

Name: _____

Date: _____

Period: _____

Practice Worksheet: The Constitution

AP United States History

Instructions: Answer the following questions based on your knowledge of the U.S. Constitution, its creation, ratification, and key principles. Write your responses in the space provided. For multiple-choice questions, circle the letter of the best answer. For essay questions, write a well-organized response.

1. Explain the significance of the Great Compromise (Connecticut Compromise) in the drafting of the U.S. Constitution. How did it resolve the conflict between large and small states?

2. Which of the following was a key argument made by the Anti-Federalists during the ratification debates?
- A. The Constitution created too weak a central government.
 - B. The Constitution lacked a bill of rights to protect individual liberties.
 - C. The Constitution gave too much power to state governments.
 - D. The Constitution established a direct democracy.

3. Describe the principle of separation of powers as established in the Constitution. Identify one specific power held by each branch (legislative, executive, judicial) and explain how these powers create a system of checks and balances.

4. The Three-Fifths Compromise addressed which of the following issues?
- A. The method for electing the president
 - B. The counting of enslaved persons for representation and taxation
 - C. The regulation of interstate commerce
 - D. The process for amending the Constitution

5. Analyze the debate between Federalists and Anti-Federalists over the ratification of the Constitution. In your response, discuss at least two major arguments from each side and explain how the Bill of Rights emerged as a compromise.

6. The Elastic Clause (Necessary and Proper Clause) is found in which article of the Constitution?
- A. Article I
 - B. Article II
 - C. Article III
 - D. Article IV

7. What is the purpose of the Supremacy Clause (Article VI, Clause 2)? Provide an example of a conflict between state and federal law that this clause would resolve.

8. Which of the following best describes the original method for electing U.S. senators as established by the Constitution?
- A. Direct election by the people
 - B. Appointment by state governors
 - C. Election by state legislatures
 - D. Selection by the House of Representatives

9. Evaluate the extent to which the Constitution addressed the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation. In your response, refer to at least three specific weaknesses of the Articles and explain how the Constitution provided solutions.

10. The concept of judicial review was established by which landmark Supreme Court case?
- A. McCulloch v. Maryland
 - B. Marbury v. Madison
 - C. Gibbons v. Ogden
 - D. Fletcher v. Peck

Answer Key

1. **Answer:** The Great Compromise, proposed by Roger Sherman, created a bicameral legislature with the House of Representatives based on population (favoring large states) and the Senate with equal representation for each state (favoring small states). This resolved the conflict by balancing the interests of both large and small states.
2. **Answer:** B. The Constitution lacked a bill of rights to protect individual liberties.
3. **Answer:** Separation of powers divides government into three branches: Legislative (Congress) makes laws, Executive (President) enforces laws, Judicial (Courts) interprets laws. Example: Congress passes a law (legislative), the President can veto it (executive check), and the Supreme Court can declare it unconstitutional (judicial check).
4. **Answer:** B. The counting of enslaved persons for representation and taxation.
5. **Answer:** Federalists (Hamilton, Madison, Jay) argued for a strong central government, the need for national unity, and that a bill of rights was unnecessary because the federal government had only enumerated powers. Anti-Federalists (Henry, Mason) argued the Constitution lacked protection for individual rights, gave too much power to the national government, and threatened state sovereignty. The compromise was the promise to add a Bill of Rights, which became the first ten amendments.
6. **Answer:** A. Article I (Section 8, Clause 18).
7. **Answer:** The Supremacy Clause establishes that the Constitution, federal laws, and treaties are the supreme law of the land, overriding conflicting state laws. Example: If a state passes a law allowing marijuana use but federal law prohibits it, the Supremacy Clause means federal law prevails.
8. **Answer:** C. Election by state legislatures (changed by the 17th Amendment in 1913).
9. **Answer:** Weaknesses of the Articles: (1) No power to tax — the Constitution gave Congress the power to levy taxes. (2) No executive branch — the Constitution created a single executive (President) to enforce laws. (3) No national court system — the Constitution established a federal judiciary (Supreme Court). (4) Unanimous consent needed for amendments — the Constitution required only 3/4 of states to ratify amendments.
10. **Answer:** B. Marbury v. Madison (1803).