

Power and Union

Read how Americans debated national power, state power, and constitutional limits.

8.17 "Government. The student understands the dynamic nature of the powers of the national government and state governments in a federal system. The student is expected to: analyze the arguments of the Federalists and Anti-Federalists..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline claims about the power of the national government or state governments. Circle two details that show people using civil discourse or resolving a disagreement.

A Debate That Continued

- ① In 1787, Americans debated whether to approve the proposed Constitution. Federalists, including Alexander Hamilton and James Madison, argued that the Articles of Confederation had left the nation too weak to collect taxes, regulate trade, or provide common defense. They supported a stronger national government with powers listed in the Constitution. Anti-Federalists, including Patrick Henry and George Mason, feared that distant officials could threaten liberty. They demanded clearer limits on national power and protections for individual rights.
- ② Instead of settling the conflict by force, people argued in public speeches, newspaper essays, and ratifying conventions. Federalists said an energetic national government could solve shared problems while still being limited by the Constitution. Anti-Federalists answered that power could grow beyond those limits, especially without a bill of rights. Speakers challenged ideas, offered reasons, and listened to opposing claims, even when their language was sharp. This public disagreement helped produce the Bill of Rights, the first ten amendments, which were ratified in 1791.
- ③ Later, disputes over states' rights tested the balance of federalism. In 1832, South Carolina declared federal tariffs null and void within the state. Supporters of nullification claimed a state could reject an unconstitutional federal law. President Andrew Jackson rejected that claim, saying a state could not cancel a national law. A compromise tariff reduced the immediate crisis. Before and during the Civil War, secession raised a larger question: could states leave the Union? The Union victory settled that states could not legally secede on their own.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How did the Federalists' view of national power differ from the Anti-Federalists' view?

2 What are two ways the Constitution debate showed civil discourse? Use details from the passage.

3 What was the constitutional issue in the Nullification Crisis, and how did President Jackson respond to it?

4 How did the Civil War address the question of states' rights and secession?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a five-sentence museum placard about the debate over national and state power. Include one Federalist claim, one Anti-Federalist concern, one example of civil discourse, and a connection to either nullification or secession.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline claims about the power of the national government or state governments. Circle two details that show people using civil discourse or resolving a disagreement. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the Federalists' view of national power differ from the Anti-Federalists' view?	Federalists wanted a stronger national government to handle shared problems such as taxes, trade, and defense. Anti-Federalists feared national power could threaten liberty and wanted clearer limits and protections for rights.
2	What are two ways the Constitution debate showed civil discourse? Use details from the passage.	People used public speeches, newspaper essays, and ratifying conventions. They offered reasons, challenged ideas, and listened to opposing claims rather than settling the conflict by force.
3	What was the constitutional issue in the Nullification Crisis, and how did President Jackson respond to it?	The issue was whether a state could reject a federal law it considered unconstitutional. Jackson rejected South Carolina's claim and said that a state could not cancel a national law.
4	How did the Civil War address the question of states' rights and secession?	The war raised the question of whether states could leave the Union. The Union victory settled that states could not legally secede on their own.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Federalists supported national powers to collect taxes because the country needed common defense. Anti-Federalists worried that distant officials might use power without clear limits. Americans shared their views through speeches, essays, and conventions. They used reasons to challenge one another instead of settling the issue by force. Later, South Carolina's nullification claim showed that Americans still disagreed about whether a state could reject a federal law.

Accept equivalent explanations that accurately contrast stronger national authority with limits on national power and protection of rights. For the placard, look for all four required elements and an accurate connection to nullification or secession.