

Farmers Demand Fair Treatment The depression hit farmers hard. The war had created a high demand for farm products. Farmers borrowed money for land, seed, animals, and tools. However, when the Revolution ended, demand for farm goods went down. As prices fell, many farmers could not repay their loans.

In Massachusetts, matters worsened when the state raised taxes. The courts seized the farms of those who could not pay their taxes or loans. Angry farmers felt they were being treated unfairly.

Daniel Shays, a Massachusetts farmer who had fought at Bunker Hill and Saratoga, organized an uprising in 1786. More than 1,000 farmers took part in **Shays' Rebellion**. They attacked courthouses and prevented the state from seizing farms when farmers could not pay their debts. Finally, the Massachusetts legislature sent the militia to drive them off.

A Call For Revision Many Americans saw Shays' Rebellion as a sign that the Articles of Confederation did not work.

To avert a crisis, leaders from several states called for a convention to revise the Articles of Confederation. They met in Philadelphia in May 1787. In the end, this convention would create an entirely new framework of government.

READING CHECK **Identify Implied Main Ideas** What did Shays' Rebellion show to many people?



Analyze Images Shays' Rebellion resulted in bloodshed when state militia attacked angry rioters led by Daniel Shays. **Draw Conclusions** How did Shays' Rebellion test the strength of the new federal government?

Lesson Check

Practice Vocabulary

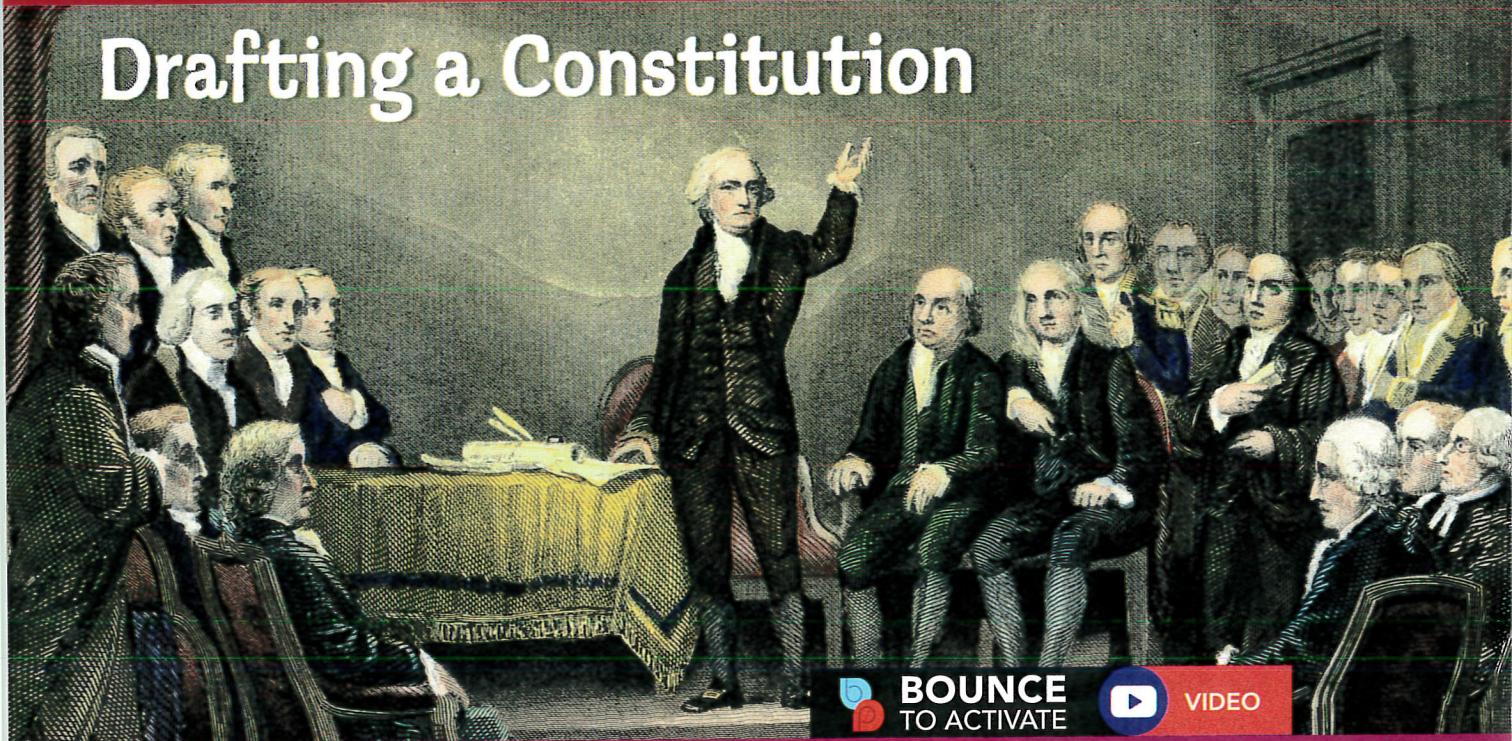
1. How did the Land Ordinance of 1785 and the **Northwest Ordinance** of 1787 **privatize** national resources?
2. Why did **currency** issues and **Shays' Rebellion** cause some leaders to decide that the **Articles of Confederation** should be revised?

Critical Thinking and Writing

3. **Identify Supporting Details** What were three weaknesses of the central government under the Articles of Confederation?
4. **Draw Conclusions** Why do you think slavery was outlawed in the Northwest Territory?
5. **Evaluate Explanations** Many American leaders, pointed to Shays' Rebellion as proof that the Articles of Confederation were weak. Does this explanation for revising the Articles make sense to you? Why or why not?
6. **Revisit the Essential Question** How much power should the government have? Restrict your answer to what you have learned in this lesson.
7. **Writing Workshop: Introduce Claims** Write a brief paragraph in your Active Journal introducing two sides of the argument about how much power the government should have. This paragraph will get you started on an essay you will write at the end of the Topic.

LESSON 2

Drafting a Constitution



 **BOUNCE**
TO ACTIVATE

 **VIDEO**

GET READY TO READ

START UP


Look at the image of the delegates. What issues are these men going to face?

GUIDING QUESTIONS


- What was the Revolution's legacy?
- Who led the Constitutional Convention?
- What were the main differences between the two rival plans for the new Constitution?
- How much power should the federal government have, and what should it do?

TAKE NOTES

Literacy Skills Compare and Contrast

Use the graphic organizer in your  Active Journal to take notes as you read the lesson.

PRACTICE VOCABULARY

Use the vocabulary activity in your  Active Journal to practice the vocabulary words.

Vocabulary

Constitutional Convention
Virginia Plan
New Jersey Plan
compromise
Great Compromise
Three-Fifths Compromise

Academic Vocabulary

legacy
ethical

The **Constitutional Convention**

opened on May 25, 1787, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Its purpose was to revise the Articles of Confederation. Every state except Rhode Island sent representatives. All of them wanted to honor the **legacy** of the Revolution and the principles for which they had fought. Yet not all delegates would agree on how to achieve that goal.

Who Led the Convention?

The convention would prove historic because it did not revise the Articles of Confederation. Instead, its delegates produced a new United States Constitution. That document established a government that has survived more than 200 years.

A Remarkable Group The convention's 55 delegates were a remarkable group. Eight of them had signed the Declaration of Independence, including the oldest, Benjamin Franklin. At age 81, Franklin was wise in the ways of government and human nature.

George Washington, age 55, represented Virginia. He was so well respected that the delegates at once elected him president of the Convention. Washington had long called for a stronger central government. Yet his role in the debates would be limited. It was his presence at the Convention that was important.

Most of the delegates belonged to a new generation of American leaders. Nearly half were young men in their thirties, including Alexander Hamilton of New York. During the Revolution, Hamilton had served for a time as Washington's private secretary. Hamilton despised the Articles of Confederation. "The nation," he wrote, "is sick and wants powerful remedies." The powerful remedy he prescribed was a strong central government.

Another of the younger delegates was Gouverneur Morris of Pennsylvania. Like Hamilton, he favored a strong central government. He would make his opinion known through many speeches at the Convention. Morris would also polish the final draft of the Constitution.

James Wilson, too, represented Pennsylvania at the Convention. Other delegates admired Wilson's political knowledge, which he would use to help clarify the issues facing the Convention.

A Student of History and Politics Perhaps the best-prepared delegate was 36-year-old James Madison of Virginia. For months, the quiet, shy Madison had been reading books on history, politics, and commerce.

His intelligence and his ideas about how to structure a democratic government strongly influenced the other delegates. Today, Madison is often called the "Father of the Constitution."

Keeping Conversations Among Themselves When the Convention began, the delegates decided to keep their talks private. They wanted to speak their minds freely in front of other delegates and be able to explore issues without pressures from outside.

Most of them thought the Articles of Confederation had made the central government too weak. They agreed that the government must be stronger, but not too strong. They did not want anything resembling the British monarchy.

READING CHECK **Compare and Contrast** How were the delegates to the Convention alike and different?

Academic Vocabulary

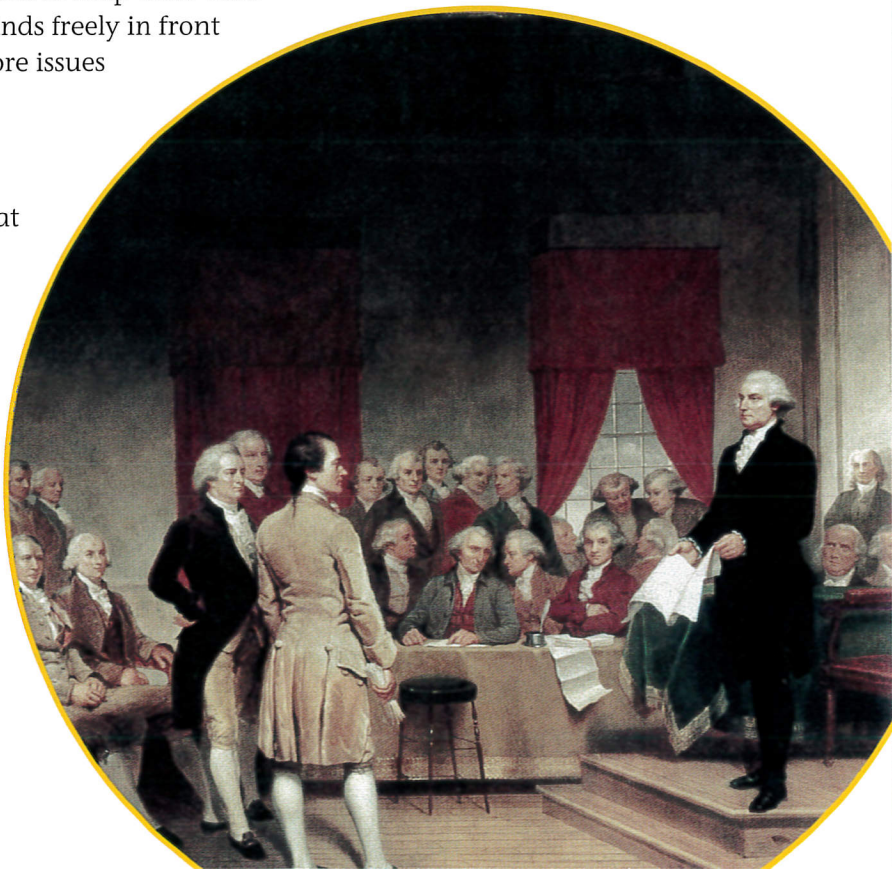
legacy • *n.*, something received by a predecessor or from the past



INTERACTIVE

Delegates to the Constitutional Convention

Analyze Images George Washington (in black, at right) was chosen by his fellow delegates to lead the Constitutional Convention in 1787. **Infer** Why do you think the delegates chose Washington to lead the proceedings?






INTERACTIVE

The Great
Compromise

Quest CONNECTIONS

How did states respond to these plans? Record your findings in your  Active Journal.

Analyze Images Oliver Ellsworth and Roger Sherman, delegates from Connecticut, devised a solution to the problem of representation.

Summarize Explain what their solution was.



Disagreements Over a New Government

Soon after the meeting began, the delegates realized they would have to do more than simply revise the Articles of Confederation. They chose instead to write an entirely new constitution for the nation. They disagreed, however, about the form the new national government should take.

Virginia Proposes a Plan Edmund Randolph and James Madison, both from Virginia, proposed a plan for the new government. This **Virginia Plan** called for a strong national government with three branches that would be responsible for different tasks. Each would keep the others from growing too powerful.

Under the Virginia Plan, the legislature would consist of two houses. The number of representatives would be based on population. Thus, in both houses, larger states would have more representatives than smaller ones. Small states opposed the Virginia Plan. They feared that the large states could easily outvote them in Congress. Supporters of the Virginia Plan replied that it was only fair for a state with more people to have more representatives.

New Jersey's Proposal After two weeks of debate, William Paterson of New Jersey presented a plan that had the support of the small states. Like the Virginia Plan, the **New Jersey Plan** called for three branches of government. However, it provided for a legislature that had only one house. Each state, regardless of its population, would have one vote in the legislature, just as it had under the Articles of Confederation.

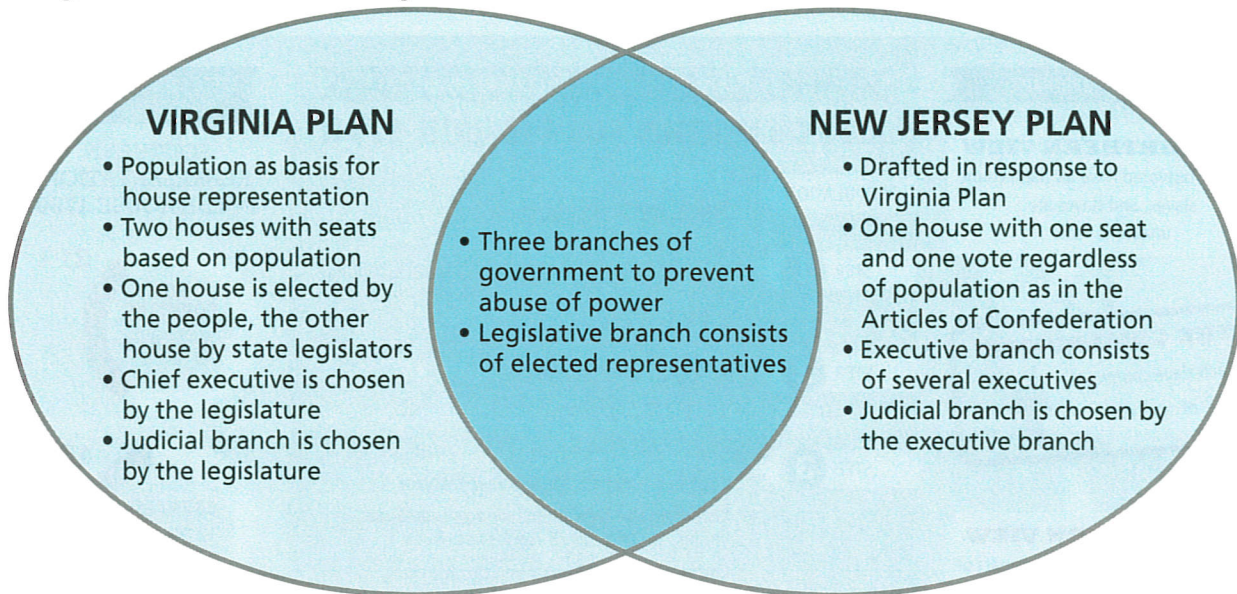
 **READING CHECK Identify Main Ideas** What was the essential difference between the Virginia Plan and the New Jersey Plan?

The Great Compromise

For a while, no agreement could be reached. Tempers flared. The Convention seemed ready to fall apart. Finally, Roger Sherman of Connecticut worked out a **compromise**. A compromise, a solution in which each side gives up some of its demands to reach an agreement.

Sherman's compromise called for the creation of a two-house legislature. Members of the lower house, the House of Representatives, would be elected by popular vote. As the larger states wished, seats would be awarded to each state based on population. Members of the upper house, called the Senate, would be chosen by state legislatures. Each state, no matter what its size, would have two senators. Small states particularly liked this part of Sherman's compromise.

Virginia and New Jersey Plans



On July 16, the delegates narrowly approved Sherman's plan. It became known as the **Great Compromise**. Each side, in an admirable show of civic virtue, gave up some demands to achieve unity. With a margin of just one vote, the delegates had found a peaceful solution to a problem that had threatened to bring the convention to a halt.

READING CHECK **Identify Supporting Details** How did the Great Compromise address the concerns of small and large states?

The Three-Fifths Compromise

Just as there were disagreements between large states and small states, there were also disagreements between northern states and southern states. The most serious disagreements concerned slavery. Would enslaved people be counted as part of a state's population? Would the slave trade continue to bring enslaved Africans into the United States?

The States Reach an Agreement Southerners wanted to include enslaved people in their states' population counts because that would give southern states more representatives in the House of Representatives. Southern states stood to gain greatly if enslaved people were counted. Extra representatives meant additional influence.

Northerners objected. They argued that since enslaved people could not vote, they should not be counted when assigning representatives.

Once again, the delegates compromised. They agreed that three-fifths of the enslaved people in any state would be counted.

In other words, if a state had 5,000 enslaved residents, 3,000 of them would be included in the state's population count. This agreement became known as the **Three-Fifths Compromise**.

Analyze Images This diagram summarizes the two plans presented for the new federal government.

Use Visual Information How did the New Jersey Plan and Virginia Plan differ in their approach to the executive branch of government?

Quick Activity

Study the biographies and writings of delegates and draw conclusions about the relationships between their backgrounds and points of view.

THE THREE-FIFTHS COMPROMISE

ISSUE AND COMPROMISE

THE NORTHERN VIEW

We'll be outvoted if we let them count slaves, and slaves are unable to vote.

THE COMPROMISE

Each slave counts as $\frac{3}{5}$ of a person.



THE SOUTHERN VIEW

Our slaves should be counted as part of our population and representation.

ESTIMATING THE EFFECT OF COMPROMISE

REPRESENTATION FOR VIRGINIA 1790

POPULATION

442,177 FREE WHITES

292,627 ENSLAVED

STEP 1

$\frac{3}{5}$ OF 292,627 ENSLAVED POPULATION
= 175,576

STEP 2

175,576 ENSLAVED + 442,177 FREE
= 617,753 TOTAL

STEP 3

Counting only the free population, Virginia would have 15 representatives.

Counting the free + enslaved populations, Virginia would have 25 representatives.

Counting free + $\frac{3}{5}$ enslaved populations, Virginia would have 20 representatives.

Source: University of Delaware

EFFECT ON SOUTHERN REPRESENTATION

SOUTHERN REPRESENTATION IN THE HOUSE 1790



Analyze Images The Three-Fifths Compromise balanced regional concerns.

Use Visual Information

How did southern states benefit from the Three-Fifths Compromise?

Academic Vocabulary

ethical • *adj.*, following accepted standards for conduct or behavior

The fraction in the Three-Fifths Compromise had come from a rule about taxes in the Articles of Confederation. The new compromise balanced the concerns of northerners and southerners.

Further Disagreement Over Slavery By 1787, some northern states had banned the slave trade within their borders. Delegates from these states urged that the importation of slaves be banned in the entire nation. Southerners argued that such a ban would ruin their economy.

In the end, northern and southern states compromised once more. Northerners agreed that Congress could not outlaw the slave trade for at least 20 years. After that, Congress could regulate the slave trade if it wished. Northerners also agreed that no state could stop a person fleeing slavery from being returned to an owner. This clause in the Constitution became known as the fugitive slave clause.

The compromises, however, also brought up an **ethical** question. How could the nation's ideals of freedom, liberty, and democracy be adopted alongside slavery?

READING CHECK Identify Main Ideas Why did many of the northern states object to including enslaved people in population counts?

The Convention Comes to a Conclusion

After a long summer full of struggle and argument, the Constitution was ready to be signed on September 17, 1787. Its opening lines, or Preamble, expressed the goals of the Framers: "We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union . . ."

Had they succeeded in carrying out the ideals of the Declaration of Independence? History's judgment has largely agreed that they did.

As the delegates gathered for the last time, Benjamin Franklin rose and said:

Primary Source

“I cannot help expressing a wish, that every member of the Convention who may still have objections to it, would with me, on this occasion, doubt a little of his own infallibility, and . . . put his name to this instrument.”

—Benjamin Franklin, *Records of the Federal Convention of 1787*

Three delegates refused to sign. Edmund Randolph and George Mason of Virginia, along with Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts, feared that the new Constitution handed over too much power to the national government.

The Constitution’s creation began a process in which states had to decide whether to approve the Constitution. Each state would hold a convention to approve or reject the plan for the new government. Once nine states endorsed it, the Constitution would become law.

READING CHECK Identify Supporting

Details Why did some delegates choose not to sign the Constitution?

Analyze Images Although some northern states wanted to ban slavery, the Constitutional Convention did not end slavery or the slave trade. **Summarize** Explain why the delegates decided to compromise on this issue.




Lesson Check

Practice Vocabulary

1. How did the legislative branch of government differ under the **Virginia Plan** and the **New Jersey Plan**?
2. What role did **compromise** play at the **Constitutional Convention**?

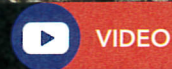
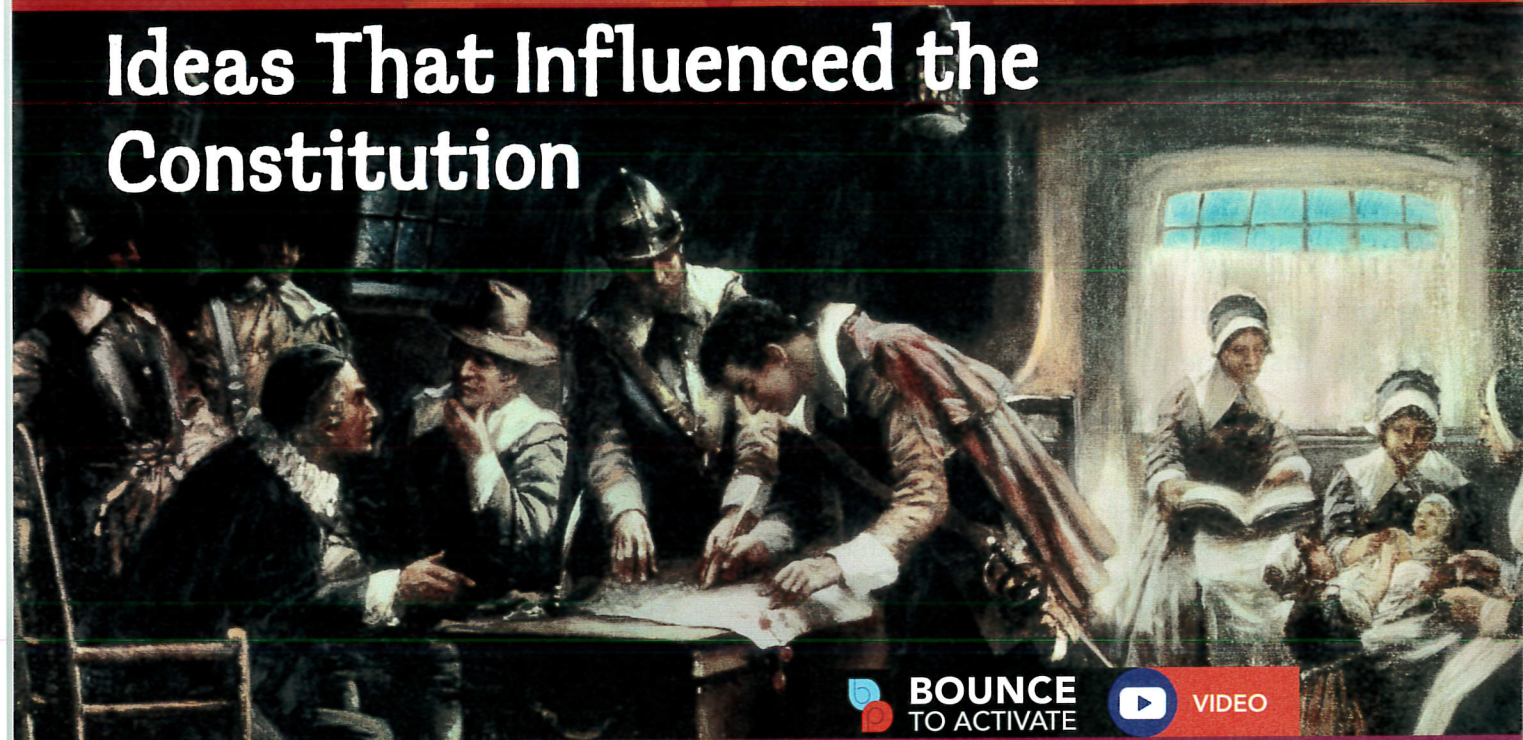
Critical Thinking and Writing

3. **Draw Conclusions** Could the Constitution have been produced if George Washington had not attended the Convention? Explain.

4. **Infer** What is so significant about the Preamble’s opening words, “We the People of the United States . . .”?
5. **Writing Workshop: Support Claims** Write a few sentences in your  Active Journal that support claims concerning how much power the government should have. These sentences will help you develop the essay that you will write at the end of the Topic.

LESSON 3

Ideas That Influenced the Constitution



GET READY TO READ

START UP

Look at the image of the signing of the Mayflower Compact. How did that document influence the Constitution?

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What did American leaders learn about government from studying ancient Rome?
- How did ideas and traditions from Europe and the colonial past shape the Constitution?

TAKE NOTES

Literacy Skills Classify and Categorize

Use the graphic organizer in your Active Journal to take notes as you read the lesson.

PRACTICE VOCABULARY

Use the vocabulary activity in your Active Journal to practice the vocabulary words.

Vocabulary

republic
dictatorship
Magna Carta
English Bill of Rights
separation of powers

Academic Vocabulary

civic
free enterprise

Long before the Revolution, John Adams called on Americans to investigate how governments worked. He urged them to “search into the spirit of the British constitution” and study the great examples of ancient Greece and Rome. Adams knew the new nation could learn much from the past. The delegates to the Constitutional Convention followed his advice.

What Did Americans Learn from the Roman Republic?

The delegates wanted to create a **republic**, a government in which citizens rule themselves through elected representatives. Few republics in the history of the world survived very long. To create one that would last, American leaders looked to the ancient examples of Greece and Rome.

What Was Civic Republicanism?

Americans greatly admired the Roman Republic. Independence and public service were virtues that the founders saw in the citizens of Rome.