

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Period \_\_\_\_\_

Unit 6 Day 4 & 5

## Constitutional Compromise!

According to the Articles of Confederation, the states were united in a "firm league of friendship" under what was understood to be a federal government. Each state legislature selected delegates to a unicameral Congress (that is, there was only one group legislature). The states were **equally** represented in Congress because each state delegation could cast only one vote. Some delegates, including James Madison, believed this arrangement led to many of the problems that the United States faced during the 1780s, as the states had many different needs and interests, based on their population and economy.

The five main issues debated were:

- Representation
- Slavery
- State vs. Federal Powers
- Executive Power
- Commerce (trade)

In order to revise the Articles of Confederation, 55 delegates from the states (all except for Rhode Island) met in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1787 at the Constitutional Convention. They agreed to total secrecy, and all windows and doors were kept shut and guarded while the delegates gave speeches, presented arguments, and debated topics presented. It took four months to agree to compromises\* and hammer out a new Constitution, which was adopted and signed on September 17, 1787.

\* **compromise:** each side agrees to give up goals they want in order to create an agreement that everyone supports.

What is the role of a **representative**? To speak for their state's interests and goals in order to get what they want.

Directions: In groups, you will discuss two of the issues debated at the Constitutional Convention, by analyzing different states' points of view. As a group, you will create a possible **compromise** that would satisfy all delegates. Then, you will learn what the actual compromise consisted of.

# Issue #1 - How many representatives in Congress should each state have?

Current status under the Articles of Confederation	What large states such as Virginia, Massachusetts, New York wanted	What small states such as New Jersey, Delaware, Georgia wanted
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each state had one vote in Congress</li> <li>• Congress was made up of <u>one</u> legislative “body” (group) for making/voting on laws: unicameral Congress</li> <li>• 9 out of 13 states had to approve new laws</li> <li>• 13 out of 13 states had to approve changes to current laws</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More votes in Congress</li> <li>• More overall power under the new Constitution</li> <li>• More opportunities to vote on and propose laws; more legislative groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A fair system in Congress</li> <li>• Not to be penalized for being a “small” state</li> <li>• Equal representation in Congress</li> </ul>
	<p>What changes, if any, to the original Articles do you think the <u>large</u> states proposed?</p> <p>Representatives should be determined by population since they are larger.</p>	<p>What changes, if any, to the original Articles do you think the <u>small</u> states proposed?</p> <p>Representation should stay equal in Congress so they are not overpowered by larger states.</p>

What compromise do you think should be made, to satisfy both the large states and the small states?



Historical Notes:

Virginia Plan:

- 2 houses (**bicameral**)
- Number of **representatives** is **based on population** - the more people live in your state, the more reps you can have
- The **large** states **liked** this plan

New Jersey Plan:

- 1 house (**unicameral**)
- Each state gets the same number of representatives in Congress (**equal representation**)

Great (Connecticut) Compromise:

- Proposed by Roger Sherman
- 2 house (bicameral)

Senate



Each state gets  
2 senators

House of  
Representatives



Representation based on  
population (30,000:1)

(both **large** and **small** states **liked** this plan!)

## Issue #2 - Slavery: continue? Count as part of the population? Taxed?

Current status under the Articles of Confederation	<u>Northern</u> states (Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, etc.)	<u>Southern</u> states (North/South Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Articles said nothing about slavery; it was left up to the individual states</li> <li>The transatlantic slave trade was ongoing in N. Carolina, S. Carolina, Georgia - 10 other states had outlawed it</li> <li>Enslaved people were <u>not</u> counted towards a states' overall population numbers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did not want the southern states to have a population advantage</li> <li>Generally agreed that slavery was an evil practice</li> <li>Did not need slavery to support their economy (\$), understood that the south relied heavily on slave labor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Had the majority of enslaved people</li> <li>Wanted to increase representation in Congress</li> <li>Economy relied heavily on slave labor (large farms - very little industry)</li> </ul>
	<p>What changes, if any, to the original Articles do you think the <u>northern</u> states proposed?</p> <p>Ending slavery.</p>	<p>What changes, if any, to the original Articles do you think the <u>southern</u> states proposed?</p> <p>Have slaves count towards state population.</p>

What compromise do you think should be made, to satisfy both the northern states and the southern states?



## Historical Notes:

### Three-Fifths Compromise:

- Delegates agreed to allow the slave states to **count every 3 out of 5 slaves** towards a state's **population**.

### Taxes:

- **3/5ths of slaves** would be **counted** for the purpose of determining **federal taxation**

### Slave Trade / Continuation of practice of slavery:

- **Slavery continued**
- **Runaway slave laws**
  - people are **finned for helping slaves escape**
  - **Runaway slaves returned** to owners
- **Ships bring slaves** to the US for only another **20 years** (stops in 1808)