

Origins of U.S. Government

Section 1: Early Influences

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Section 1:

Early Influences

Objectives:

- What political ideals did English colonists bring with them to North America?
- What major documents limited the power of English monarchs?
- How were the ideals of limited and representative government evident in colonial governments?

Section 1:

Early Influences

Political ideals of English colonists:

- limited government
- representative government

Section 1:

Early Influences

Major documents that limited the power of English monarchs:

- the Magna Carta
- the Petition of Right
- the English Bill of Rights

Section 1:

Early Influences

Evidence of English political ideals in colonial governments:

- Most charters limited government.
- The governor of each colony served as the chief executive for that colony's government.
- Governors were appointed or elected.
- Assemblies of elected representatives existed in most colonies.
- Assemblies and councils served to limit governor's power.

Section 2:

Independence

Objectives:

- What were two early attempts at unity among the colonies?
- What British policies pushed the colonies to cooperate with one another?
- What were some of the ideals that influenced the writing of the Declaration of Independence?
- How were the governments of the newly independent states similar?

Origins of U.S. Government

Section 2:

Independence

Attempts at unity:

- New England Confederation of 1643
- Albany Plan of Union

Section 2:

Independence

British policies that brought the colonies together:

- trade regulations
- taxes, such as the Stamp Act

Section 2:

Independence

Ideals that influenced the writing of the Declaration of Independence:

- unalienable rights of human beings
- protection of citizens' natural rights
- government ruled by consent of the people
- safeguard of the public good

Section 2:

Independence

Similarities among the governments of the newly independent states:

- limited governments
- annual elections
- bicameral legislatures
- representative legislatures
- limited gubernatorial power
- protection of individual rights
- gender and race restrictions on voting rights

Section 3:

The First National Government

Objectives:

- What were the powers of the national government under the Articles of Confederation?
- How did limits on its power weaken the national government under the Articles?
- How did the states continue to struggle with unity after independence?
- How did Shays's Rebellion highlight the need for a stronger national government?

Section 3:

The First National Government

Powers of the national government under the Articles of Confederation:

- to declare war
- to conduct foreign policy
- to borrow money
- to settle disputes between states
- to manage relations between American Indians

Section 3:

The First National Government

Weaknesses of the national government under the Articles:

- no officials to carry out Congress's laws
- no authority to enforce Congress's laws
- no power to tax
- no national currency
- no power to regulate foreign or domestic trade
- no national court system
- amendments easily blocked by one state

Section 3:

The First National Government

Obstacles to the states' unity after independence:

- cultural differences
- economic differences
- geographic isolation

Section 3:

The First National Government

How Shays's Rebellion proved the need for a stronger national government:

- by showing government's inability to maintain peace and order
- by illustrating government's inability to protect and promote the public good

Section 4:

The Constitutional Convention

Objectives:

- Who were the delegates to the Constitutional Convention?
- What major competing plans of government did the convention delegates debate?
- What were some of the compromises reached by the delegates?

Section 4:

The Constitutional Convention

Delegates to the Constitutional Convention:

- Included many of the country's educated, leaders, and political thinkers, such as:
 - 8 people who signed the Declaration of Independence
 - 7 people who participated in the First Continental Congress
 - 7 people who had been state governors
 - George Washington
 - Benjamin Franklin
 - Alexander Hamilton
 - James Madison

Section 4:

The Constitutional Convention

Rival plans of government debated by the convention delegates:

- **Virginia Plan**—strong national government with a bicameral legislature based on each state's population and with an executive and a judiciary both chosen by the legislature
- **New Jersey Plan**—national government with a unicameral legislature and in which the states had a stronger role

Section 4:

The Constitutional Convention

Great Compromise:

- bicameral legislature
- representation in the House of Representatives based on population and elected directly by the people
- two state representatives in the Senate, who were elected by state legislatures
- majority votes by House of Representatives and the Senate needed to pass laws

Section 5:

Ratifying the Constitution

Objectives:

- What were the main arguments in the debate over ratification of the Constitution?
- What role did a bill of rights play in the debate?
- Which key states were among the last to ratify the Constitution?

Section 5:

Ratifying the Constitution

Debate over ratification of the Constitution:

- Antifederalists
 - would create too powerful a national government
 - concerned that a strong executive too closely resembled a monarch
 - included no bill of rights
- Federalists
 - limited the national government's power with a system of checks and balances by the three branches
 - guaranteed any unlisted powers of the national government to the states or the people

Section 5:

Ratifying the Constitution

Role of the bill of rights in the debate:

- concern that individual rights would go unprotected without a bill of rights
- fears that an overly powerful and unjust national government would be created without a bill of rights
- argued that no bill of rights was necessary because the Constitution limited the powers of the national government to those listed

Section 5:

Ratifying the Constitution

Last key states to ratify the Constitution:

- Virginia
- New York
- North Carolina

Chapter Wrap-Up

- 1.** Explain the importance of a written constitution.
- 2.** Which key documents limited the power of English monarchs and how did they do it?
- 3.** How did Benjamin Franklin try to bring unity to the country during the conflict between Britain and France?
- 4.** In the Declaration of Independence, what rights did Thomas Jefferson consider “unalienable”?

Chapter Wrap-Up

- 5.** How did the Constitution address the weaknesses of the Articles?
- 6.** What role did compromise play in the Constitutional Convention?
- 7.** Why did delegates compromise on a bicameral Congress?
- 8.** During the ratification battle in New York, how did the Federalists explain the principals of American constitutional government and try to win supporters?