Antifederalists Viewpoints**

<b>ISSUE</b>	<b>Federalist View</b>	<b>Antifederalist View</b>
<b>Supporters and Leaders</b>		
<b>Articles of Confederation</b>		
<b>Power</b>		
<b>Constitution</b>		
<b>Bill of Rights</b>		

Appendix B

**Federalists vs. Antifederalists Viewpoints**

<b>ISSUE</b>	<b>Federalist View</b>	<b>Antifederalist View</b>
<b>Supporters and Leaders</b>	Large famers, merchants, artisans, businessmen  George Washington, James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, John Adams, Ben Franklin, etc...	Small farmers, laborers, rural residents  Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, George Mason, Samuel Adams, etc...
<b>Articles of Confederation</b>	Weak and ineffective government, Congress power too limited, must be replaced	Needed to be amended, not replaced
<b>Power</b>	Need to limit State's powers, strong national government needed to function effectively and control states	Strong central government threatening to states' power and danger to rights of common people
<b>Constitution</b>	In favor of ratification	Opposed to ratification, wanted to amend Articles
<b>Bill of Rights</b>	Not necessary, national government and state governments would protect rights of people	Absolutely essential, lack of Bill of Rights a real threat to individual liberties, State Bills of Right could be overridden by national government.



## Appendix C

# **APPARTS**

## Document Analysis

### **AUTHOR**

Who created the source? What do you know about the author? What is the author's point of view?

### **PLACE AND TIME**

Where and when was the source produced? How might this affect the meaning of the source?

### **PRIOR KNOWLEDGE**

Beyond information about the author and the context of its creation, what do you know that would help you further understand the primary source? For example, do you recognize any symbols and recall what they represent?

### **AUDIENCE**

For whom was the source created and how might this affect the reliability of the source?

### **REASON**

Why was this source produced and how might this affect the reliability of the source?

### **THE MAIN IDEA**

What point is the source is trying to convey?

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Why is this source important? Ask yourself, "So what?" in relation to the question asked.

## Excerpt from The Federalist No. 84

*Independent Journal*

Wednesday, July 16, Saturday, July 26, Saturday, August 9, 1788

[Alexander Hamilton]

### To the People of the State of New York:

IN THE course of the foregoing review of the Constitution, I have taken notice of, and endeavored to answer most of the objections which have appeared against it...

...It has been several times truly remarked, that bills of rights are in their origin, stipulations between kings and their subjects, abridgments of prerogative in favor of privilege, reservations of rights not surrendered to the prince. Such was Magna Carta, obtained by the Barons, sword in hand, from king John...It is evident, therefore, that according to their primitive signification, they have no application to constitutions professedly founded upon the power of the people, and executed by their immediate representatives and servants. Here, in strictness, the people surrender nothing, and as they retain every thing, they have no need of particular reservations. "We the people of the United States, to secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this constitution for the United States of America." Here is a better recognition of popular rights than volumes of those aphorisms which make the principal figure in several of our state bills of rights, and which would sound much better in a treatise of ethics than in a constitution of government....

...I go further, and affirm that bills of rights, in the sense and to the extent in which they are contended for, are not only unnecessary in the proposed Constitution, but would even be dangerous. They would contain various exceptions to powers not granted; and, on this very account, would afford a colorable pretext to claim more than were granted. For why declare that things shall not be done which there is no power to do? Why, for instance, should it be said that the liberty of the press shall not be restrained, when no power is given by which restrictions may be imposed? I will not contend that such a provision would confer a regulating power; but it is evident that it would furnish, to men disposed to usurp, a plausible pretense for claiming that power. They might urge with a semblance of reason, that the Constitution ought not to be charged with the absurdity of providing against the abuse of an authority which was not given, and that the provision against restraining the liberty of the press afforded a clear implication, that a power to prescribe proper regulations concerning it was intended to be vested in the national government. This may serve as a specimen of the numerous handles which would be given to the doctrine of constructive powers, by the indulgence of an injudicious zeal for bills of rights...

## **Appendix E**

### **APPARTS – Federalist 84 excerpt**

#### **AUTHOR**

Alexander Hamilton

#### **PLACE AND TIME**

Published in the Independent Journal on Wednesday, July 16, Saturday, July 26, and Saturday, August 9, 1788 in New York.

#### **PRIOR KNOWLEDGE**

Alexander Hamilton was a leading Federalist who believed that a Bill of Rights was unnecessary. The fear by many Federalists was that listing the rights would limit them.

#### **AUDIENCE**

The essay was addressed to the people of New York.

#### **REASON**

The reason Hamilton wrote this essay was to support the Federalist viewpoint that a Bill of Rights was not needed and even dangerous.

#### **THE MAIN IDEA**

Hamilton argues that a Bill of Rights was not needed in the Constitution because the natural rights of people are already protected by the Constitution. Listing the rights of citizens would inherently limit the rights that they already have.

#### **SIGNIFICANCE**

The entire Federalist Papers were an effort by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay to encourage the people to support the ratification of the Constitution and to address specific complaints Anti-Federalists had about the Constitution.

## **Appendix F**

### **Letter to James Madison**

*Thomas Jefferson*  
December 20, 1787  
Paris  
(excerpts)

... I will now add what I do not like. First the omission of a bill of rights providing clearly & without the aid of sophisms for freedom of religion, freedom of the press, protection against standing armies, restriction against monopolies, the eternal & unremitting force of the habeas corpus laws, and trials by jury in all matters of fact triable by the laws of the land & not by the law of nations. To say, as Mr. Wilson does that a bill of rights was not necessary because all is reserved in the case of the general government which is not given, while in the particular ones all is given which is not reserved, might do for the audience to whom it was addressed, but is surely a gratis dictum, opposed by strong inferences from the body of the instrument, as well as from the omission of the clause of our present confederation which had declared that in express terms. It was a hard conclusion to say because there has been no uniformity among the states as to the cases triable by jury, because some have been so incautious as to abandon this mode of trial, therefore the more prudent states shall be reduced to the same level of calamity. It would have been much more just & wise to have concluded the other way that as most of the states had judiciously preserved this palladium, those who had wandered should be brought back to it, and to have established general right instead of general wrong. Let me add that a bill of rights is what the people are entitled to against every government on earth, general or particular, & what no just government should refuse, or rest on inferences. ...

## **Appendix G**

### **APPARTS – Letter to James Madison excerpt**

#### **AUTHOR**

Thomas Jefferson

#### **PLACE AND TIME**

December 20, 1787 from Paris, France

#### **PRIOR KNOWLEDGE**

Jefferson was a leading Anti-Federalist and a strong advocate for a Bill of Rights.

#### **AUDIENCE**

This was a personal letter to James Madison

#### **REASON**

Jefferson is trying to persuade Madison that a Bill of Rights was necessary to protect the people from the government.

#### **THE MAIN IDEA**

Jefferson argues that people have unalienable rights that the government is responsible for protecting. Jefferson does not support the Federalist claim that many of these rights are protected by the States because the bills of rights of the states all are different. He also argues that a Bill of Rights is what all people entitled to against every government.

#### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Jefferson clearly states that the Constitution needs a Bill of Rights to guarantee that the peoples' freedoms will be protected and that the States' bills of rights are not adequate to do this. The rights that Jefferson argues that need to be protected, such as freedom of press, freedom of religion, trial by jury, etc..., become the basis for the Bill of Rights that ultimately was created.

## Appendix H

### The Question of a Bill of Rights

#### **James Madison - Letter to Thomas Jefferson, October 17, 1788**

My own opinion has always been in favor of a bill of rights; provided that it be so framed as not to imply powers not meant to be included in the enumeration. At the same time I have never thought the omission a material defect, nor been anxious to supply it even by *subsequent* amendment, for any other reason than that it is anxiously desired by others. I have favored it because I suppose it might be of use, and if properly executed could not be of disservice.

I have not viewed it in an important light —

1. because I conceive that in a certain degree ... the rights in question are reserved by the manner in which the federal powers are granted.
2. because there is great reason to fear that a positive declaration of some of the most essential rights could not be obtained in the requisite latitude. I am sure that the rights of conscience in particular, if submitted to public definition would be narrowed much more than they are ever likely to be by an assumed power. One of the objections in New England was that the Constitution by prohibiting religious tests, opened a door for Jews Turks & infidels.
3. because the limited powers of the federal Government and the jealousy of the subordinate Governments, afford a security which has not existed in the case of the State Governments, and exists in no other.
4. because experience proves the inefficiency of a bill of rights on those occasions when its controul is most needed. Repeated violations of these parchment barriers have been committed by overbearing majorities in every State. In Virginia I have seen the bill of h rights violated in every instance where it has been opposed to a popular current. ... Wherever the real power in a government lies, there is the danger of oppression. In our Governments the real power lies in the majority of the Community, and the invasion of private rights is *chiefly* to be apprehended, not from acts of Government contrary to the sense of its constituents, but from acts in which the Government is the mere instrument of the major number of the Constituents. This is a truth of great importance, but not yet sufficiently attended to. ... Wherever there is an interest and power to do wrong, wrong will generally be done, and not less readily by a powerful & interested party than by a powerful and interested prince. ... The difference so far as it relates to the point in question — the efficacy of a bill of rights in controuling abuses of power — lies in this: that in a monarchy the latent force of the nation is superior to that of the Sovereign, and a solemn charter of popular rights must have a great effect, as a standard for trying the validity of public acts, and a signal for rousing & uniting the superior force of the community; whereas in a popular Government, the political and physical power may be considered as vested in the same hands, that is in a majority of the people, and, consequently the tyrannical will of the Sovereign is not [to] be controuled by the dread of an appeal to any other force within the community.

## **Appendix I**

### **APPARTS – Letter to Thomas Jefferson excerpt**

#### **AUTHOR**

James Madison

#### **PLACE AND TIME**

October 17, 1788

#### **PRIOR KNOWLEDGE**

Madison was an author of the Federalist Papers and help draft the Constitution. Although Madison initially opposed a Bill of Rights, he compiled a list of possible rights to include and ushered them through Congress.

#### **AUDIENCE**

Thomas Jefferson

#### **REASON**

Madison addresses some of Jefferson's concerns regarding the lack of a Bill of Rights, but also addresses his own concerns about putting a Bill of Rights into the Constitution.

#### **THE MAIN IDEA**

Madison was initially concerned that adding a Bill of Rights would actually limit the rights of the people. Eventually he begins to support the idea that a Bill of Rights would be necessary to ensure ratification. He expresses his concerns about how the Bill of Rights should be written so as not to diminish the rights of the people.

#### **SIGNIFICANCE**

This letter provides a great insight to the concerns that Madison had about the Bill of Rights and the importance he placed on making sure that it was written in a way that would not limit the peoples' freedoms. This letter also details the conflict Madison had about supporting a Bill of Rights and why he ultimately would take charge of guiding the Bill of Rights through Congress.

## **Appendix J**

### Assessment

AP U.S. History Free Response Question (FRQ)

The political battle over ratification of the Constitution between Federalists and Antifederalists led to a compromise that resulted in the creation of the Bill of Rights. Assess the validity of this statement.



## **Appendix K**

### **Assessment Rubric**

#### **APUSH FRQ Rubric**

##### **8-9 points (“A” essay)**

- Has a clear well-developed thesis that answers the prompt and which guides the essay throughout.
- Presents a strong interpretation and analysis that answers all aspect of the question.
- Makes substantial use of relevant outside information to support thesis.
- Supports thesis with many relevant facts and interprets that information correctly.
- Writing presents a high degree of skill and complexity.

##### **5-7 points (“B/C” essay)**

- Presents a clear, adequate thesis, but not as focused or comprehensive as above.
- Analysis deals with part of the question in some depth, other parts in a more general way.
- Essay may be more descriptive than analytical.
- Supports thesis with outside information but in a more general way.
- Shows acceptable organization and writing; language errors do not interfere with the comprehension of the essay.

##### **2-4 points (“C/D” essay)**

- Has a limited, confused, or poorly developed thesis, may simply restate the prompt.
- Contains few facts or contains facts that are irrelevant or inaccurate.
- Does not sufficiently answer all parts of the question.
- Contains little analysis – much more needed.
- May be poorly organized and/or written.

##### **0-1 points (“F” essay)**

- Has little or no thesis that does not address the topic.
- Shows inadequate or inaccurate understanding of the question.
- Contains inappropriate facts or no outside facts.
- Disorganized or written so poorly that it inhibits understanding.
- Contains numerous errors, both major and minor.
- May contain major historical errors.

## Appendix L

### Sample Essays

#### Sample 1

The Federalists and Anti-Federalists disagreed on many aspects concerning the ratification of the United States Constitution. One of the most significant arguments was the inclusion of a Bill of Rights. However, this disagreement would ultimately lead to the formation of the Constitution in use today. The two groups differed in several areas such as their standard beliefs regarding supreme authority, ideology of separation of powers, and position on a Bill of Rights.

One of the points that the Federalists and Anti-Federalists disagreed on was their outlook on who should have supreme authority: the national or state governments. The Federalist Party was comprised of mostly businessmen who had fought in the Revolutionary War like James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and most importantly, President George Washington. The Federalists believed that national government should have supreme authority over the states in order to keep them under control. However, the Anti-Federalist Party, comprised generally of individuals of the labor class and rural areas of the country such as Patrick Henry, George Mason, and Samuel Adams, believed that the states should have ultimate authority, with the national government acting merely as a link between the two.

As described in the Anti-Federalist Paper No. 84, the Anti-Federalists had three basic fears: first, that a new centralized government would make the state governments obsolete; second, that too much power given to people too far from citizens would be dangerous; and third, that expansion of governmental authority would cause corruption. After all, to them, the states had been the ones who had created the Constitution, and would be the ones to ratify it (not the citizens), therefore the states should have certain rights.

A second area of contrast between the two parties included the principles of separation of powers. The Federalists felt that three branches (the executive, legislative, and judicial branches) of government would be efficient in keeping the administration of powers balanced in regards to citizens' rights. Since the three branches were equal, they explained, no one group could assume control over the other. The Anti-Federalists, however, argued that the different branches of administration would be given too much power, especially the executive branch. Anti-Federalists such as Patrick Henry argued that once the positions of the branches would be filled, it would result in the election of aristocrats, not a true system of checks and balances.

Lastly, the most prominent argument among the two parties was whether or not the Constitution should include a Bill of Rights. To the Federalists, as argued in Federalist Paper No. 84, a listing of specific rights was a dangerous thing. They thought if the national government was to protect specifically listed rights, what would stop it from violating rights other than the listed ones? Why, for instance, they asked, should it be said that the liberty of the press shall not be restrained, when no power is given by which restrictions may be imposed? On the other hand, the Anti-Federalists strongly disagreed. They argued that this new Constitution offered no protection of liberties to its citizens. This argument became the focus of the Anti-Federalist campaign against ratification. They felt that it was essential that the Constitution include a Bill of Rights. Without a Bill of Rights, Patrick Henry exclaimed, you will exhibit the most absurd

thing to mankind that ever the world saw - a government that has abandoned all its powers - the powers of taxation, the sword, and the purse. You have disposed of them to Congress, without a Bill of Rights - without check, limitation, or control!

Finally, when the Constitution was sent for ratification, it did not include a Bill of Rights. Nine states had already ratified it, but some remained stubborn and refused to accept the new document without the addition of a Bill of Rights. It had already been decided that unanimity was a political necessity (especially with states such as New York and Virginia), so Congress promised that once the bill had been ratified and had taken effect, a Bill of Rights would be inserted. Finally, New York and Virginia approved, and the Constitution became a reality; two-hundred amendments were proposed and were narrowed down to seventeen. Twelve of the seventeen passed the first stage, and then ten of those twelve amendments were passed by the states. The Constitution opens with these ten amendments as a result of the strident efforts made by Anti-Federalists and has proved to be highly important in protecting the rights of the people.

### Sample 2

On September 17, 1787, the first draft of the Constitution of the United States of America was approved and signed by thirty-nine of the forty-two delegates present at the convention. Now, it was up to the states to ratify. On June 21, 1788, the Constitution was ratified by nine of the original thirteen states, which made it law. However, tensions were still high between the feuding Federalists and Anti-federalists over what was included in the Constitution. Obviously, the two groups held completely different, in fact almost opposite, viewpoints as to how the country should be governed. The Federalists were very firm in their support of the current Constitution and its content, however Anti-federalists felt the Constitution needed revamped to be more democratic, so finally the Federalists and Anti-federalists succeeded in making a compromise to settle their different viewpoints of the Constitution.

The Federalists, led by George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and John Adams, supported the ratification of the Constitution because they feared the disorder and chaos that would erupt if the states and people maintained most of the power in the country. It was necessary for the federal government to maintain supreme authority in order to keep control over the states. The separation of powers described in the Constitution would guarantee an effective administration. As for the issue of the adding a bill of rights, they argued that there was no need for a bill of rights because the people's rights were already protected by state governments and the Constitution. In one of the Federalists Papers, Alexander Hamilton even went as far as saying that a Bill of Rights is not only unnecessary, but dangerous. It would give citizen exceptions to powers that were not even granted. Ultimately their major argument against the issue could simply be summed up as, why declare things shall not be done if there is no power to do them anyways?

On the contrary, Anti-federalists, led by Thomas Jefferson, John Hancock, Patrick Henry, and Samuel Adams, saw themselves as those defending the true ideals of the revolution They

believed that the federal government was too strong and too powerful under the Constitution. The presidency was beginning to resemble the English monarchy. And furthermore, they believed the Constitution to be undemocratic since citizens really only voted on the House of Representatives. There was no guarantee to personal liberties and freedoms for American citizens; therefore the addition of the Bill of Rights was obviously necessary. Without a Bill of Rights, state governments had virtually no power, and it was all given to Congress. It was not that the anti-federalists did not want an effective government; they were just concerned about the dangers of concentrated authority. Many of what the Anti-federalists would call “flaws” in the Constitution was the exact principles which the federalists supported.

After much deliberation, it was decided that a bill of rights, a listing of the individual freedoms of United States’ citizens, would be added to please Anti-federalist. This agreement satisfied the Anti-federalist delegates from Massachusetts, New York, and Virginia, and these states too ratified the Constitution. This was extremely important for these three states to ratify because they were large and contained a significant portion of the country’s population. With the decision to include the Bill of Rights in the Constitution, the unrest now laid in as to what would be included. At the start, state delegates sent in 212 proposals for possible amendments to the Bill of Rights. Although an avid federalist and a firm believer in the idea of listing rights also limited them, James Madison took on the task of compiling the Bill of Rights. He narrowed down the original 212 proposals to what he saw as the seventeen which would receive the most support. The now seventeen proposals were sent to Congress, in which twelve were passed. From there, the states ratified ten. This was now the United States of America’s Bill of Rights, the first ten amendments to the Constitution.

Although it took several years to compile and agree upon, the Constitution, including the Bill of Rights, was ratified by the end of 1791. Through the struggle of ratification, both the Federalists and anti-federalists made sacrifices on their beliefs in order to compromise. Against the wishes of the Anti-federalists, the federal government was still superior to state governments, while the Federalists gave in and helped to ratify the Bill of Rights. In these first ten amendments, the first nine forbid Congress from infringing on certain individual rights, while the tenth help to protect state governments. This finally gave America the supreme law which would ultimately help unite it into one country.