CONSTITUTIONAL RATIFICATION DEBATE

Debate Question: Should the Constitution of the United States be ratified, or should the U.S. continue under its present government, the Articles of Confederation?

Time Frame: October, 1787
Place: Philadelphia, PA
Debate Moderator: George Washington

Scenario: Although in reality the Constitution had to be ratified by each state in special ratifying conventions called expressly for that purpose, this is a hypothetical debate in which Federalist and Anti-Federalist leaders from many states have assembled to discuss their beliefs and air their grievances.

Content Information: Students will be assigned an historical character for this debate. Using at least one primary source and a minimum of two secondary sources (no traditional encyclopedias, internet encyclopedias, or your textbook; at least one print source must be used and listed), students should:
1- identify their character as Federalist or Anti-Federalist.
2- identify the state which their character represents - with particular attention to the state’s geography, economy, population and social structure.
3- identify the character’s occupation and socio-economic background
4- discover whether the character was a member of the Constitutional Convention & if so, what his role was at the convention. If the person was not a member of the Convention find out why.
5- determine whether the character was a member of the state’s ratifying convention and how he voted.
6- analyze and evaluate the character’s arguments for and against ratification.

In order to do a thorough job you will be given 1-40 minute period of class/library time and 1+ full period for the debate. Any work not completed in the library will need to be completed at home.

Resume: A resume must be submitted on the day of the debate following the model you have been given. All information on the resume must be factual, please do not attempt to create information. Please put your name in the upper left hand corner. Each character must have 3 references that reflect his/her ideas and section of the country. These references must be chosen from among the list of debate participants. Should you use someone outside the list, please see Ms. Poplaski or Mr. Hocker before you submit the resume.

A bibliography with a minimum of 3 sources (one of which must be a primary source: and one must be a print source), must be part of your character’s resume. The bibliography must follow the MLA format. You may use your textbook, but you may not cite your text as a source. No traditional or on-line encyclopedias may be cited as sources.

Debate Procedure: Students may use note cards only - no papers or books. They may not read directly from the note cards unless they are quoting something brief and specific. They must speak during the debate as if they are the actual person they are portraying. Each student will be given a name tag and a list of debate participants and must refer to other students by the name that is on the name tag. Before each student speaks, he/she should stand, introduce himself/herself, and deliver a little background information about the character he/she is portraying. Any student can begin the debate. When the first
student finishes the next student (preferably from the opposition) should either address what has been said, or express another concern. Students should also take notes during the debate. The debate/discussion will be monitored so that everyone has at least one opportunity to speak and so that no one person monopolizes discussion. Students who do not participate in the debate will receive a grade of 0.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Federalists</th>
<th>Anti-Federalists</th>
<th>Anti-Federalists</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oliver Ellsworth</td>
<td>Melancton Smith</td>
<td>Centinel ++(Samuel Bryan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Jay</td>
<td>John Mercer</td>
<td>Mercy Otis Warren</td>
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<tr>
<td>James Madison</td>
<td>William Lenoir</td>
<td>George Clinton (Cato)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Hamilton</td>
<td>Robert Yates (Brutus)</td>
<td>Joshua Atherton ++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmund Pendleton</td>
<td>George Mason</td>
<td>Samuel Nasson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Benjamin Rush</td>
<td>Luther Martin</td>
<td>Z</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tenche Coxe</td>
<td>Samuel Adams++</td>
<td>Edmund Randolph</td>
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<tr>
<td>James Wilson</td>
<td>John Lansing</td>
<td>William Findley (1741-1821)</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Dickinson</td>
<td>Thomas Jefferson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ben Franklin</td>
<td>Richard Henry Lee</td>
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<td>John Langdon</td>
<td>James Winthrop</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Adams</td>
<td>Patrick Henry</td>
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<td>Jonathan Smith</td>
<td>Amos Singletary (Singletree)</td>
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<td>James Iredell</td>
<td>General William Thompson</td>
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<td>Elbridge Gerry</td>
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</tbody>
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++There are primary sources but they are difficult to locate.

**Grading:**

- **Part 1 – Resume** 35% of total grade
- **Part 2 – Debate Participation** – including use of primary sources in argument; linking your thoughts with others who have already spoken or asking others to comment on your opinions; staying in character – 40% of total grade
- **Part 3 – Post Debate Assessment** -20% of total grade

Total will be equal to one test grade

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AP US History Key Concept 3.2: In the late eighteenth century, new experiments with democratic ideas and republican forms of government, as well as other new religious, economic and cultural ideas, challenged traditional imperial systems across the Atlantic World.

II. After experiencing the limitations of the Articles of Confederation, American political leaders wrote a new Constitution based on the principles of federalism and separation of powers, crafted a Bill of Rights, and continued their debates about the proper balance between liberty and order.

**Primary Historical Thinking Skill(s):** Argumentation, use of relevant historical evidence

**Learning Objective:** (POL-5) Analyze how arguments over the meaning and interpretation of the Constitution have affected U.S. politics since 1787.
George Washington  
Mt. Vernon, Virginia

Victorious general of the recent war for independence, successful planter and entrepreneur with the ability to inspire people to extraordinary feats both militarily and politically.

Education

Private tutors

Accomplishments

- **Established Executive Branch** of the United States Government
- **Presided** over debates of Constitutional Convention
- **Extensive military experience** in leading both the Virginia militia in war for British empire and the Continental Army in recent war for independence
- **Proprietor** of 8000 acre plantation, consisting of five farms with more than 3000 acres under cultivation each year
- **Developed** and **managed** largest whiskey distillery in America

Experience

**President, United States of America.** *New York, New York (1789-1796)*
- Created the Executive Branch of the government by appointing heads of Department of State, Treasury, War and Justice
- Oversaw all diplomatic relations and appointed ambassadors
- Put down Whiskey Rebellion

**President, Constitutional Convention.** *Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. (June 1787-September 1787)*
- Presided over daily debates of the Convention
- Scheduled daily meetings of Convention delegates

**General, Continental Army.** *(June 1775 to December 1783)*
- Commanding General of Continental army of the United States of America
- Led siege of Boston resulting in British evacuation of city in March 1776
- Developed and implemented successful plan to attack Trenton & Princeton, NJ in December 1776
- Commanded both American and French forces at Battle of Yorktown

**Lieutenant Colonel, Virginia Colony Militia** *(1753-1763)*
- Helped start French & Indian War that resulted in British expansion of empire to North American continent east of Mississippi River
- Rallied British regular army soldiers & Virginia militia in Braddock’s unsuccessful attack on Ft. Duquesne. During battle had two horses shot out from under & four bullets pierce coat
- Given command of entire Virginia militia to guard frontier settlements of western Virginia
**Farmer, Mt. Vernon Plantation, Mt. Vernon, Virginia (1750 to present)**
- Successfully transformed farm production from tobacco to wheat
- Expanded farm production to include building of gristmill for both local use and international sale
- Built distillery to produce up to 11,000 gallons of rye whiskey per year

**County Surveyor. County of Culpeper, Virginia Culpeper, Virginia (1749)**
- First surveyor of the newly created county
- Skills developed through self-education

**Publications**

List separately any publications by your person

**Other Relevant Activities**

List separately any other relevant activities by your person, such as
- Established committee of correspondence for colony of ...
- etc

**References**

James Madison, Virginia
Edmund Pendelton, Virginia
John Jay, New York

**Bibliography**

<http://www.mountvernon.org/george-washington/biography/>