

Building a New Government

Read how the Constitution created a stronger national government.

SS.5.CG.1.2 "Explain how and why the U.S. government was created by the U.S. Constitution."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two problems caused by the Articles of Confederation. Circle two ways the Constitution created a stronger government while limiting its power.

From Weak Plan to Constitution

- ① After winning independence, the thirteen states first worked under the Articles of Confederation. This plan created a national government, but it was too weak to solve many shared problems. Congress could make requests for money, yet it could not collect taxes. It also could not regulate trade between states. Without steady money or clear power, the nation struggled to pay debts and keep order.
- ② In 1787, delegates met in Philadelphia to improve the Articles. They decided that a new Constitution was needed. The Constitution created a stronger federal government while keeping state governments. It gave Congress the power to tax and regulate trade. It also divided national power among Congress, the president, and the courts. This separation helped prevent one person or group from controlling the whole government.
- ③ Creating the Constitution did not end the debate. Supporters promised that the new government would be able to handle national problems, such as trade, debt, and defense. Some people worried that the federal government would become too powerful. To answer that concern, supporters agreed to add a Bill of Rights after ratification. In 1788, enough states ratified the Constitution, and the new government began in 1789.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Why did delegates decide that the Articles of Confederation needed to be replaced? Use two details from the passage.

2 How did the Constitution make the federal government stronger? Name two powers or features from the passage.

3 How did the Constitution help prevent one person or group from controlling the whole national government?

4 Why did supporters agree to add a Bill of Rights after ratification?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Imagine several states share a problem that one state cannot solve alone. Write 3 or 4 sentences explaining why they would create a Constitution and how it would create a government. Include one power the national government needs and one way to limit too much power.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline two problems caused by the Articles of Confederation. Circle two ways the Constitution created a stronger government while limiting its power. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did delegates decide that the Articles of Confederation needed to be replaced? Use two details from the passage.	The Articles made the national government too weak. Congress could not collect taxes or regulate trade, so the nation struggled with debts and order.
2	How did the Constitution make the federal government stronger? Name two powers or features from the passage.	It gave Congress power to tax and regulate trade. It also created national branches with power divided among Congress, the president, and the courts.
3	How did the Constitution help prevent one person or group from controlling the whole national government?	It divided national power among Congress, the president, and the courts.
4	Why did supporters agree to add a Bill of Rights after ratification?	Some people feared that the federal government would become too powerful. The Bill of Rights was meant to answer that concern.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The states create a Constitution because pollution in a river crosses state borders, and one state cannot solve it alone. The Constitution gives Congress power to make river-cleanup laws and collect money for the work. It divides power among Congress, the president, and courts so no one part controls every decision.

Accept equivalent explanations supported by the passage. For the open response, accept any sensible shared problem, one national power, and one limit on government power.