

CHALLENGES FACED BY THE NEW NATION STUDY GUIDE

I. What were the basic weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation?

The Articles of Confederation was a constitution written during the American Revolution to establish the powers of the new national government.

Articles of Confederation

- Provided for a weak national government
- Gave Congress no power to tax or regulate commerce among the states
- Provided for no common currency
- Gave each state one vote regardless of size
- Provided for no executive or judicial branch

II. What were the basic principles of governments stated in the Bill of Rights?

The Bill of Rights provided a written guarantee of individual rights.

Bill of Rights

- James Madison was the author of the Bill of Rights.
- The first ten amendments to the Constitution of the United States of America provide a written guarantee of individual rights (e.g., freedom of speech, freedom of religion).

II. **What were the basic principles of governments stated in the Constitution of the United States of America?**

The Constitution of the United States of America established a federal system of government based on power shared between the national and state governments.

Terms to know

Federal system of government: A system that divides governmental powers between national government and the governments of the states

Basic principles of government

Separation of powers

The structure of the new national government was based on James Madison's "Virginia Plan," which called for three separate branches of government:

Legislative Branch (Congress)

makes the laws.

Congress is a two-house legislature in which all states are represented equally in the Senate (two Senators per state) and people are represented in the House of Representatives (number of a state's representatives is based on state's population).

Judicial Branch (Supreme Court)

determines if laws made by Congress are constitutional.

Executive Branch (President) carries out the laws.

Checks and balances

Each branch can check the power of the other.

These checks keep any one branch from gaining too much power.

III. What were the major differences between Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson?

Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson had opposing views on the role of the national government. That opposition resulted in the creation of two political parties.

The debate over the role of the national government has continued throughout United States history.

Major party differences

Alexander Hamilton

- Leader of Federalists
- Favored strong national government
- Favored limits on states' powers
- Favored development of industry on a national scale
- Favored a national bank

Thomas Jefferson

- Leader of the Democratic Republicans
- Favored a weak national government
- Supported states' powers
- Favored small business and farmers
- Opposed a national bank

IV. What were the major national issues and events faced by the first five presidents?

Congress and the first five presidents made decisions establishing a strong government that helped the nation grow in size and power.

All of the first five presidents were Virginians except John Adams.

Accomplishments during first five presidencies

George Washington

- Federal court system was established.
- Political parties grew out of the disagreements between Hamilton and Jefferson over the proper role of the national government.
- The Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution of the United States of America.
- Plans were initiated for development of the national capital in Washington, D.C. Benjamin Banneker, an African American astronomer and surveyor, helped complete the design for the city.

John Adams

- A two-party system emerged during his administration.

Thomas Jefferson

- He bought Louisiana from France (Louisiana Purchase).
- Lewis and Clark explored this new land west of the Mississippi River.

James Madison

- The War of 1812 caused European nations to gain respect for the United States.

James Monroe

- He wrote the Monroe Doctrine warning European nations not to interfere in the Western Hemisphere.