

CONTINUOUS DISTANCE LEARNING LESSON

The Constitution of the United States of America Grade: 7th Grade

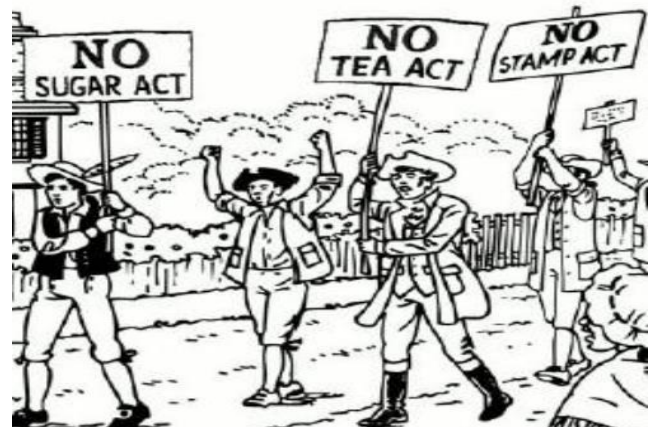
The United States of America is a country that, like many, has a few founding seminal documents. From the Declaration of Independence to the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution, these all provide an idealistic basis for American government. However, many people have never read these documents. This GoogleDoc will guide you through a deep dive into the Constitution, and I hope will offer you a chance to see what exactly this important piece of paper tells us about our government.

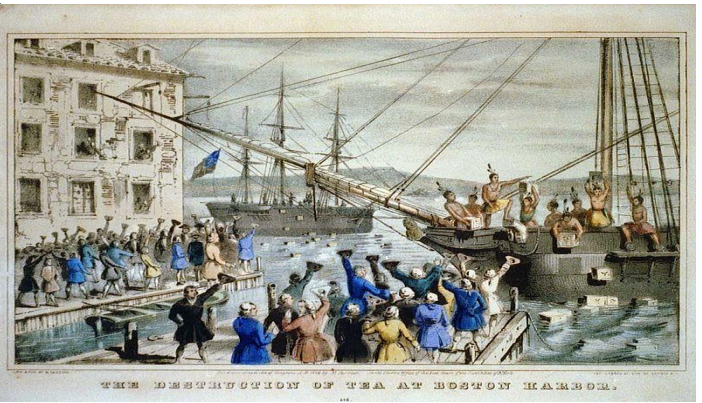


Background: Seven Events that Led to the American Revolution

The founding fathers didn't wake up one day deciding that they were finished being British subjects. Instead, King George III, Parliament, and the British Army had done some terrible things to their American colonists. As a reminder, we [researched these seven events in class](#):

- (1) The Stamp Act
- (2) The Townshend Acts
- (3) The Boston Massacre
- (4) The Boston Tea Party
- (5) The Coercive Acts
- (6) Lexington and Concord
- (7) British Attacks on Coastal Towns





More Background: The Declaration of Independence

By the time the founding fathers convened to write the Constitution, they had already sent their break-up letter to King George III in England. As a reminder, we examined this as an (1) Instagram post, (2) [a break-up voicemail](#), and (3) [a parody of Too Late to Apologize](#).

(1)



AmCo · Follow

BosMas

I'm not sure how to start this letter, but I feel we need to talk. I've been thinking about us a lot lately. Things used to be so great. It was like we were made for each other. I mean, everyone said it was perfect. I really thought we would be together forever. But then things changed. I feel like you started taking me for granted. You just started to do whatever you wanted and never asked me about anything or how I felt. I've been thinking about this for a while, and I don't want to hurt you, but I think it's time we broke up. I mean, it's not going to work. I need some time by myself to see what it is like on my own. I'm sorry things didn't work out but I do think you are the one to blame. I'm sorry, but 'us' is over.

(2)



(3)

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6 April



[A copy of the full text of the Declaration of Independence is available here.](#)

We also complete a [close read of the Declaration of Independence](#).

That was all the lead up work to what we really, really, really want to dive into...

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



Important Vocabulary

Go to [dictionary.com](https://www.dictionary.com) and define these terms. Please put the definitions in your own words.

Preamble	
Amendment	
Democracy	
Republic	
Federal System/ Federalism	

Preamble: A Close Reading

[The Preamble to the Constitution](#) is one of the most familiar parts of it. Many students have had to memorize it throughout history. Don't worry; I won't make you do that! I do, however, want you to know what's in the Preamble, so let's examine it closely.

Line from the Preamble	My Own Words
We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect union	
establish Justice, ensure domestic Tranquility,	
provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare,	
and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity,	
do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.	

Now, we're turning to the body of the Constitution. Below, we're going to examine each Article of the Constitution closely. There are hyperlinks in each table that will take you to the [National Constitution Center's Interactive Constitution](#).

Article I: The Legislative Branch



ARTICLE I: THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Section 1: The Congress

1. What are the two Chambers of Congress?
2. Who has the power to make laws?

Section 2: The House of Representatives

1. How are members of the House of Representatives elected?
2. How long is their term of office?
3. What are the requirements to be a Representative?

Section 3: The Senate

1. How long is a Senator's term?
2. What are the requirements to be a Senator?
3. How many Senators are from each state?

Section 4: Elections

Who decides how voting will be handled?

Section 5: Powers and Duties of Congress

How can a member of Congress be removed from office?

Section 6: Rights and Disabilities of Members

When can a member of Congress *not* be arrested?

Section 7: Legislative Process

How does a Bill become a Law?

Section 8: Powers Granted to Congress Congress has the power to do many things. How many can you find? List them.	
Section 9: Powers Denied to Congress What powers does Congress not have? List them.	
Section 10: Powers Denied to the States Most of the power in our system of Federalism lies with the state government. However, there are some powers denied to them. List as many as you can find.	

Article II: The Executive Branch



ARTICLE II: THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

Section 1

1. What power does the President have?
How long is the President's term in office?
2. How is the President elected?
3. What are the three requirements to become President?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Section 2

How many powers can you find that are granted to the President?

Section 3

1. What is the State of the Union address?
2. When can the President "Adjourn" Congress?

- 1.
- 2.

Section 4

1. How can the President be removed from office?
2. What are the crimes that the President must have committed in order to be removed?

- 1.
- 2.

Article III: The Judicial Branch



ARTICLE III: THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

Section 1

Who has the power to make decisions in courts of law?

Section 2

Federal Courts have the legal authority over several things. List as many as you can.

Section 3

Treason was a word the Founding Fathers didn't enjoy because they were accused of treason against King George III. For this reason, the Constitution explicitly defines treason.

1. What is treason as defined by the Constitution?
2. Who decides on the punishment for treason?

- 1.
- 2.

Article IV: States, Citizenship, New States



ARTICLE IV: STATES, CITIZENSHIP, NEW STATES

Section 1

True or False: All states are required to honor the laws of other states.

Section 2

1. What are all citizens guaranteed when visiting other states?
2. If a person is charged with a crime and flees to another state, what happens if that person is caught?

- 1.
- 2.

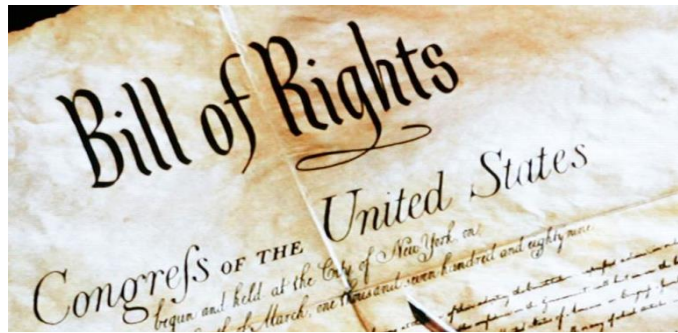
Section 3

Who decides that a territory can become a state?

Section 4

What does the federal government guarantee to each state?

Article V: Amendment Process



ARTICLE V: AMENDMENT PROCESS

What are the two ways to make amendments to the Constitution?

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Mission 8: Debts, Supremacy, Oaths, Religious Tests



ARTICLE VI: DEBTS, SUPREMACY, OATHS, RELIGIOUS TESTS

Who is responsible for paying back any debts that the United States accrues?

What document is the “Supreme Law of the Land”?

What do all officials have to promise when taking office?

What is that officials cannot be asked to take before assuming office?

Article VII: Ratification



ARTICLE VII: RATIFICATION

How many states had to approve the Constitution for it to become law?

What date was the original Constitution approved by the Constitutional Convention?

What date was the Constitution ratified?