

Building a Republic

Trace three challenges that required stronger national institutions.

8.5.A “describe major domestic problems faced by the leaders of the new republic, including maintaining national security, creating a stable economic system, and setting up the court system;”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB In each paragraph, underline words that show what the national government could not do, then circle any change that addressed the problem.

Problems of a New Nation

- ① After the Revolution, the United States needed to protect its borders and keep order at home. Under the Articles of Confederation, Congress could request soldiers and money from the states, but it could not force states to send either. This limited response to threats from Britain, which kept forts in the Northwest Territory, and from Spain, which restricted American use of the Mississippi River. Shays' Rebellion in Massachusetts also showed that unrest could challenge a government with few national resources.
- ② A stable economy was also difficult to create. Congress under the Articles could not levy national taxes, regulate trade among the states, or require one shared currency. States set separate trade rules, and some placed tariffs on goods from neighboring states. The national government struggled to pay war debts, while many farmers faced debts and hard times. The Constitution gave Congress power to tax, regulate interstate and foreign commerce, and coin money, helping build a more predictable economic system.
- ③ Leaders also needed a way to settle cases involving national laws. The Articles created no general federal court system. Congress had narrow authority over admiralty cases and disputes between states, but there was no Supreme Court to interpret national law consistently. The Constitution's Article III established a Supreme Court and allowed Congress to create lower federal courts. In 1789, the Judiciary Act created district and circuit courts. This system gave national laws a place to be heard and applied across the country.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

- 1 Why did Congress's inability to force states to provide soldiers or money make national security harder to maintain?

- 2 Name two economic powers that the Constitution gave Congress.

- 3 How did the court system under the Articles of Confederation differ from the system created by the Constitution?

- 4 What pattern connects the security, economic, and court problems described in the passage?

Imagine you are advising delegates in 1787. Complete the table with one recommendation for each area, naming the problem and a national action that would help solve it.

AREA	PROBLEM TO SOLVE	NATIONAL ACTION AND REASON

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

In each paragraph, underline words that show what the national government could not do, then circle any change that addressed the problem. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did Congress's inability to force states to provide soldiers or money make national security harder to maintain?	Congress had few resources to respond to border threats or unrest because states could refuse to provide soldiers and money.
2	Name two economic powers that the Constitution gave Congress.	Any two: power to tax, regulate interstate and foreign commerce, or coin money.
3	How did the court system under the Articles of Confederation differ from the system created by the Constitution?	The Articles had no general federal court system or Supreme Court. The Constitution established a Supreme Court and allowed Congress to create lower federal courts.
4	What pattern connects the security, economic, and court problems described in the passage?	In each area, the national government under the Articles lacked enough power or resources to handle an important national responsibility.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

AREA	PROBLEM TO SOLVE	NATIONAL ACTION AND REASON
National security	States might refuse to provide soldiers or money during a crisis.	Give Congress power to raise resources so it can respond quickly to threats.
Economy	Different state trade rules can make business unpredictable.	Let Congress regulate interstate trade so states follow more consistent rules.
Courts	National laws may be interpreted differently in different places.	Create federal courts so national cases can be heard under the same laws.

Accept equivalent explanations that connect each problem to weak national authority under the Articles. For the table, accept historically reasonable national actions and clear reasons, even if students use different wording.