



CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION ANTICIPATION GUIDE

Read each statement and decide if it is True or False. Complete the left column before the reading by circling the T for True or the F for False. Complete the right column after you finish the reading. Did any of your answers change?

BEFORE READING		STATEMENT	AFTER READING	
T	F	George Washington was chosen to lead the convention.	T	F
T	F	Presidents serve six years in a presidential term.	T	F
T	F	The Constitutional Convention was held in Washington, D.C.	T	F
T	F	Delegates decided that Congress should have two houses.	T	F
T	F	The Articles of Confederation served as America's first Constitution.	T	F
T	F	Congress has the Senate and the House of Electors.	T	F
T	F	Another founding father was Alexander Hamilton.	T	F
T	F	An Electoral College was proposed, debated and eventually approved.	T	F
T	F	James Madison is considered the "father of the Constitution".	T	F

DID YOU KNOW?

The debates of the Constitutional Convention lasted four months.

Constitutional Convention

Name: _____

Answer the questions below. Then on the coloring page, color each numbered section with the corresponding color. If there is any space left over, color it your choice! Follow the directions provided to cite evidence from the reading.

Questions	Text Evidence	Answer
#1 What year was the Convention held?	Find proof in the reading and <u>UNDERLINE</u> it in ORANGE	1776 RED
#2 Which state did not send a representative?	Find proof in the reading and <u>CIRCLE</u> it in GREEN	Rhode Island PURPLE STRIPES
#3 Who wrote the Virginia Plan?	Find proof in the reading and <u>BOX</u> it in RED	Madison YELLOW
#4 How many people in total represented one state?	Find proof in the reading and <u>BOX</u> it in YELLOW	Four ORANGE
#5 Which was the first state to ratify the Constitution?	Find proof in the reading and <u>CIRCLE</u> it in ORANGE	Delaware BLUE
#6 Which was the last state to ratify the Constitution?	Find proof in the reading and <u>UNDERLINE</u> it in PURPLE	Tennessee ORANGE STRIPES
		Rhode Island GREEN STRIPES

would choose their electors. The electors would then meet and vote for the next President. The electors would vote for two people. The person with the most votes would be President, and the second-most votes would be Vice President. If no one received a majority vote, the House of Representatives would choose the next President.

Delegates began to disagree over representation and the election process. Larger states wanted their votes to count more than smaller states because they had more people living there. Small states like New Jersey feared their votes would be ignored and outnumbered by largely populated states. Two plans regarding state representation were proposed to the delegates.

The Virginia Plan, written by James Madison, suggested the number of representatives in Congress should be based on the population of a state. Larger states supported this plan. This plan also suggested a stronger central government with two houses of Congress.

The New Jersey Plan, written by William Paterson, said that each state should have the same number of representatives, regardless of population. Smaller states supported this plan. This plan also called for stronger state powers and only one house of Congress.

The delegates decided that the new legislature (Congress) should have two houses; the House of Representatives and the Senate.

After much debate, Oliver Ellsworth and Roger Sherman from Connecticut came up with "The Great Compromise." The Senate would have an equal number of representatives from each state, regardless of population. The House of Representatives would have representation based on the population of the state. Both sides got some of what they wanted.

Compromises were also discussed regarding commerce and the slave trade. Back then, enslaved persons were not allowed to vote. There were over 550,000 enslaved persons. The question was, should enslaved persons be counted as a part of a state's population? Delegates agreed that enslaved persons would be counted as three-fifths of their number. Meaning every five enslaved persons would count as three free persons. This became known as the Three-Fifths Compromise.

In order for the Constitution to be accepted, 9 out of 13 states needed to ratify or approve it. The first state to ratify the Constitution was Delaware. The last state was Rhode Island in May of 1790.