

Blueprints for Liberty

Trace ideas from early documents to the United States government.

8.15 "Government. The student understands the American beliefs and principles reflected in the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and other important historic documents..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each historic document or person named in the passage. In the margin, write a short note telling which government idea or feature connects to it.

Ideas Become Government

- ① Long before independence, colonists encountered English documents that challenged unchecked power. The Magna Carta of 1215 said that a king must obey the law and could not take certain actions without following legal procedures. The English Bill of Rights, adopted in 1689, limited the monarch and protected Parliament's role. In 1620, the Mayflower Compact showed settlers agreeing to make just and equal laws for their community. These ideas helped Americans expect government under law and government based on consent.
- ② After the Revolution, the Articles of Confederation joined the states in a firm league of friendship. Congress could conduct foreign relations, make treaties, and organize western lands through the Northwest Ordinance. Yet Congress could not tax directly, regulate interstate trade, or force states to obey national laws. These weaknesses made it hard to pay debts or respond to unrest. The Declaration of Independence had criticized King George III for imposing taxes without consent, keeping troops among colonists, and blocking representative lawmaking. Americans wanted a stronger government that still protected liberty.
- ③ The Constitution created a stronger government but divided its power. Federalism shares powers between national and state governments. Separation of powers assigns lawmaking to Congress, enforcement to the president, and judging cases to courts. Checks and balances let each branch limit the others. Limited government, popular sovereignty, republicanism, and individual rights appear in elected representation, limits, and protections. John Locke argued that people have natural rights and may change unjust government. Montesquieu promoted separated powers. Thomas Hooker's ideas helped shape the principles of the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut. The Federalist Papers supported ratification.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Choose two early documents from the first paragraph. Explain how each helped shape Americans' expectations for government.

2 Name one strength of the Articles of Confederation and one weakness. Explain how the weakness made national problems harder to solve.

3 How did elected representation respond to the Declaration's complaint that the king blocked representative lawmaking?

4 State one idea from Locke or Montesquieu and connect it to a feature of the Constitution. Then state the purpose of the Federalist Papers.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write exactly four sentences about a president who tries to make laws alone. Explain how one constitutional principle would limit that action, and connect the safeguard to one historic person or document from the passage.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each historic document or person named in the passage. In the margin, write a short note telling which government idea or feature connects to it. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Choose two early documents from the first paragraph. Explain how each helped shape Americans' expectations for government.	Answers may name any two: Magna Carta, government and leaders must obey law; English Bill of Rights, government power is limited and representative bodies have a role; Mayflower Compact, people can agree to make laws for their community.
2	Name one strength of the Articles of Confederation and one weakness. Explain how the weakness made national problems harder to solve.	A strength was conducting foreign relations, making treaties, or organizing western lands. A weakness was no direct taxing power, no power to regulate interstate trade, or no power to force states to obey laws. The weakness made paying debts or responding to unrest difficult.
3	How did elected representation respond to the Declaration's complaint that the king blocked representative lawmaking?	Elected representation gives people representatives who take part in making laws, instead of allowing one ruler to block representative lawmaking.
4	State one idea from Locke or Montesquieu and connect it to a feature of the Constitution. Then state the purpose of the Federalist Papers.	Locke's natural rights and right to change unjust government connect to individual rights or popular sovereignty, or Montesquieu's separated powers connect to separation of powers. The Federalist Papers supported ratification of the Constitution.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

If a president tried to make laws alone, Congress should block the action. Separation of powers assigns lawmaking to Congress, while checks and balances stop one branch from taking all power. This safeguard uses Montesquieu's idea of separated powers. It also supports limited government because the president must follow constitutional limits.

Accept accurate connections between a passage source and a constitutional principle or feature. For the open response, require exactly four sentences, a realistic limit on presidential lawmaking, one named principle, and one accurate historic connection.