

Unit Four - Effects of the American Revolution

Some people were afraid of having a centralized government after the problems with King George III, so the founding fathers needed to allay those fears by putting provisions into the new government to calm them.

The concern was that the Articles of Confederation had too many weaknesses that prevented it from effectively dealing with the problems the new nation faced, both domestically and in foreign affairs. In 1787, the Philadelphia Convention met to discuss a new national government that would be stronger and, therefore, more able to govern the new nation.

Some of the fears that needed to be addressed were:

- size discrepancy among states – smaller states would lose power to larger states
- weak central government – lack of uniform currency, concerns over trade policies
- unwritten word not secure – poor past experience with Britain
- conflict with other states – border and trade disputes
- foreign powers – possibility of invasion
- strong executive powers – unpleasant experience with George III
- losing individual rights – no written guarantee of individual rights

After finishing this week's lessons, you should be able to meet the following objectives:

1. Discuss the effectiveness of the Articles of Confederation as an instrument of government
2. Understand how the Founding Fathers balanced competing interests when creating a centralized government
3. Describe the various means Alexander Hamilton used to put the federal government on a sound financial footing
4. Describe the roles of Madison and Hamilton and how conflict over Hamilton's policies led to the formation of the first American political parties
5. Describe the growth of discontent in mid-1700s France
6. Explain why and how the French Revolution spread
7. Identify ways in which Napoleon's government was successful
8. Explain how France became an empire
9. Describe how Napoleon reorganized Europe
10. Discuss the events that led to Napoleon's final defeat at Waterloo
11. Describe the polarizing effects of the French Revolution on American foreign policy and politics from 1790 to 1800
12. Explain why Washington negotiated the conciliatory Jay's Treaty with the British and why it provoked Jeffersonian outrage
13. Describe the political atmosphere that produced the Alien and Sedition Acts and the Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions in response
14. Describe the contrasting membership and principles of the Hamiltonian Federalists and Jeffersonian Republicans.

The Constitution and the New Republic Vocabulary: As you work through the readings and activities, define or identify key terms, people, or places on the vocabulary chart located at the end of this unit.

The Constitution

Read the “Forming a new nation” section of the World Book Advanced article on the History of the United States:

<https://www.worldbookonline.com/advanced/article?id=ar576000&st=untied%20states%20history>

Read the Constitution of the United States and the twenty-seven Amendments:

http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/usconst.asp

Read about President Obama’s proclamation on the 150th anniversary of the 13th Amendment:

<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/DCPD-201500869/html/DCPD-201500869.htm>

Read about President Johnson’s proclamation of the ratification of the 14th Amendment:

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=72274>

Read President Truman’s statement on the 25th anniversary of the 19th Amendment:

<https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/public-papers/111/statement-president-25th-anniversary-womens-suffrage-amendment>

Read President Roosevelt’s proclamation on the repeal of the 18th Amendment:

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=14570>

Complete the Amendments to the Constitution Timeline located at the end of this unit.

Key Points to Remember and Additional Information:

The Constitution

- United States Under the Articles
 - Problems
 - one-house congress, no separate executive or judiciary
 - reduced foreign trade; could not repay war debt
 - no taxes; worthless paper money
 - problems with intrastate commerce and border disputes
 - Annapolis Convention (1786)
- Drafting the Constitution
 - Delegates
 - 55 white males; well-educated; no one from Rhode Island
 - Washington – presiding officer; Ben Franklin – elder statesman

- Madison, Hamilton, Morris, Dickinson – revised the articles
 - Jay, Adams, Paine, Jefferson – diplomacy aboard; Samuel Adams and John Hancock not elected; Patrick Henry boycotted
 - Major Issues
 - a new document?
 - mistrust of government (separation of powers, bill of rights)
 - representation – VA Plan, NJ Plan, Great Compromise
 - 3/5 Compromise
 - trade – tax imports, not exports; Congress regulates interstate and foreign commerce, not intrastate commerce
 - president’s term four years; electoral college
 - Sept 17, 1787
- Federalists and Anti-Federalists
 - Major Beliefs
 - Federalists – strong central government
 - Anti-Federalists – strong state government
 - Federalist Papers (Madison, Hamilton, Jay)
 - Outcome
 - Delaware, PA, NJ → first to ratify
 - key states → VA & NY
 - “supreme law of the land”
- Adding the Bill of Rights
 - Major Points of View
 - for → Americans needed to be protected against tyranny
 - against → Congress elected by the people; assumed all rights were to be protected
 - First Ten Amendments (adopted 1791)
 - religion, press, assembly, speech, petition
 - bear arms
 - quartering
 - searches and seizures
 - due process, self-incrimination, double jeopardy
 - speedy trial
 - trial by jury
 - excessive bail, cruel and unusual punishment
 - any rights not mentioned still protected
 - not delegated, reserved to states

Review Questions:

1. What were some of the problems with the Articles of Confederation?
2. Why wasn’t Rhode Island represented at the Constitutional Convention?
3. What were some of the issues delegates faced when attempting to draft the Constitution?

4. How did the Constitution address some of the specific fears listed at the beginning of this unit?
5. Why was the Bill of Rights established?

The New Republic

There were three main events that shaped early American foreign policy: Washington's Farewell Address, the War of 1812, and the Monroe Doctrine.

Read about George Washington:

<http://www.worldbookonline.com/advanced/article?id=ar592940&st=washington%27s+farewell+address#tab=homepage>

Read Washington's Farewell Address:

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=65539>

Read about the War of 1812:

<http://www.worldbookonline.com/advanced/article?id=ar591480&st=war+of+1812#tab=homepage>

Read about the Monroe Doctrine:

<http://www.worldbookonline.com/advanced/article?id=ar368620&st=monroe+doctrine#tab=homepage>

Critical-Thinking Questions

1. Which of these events might be considered to have had a positive effect on America and its early foreign relations policies? Which could be seen as more negative?
2. Do you see any trends in early American foreign policy?

Read about Abigail Adams, wife of John Adams. She wrote many letters to her husband while they were separated during the war. These letters provide a glimpse into colonial life, as well as her own support for women's rights.

<http://www.worldbookonline.com/advanced/article?id=ar723781&st=abigail+adams#tab=homepage>

Read this letter, dated March 31, 1776, which Abigail Adams wrote to her husband, asking him to consider the status of women as he wrote the laws of the new country.

<https://history.msu.edu/hst202/files/2013/04/Abigail-Adams-letter.pdf>

Key Points to Remember and Additional Information:

The New Republic

- Washington's Presidency (April 30, 1789 – Oath of Office)
 - Organizing the Government
 - Executive Departments: State, Treasury, War, Justice (Attorney General)
 - Judiciary Act of 1788: district, circuit, supreme courts
 - Hamilton's Financial Program
 - pay national debt assume states' war debt
 - high tariff to protect industry and raise revenue
 - creation of national bank
 - opposed by Anti-Federalists (Jefferson)
 - finally approved
 - national debt paid and state war debt approved
 - capital along the Potomac
 - low tariff; raise excise tax (Whiskey)
 - national bank: "necessary and proper"
 - Foreign Affairs
 - Proclamation of Neutrality (1793) – Jefferson resigns from Cabinet
 - Citizen Genet
 - Jay Treaty (1794) – British evacuate posts on frontier, but no agreement concerning Impressment
 - Pinckney's Treaty (1795)
 - right of deposit at New Orleans
 - 31st parallel northern boundary of Florida
 - Domestic Concerns
 - Native Americans and Treaty of Grenville – surrendered claims to Ohio Valley
 - Whiskey Rebellion (1794) – farmers refused to pay excise tax on whiskey; Hamilton stopped rebellion with 15,000 troops
 - Western lands
 - 13 states abandoned western land claims
 - new states: Kentucky, Tennessee, Vermont
- Political Parties
 - Differences in the Parties
 - Federalists – Hamilton; favored growth of federal power
 - Anti-Federalists – Jefferson; states' rights
 - Washington's Farewell Address (two-term precedent)
 - no European affairs
 - no permanent alliances
 - avoid political parties
 - avoid sectionalism

- John Adams’s Presidency
 - Election of 1796
 - Adams vs. Jefferson (Adams won by 3 electoral votes)
 - 12th Amendment added to Constitution in 1804
 - XYZ Affair
 - “Millions for defense, not one cent for tribute”
 - aroused anti-French feelings in US
 - Alien and Sedition Acts; Naturalization Act
 - Alien Act – president could authorize deportation
 - Sedition Act – illegal to criticize president or Congress
 - Naturalization Acts – five to fourteen years for citizenship
 - significance: perceived as anti-Democratic-Republican; caused many people to leave Federalists, infringed on Bill of Rights
 - Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions
 - theory of nullification
 - violation of compact between federal and state governments

- Election of 1800
 - Election Results
 - Federalists swept from legislative and judicial branches
 - Jefferson and Burr tied; election went to House; vote went to Jefferson
 - Peaceful Resolution
 - shift of political power without violence
 - Constitution would work
 - “government of laws, not men”

Review Questions

1. How did George Washington impact history? How did he emerge as a leader? What impact did he have on the United States?
2. What type of power, according to Abigail Adams, do husbands possess? How does a man achieve happiness?
3. What present-day freedoms do women now possess that would please Abigail Adams?

Write an essay that addresses one of the following questions:

1. What factors led to the United States needing a new federal government by 1787?
2. What factors contributed to the development of political parties in the US during the 1790s?