A Stronger Union

Read how a new plan connected the original 13 states.

5.H.14 "Explain why the United States Constitution was created in 1787 and how it established a stronger union among the original 13 states by making it the supreme law of the land. Identify people who were involved in its development."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two problems under the Articles of Confederation, circle the names of three people involved in writing the Constitution, and number two ways the Constitution helped the states act together.

A New Plan for Thirteen States

1. Picture two neighboring states arguing over a tax on goods crossing their border. After independence, the 13 states were joined under the Articles of Confederation. This first plan gave the national government too little power to solve shared problems. It could not collect taxes directly from people, so it struggled to pay debts. States also made their own trade rules, which could lead to quarrels.

2. In 1787, delegates from 12 states met in Philadelphia to write a new plan of government. George Washington led the meetings. James Madison brought ideas for a stronger national government and kept detailed notes. Benjamin Franklin encouraged delegates to work together when they disagreed. They debated how states would have a voice in Congress. The result was the United States Constitution, which still needed approval from the states.

3. The Constitution gave the national government power to collect taxes and set rules for trade between states. It created Congress to make laws, a president to carry them out, and federal courts to decide cases. States kept important powers, but the Constitution became the supreme law of the land. When a state law conflicts with the Constitution, the Constitution wins. This shared rule helped the states act as one stronger union.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why could different state trade rules cause trouble under the Articles of Confederation?

2. Name two people involved in developing the Constitution. What did each do?

3. How did one power given to the national government address a problem under the Articles?

4. If a state law conflicts with the Constitution, which one wins? How does this help unite the states?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine two of the original states disagree about fees for moving goods across their shared river. Write a message to their leaders explaining how the Constitution could help them act as one union. Include a problem under the Articles, two powers or rules in the Constitution, and one person's contribution to its development.

ANSWER KEY

A Stronger Union

GRADE 5 · 5.H.14

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two problems under the Articles of Confederation, circle the names of three people involved in writing the Constitution, and number two ways the Constitution helped the states act together. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why could different state trade rules cause trouble under the Articles of Confederation?	**States could make different rules for trade, leading to quarrels over goods moving between them.**
2	Name two people involved in developing the Constitution. What did each do?	**Accept any two: Washington led the meetings; Madison brought ideas for a stronger national government and kept notes; Franklin encouraged delegates to work together.**
3	How did one power given to the national government address a problem under the Articles?	**The power to collect taxes could help the national government pay debts, or the power to set interstate trade rules could help prevent quarrels between states.**
4	If a state law conflicts with the Constitution, which one wins? How does this help unite the states?	**The Constitution wins. Having one supreme law gives all states a shared rule to follow.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Leaders of both states, different trade rules could lead to quarrels under the Articles of Confederation. The Constitution lets the national government set rules for trade between states, which could help you settle this disagreement. Federal courts can decide cases, too. If a state law conflicts with the Constitution, the Constitution wins because it is the supreme law of the land. James Madison brought ideas for a stronger national government.

For the open response, accept any passage-supported problem, two relevant constitutional powers or rules, and an accurate contribution by Washington, Madison, or Franklin. Students should apply those facts to the river-fee disagreement rather than only list them.