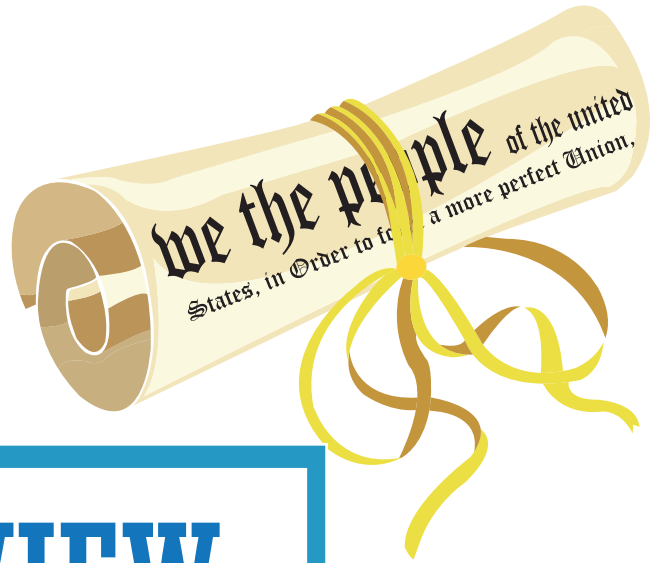


# The U.S. Constitution

by Katie Clark



When the founding fathers of America first decided what kind of a government to form, they considered lots of options. Many of them had come from England where they had a monarchy, or a king. They did not like the way things had been done there. They also thought of the ancient Greeks, and their unicameral system. They had paved the way for a democratic republic.

The American leaders studied the Roman and Greek systems.

A democratic republic is a government where the people elect representatives who are elected, or called, to represent them. The elected officials are responsible for making laws and carrying out the government's duties.

When the Revolutionary War ended, the states were ruled by the Articles of Confederation. This system was weak. However, it quickly became clear that the states could not govern a new country.

This led the leaders to meet at the Constitutional Convention. Leaders from across the states came together to debate the ups and downs of different types of government. Throughout this process they wrote the Constitution of the United States.

The Constitution is a written document of laws. It had two main focuses. First, it meant to create a federal republic. This meant the government would be run by the

eventually failed, but

so saw how the early democratic republic.

carried out by leaders and American politicians and

as ruled by the Articles should follow.

enough to properly

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states of the country. It also meant to create a separation of powers. This meant no one would have complete power over the land, the way a king might. Instead, there would be three different branches of government. These three branches would each have their own areas of power. The three branches would work together to rule the country.

The three branches of government created by the Constitution were the Executive branch, the Legislative branch, and the judicial branch. The Constitution grants each branch a specific type of power.

The Executive branch refers to the President of the United States. His power is focused on the United States Army, Navy, and Air Force. He is the chief of the American troops. He also works with the Supreme Court. He meets with foreign leaders.

The Legislative branch consists of the Senate and the House of Representatives. They make laws. They also make plans for following years.

The Judicial branch consists of judges and courtrooms. The judicial branch interprets the Constitution. When it appears a law is against the Constitution, it is the case to make a determination.

Separating the three branches of government gave America's early leaders peace that the government would not become corrupted. Each branch would be required to stick to their own areas of power. They would not be able to take power that did not belong to them.

The Constitution also created other laws. It set up the rules that would be used to elect the leaders of the different branches of government. The people within the country would vote for their state representatives. In turn, the state representatives would

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advocate for the people within their state. They would speak on their behalf when new or old laws were being considered.

This was important to the American leaders. This would help ensure that the small states would have just as much of a voice as the large states. Every state—no matter how big or small—would have a say in the happenings of the country.

The Constitution provided a way for the President to be elected, as well. First, the state representatives would choose people called electors. These electors would be responsible for speaking on behalf of the people of their state. When the people voted for a new president, the electors would meet and put in their votes according to their state's rules. The electors' votes would be counted to elect a president.

Lastly, there was a Supreme Court. The Supreme Court judges would be appointed by the president and approved by the Congress as well. Judges would be chosen? They would be chosen? The Supreme Court judges would be chosen? They would be chosen? They would be chosen?

The Constitution was signed on September 17, 1787. The Constitutional Convention debated something so new and important. The people agreed to sign the Constitution.

A few of the men who wrote the Constitution were called the Federalist Papers. Through these essays, the men were able to convince the people that the Constitution was a good thing.

Along with detailing how American leaders were to be chosen, the Constitution also detailed who would be eligible to be a leader. Each branch would have its own requirements. For instance, to be the president a person must be at least thirty-five years old. They must be a natural-born citizen of America. They must have lived in the United

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States for at least fourteen years.

At last, the Constitution was ratified, or agreed upon and passed.

The United States Constitution now has twenty-seven amendments. This means twenty-seven additional laws have been added or changed. Amendments have been needed from time to time to adjust the laws that are outdated or no longer needed. For example, laws that pertained to slavery were changed when the slaves were freed during the Civil War.

This written document was put into its creation, and it is still

it was put into its

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# The U.S. Constitution

1) Why did the American leaders prefer democracy to the other forms of governance?

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2) What are the three branches of government as per the constitution?

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3) Write a brief note on

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4) Why were the amendments necessary?

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5) What, according to the passage, made the amendments necessary?

- a) The outdated and unnecessary laws had to be adjusted.
- b) Every year, new laws were required.
- c) Americans were rebellious and disobeyed laws.
- d) The country had to be inspired by the laws of other countries.