

2nd Grade

Discover America

Course 6 - Teacher Guide



**COURSE 6: CREATING THE
AMERICAN GOVERNMENT**

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Teacher Guide



Key Themes

- Freedom
- Independence

Core Values

- Community
- Life
- Liberty

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- List two reasons why the Constitution was written.
- Define the Constitution.
- List two synonyms for the Constitution.
- Explain why James Madison was called the Father of the Constitution.



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Key Terms

- 01 **compromise** - an agreement between two people or groups of people, where each group has to give up something they want to reach an agreement.
- 02 **constitution** - a set of rules that guides how a country works.
- 03 **government** - a system of rules and the people who make and enforce them.

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Introduction

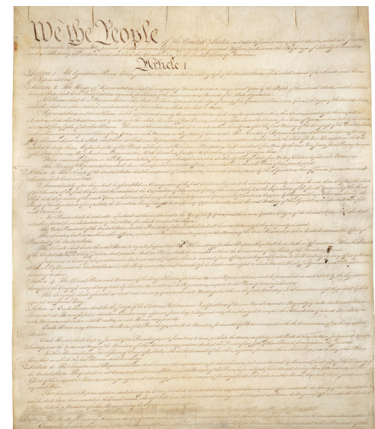
TELL Students

The **Constitution** is like a set of rules for our country. A long time ago, after we won our freedom from the British, people had to decide what rules we should have to make sure everyone is treated fairly and has their rights protected.

The leaders came together to make these rules, and they were very careful. They didn't want one person to have too much power, like a king. So, they made sure the **government** had rules to follow.

They listened to what the people wanted, and they made a special list of rules called the Bill of Rights. These rules make sure we have important freedoms like saying what we think, believing in our own religion, and more.

James Madison helped make these rules. He is called the Father of the Constitution because he played a big part in making sure our country's rules are fair and protect our rights.



U.S. Constitution

WATCH

Star Spangled Adventures Episode:
The Constitutional Convention



Scan Me!

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Lesson

ASK Students

What is the Constitution? Why was the Constitution created?

(allow students to respond)

TELL Students

America was made by people who lived and worked together in groups called communities. A community is when people are like a big family and help each other. In a community, we feel safe, trust each other, and work together.

People in communities can make decisions together and change their surroundings. For the American Patriots and leaders, their communities were their states, the early governments, families, and people nearby.

The first Americans had just won their freedom from the British in the American Revolution. Now, they needed to make rules and laws to make their community, the United States of America, even better.

WATCH

Learn More With Liberty Video:
Why Community Matters: The Constitution



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Lesson

ASK Students

What is a synonym (words that are similar in meaning) for the Constitution?

(allow students to respond)

TELL Students

The Patriots won the war against the British, but they needed to create a new government for all the Thirteen States. The problem was that each state thought of itself as its own country, like Pennsylvania or Georgia, instead of being all Americans. This was a big challenge.

To solve this, they had a meeting called the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. George Washington, who was a strong leader and believed in a powerful government, was in charge. They decided to make a new system of government instead of fixing the old one.

They had two plans, one called the Virginia Plan and the other the New Jersey Plan. They had to find a **compromise**, which means they took some ideas from both plans and made one plan called "The Great Compromise."

After a lot of hard work, they made the Constitution of the United States of America. The Constitution created the government and gave people rights. It also divided the government into three parts: the legislative branch (makes laws), the executive branch (carries out laws), and the judicial branch (interprets laws). This way, no part of the government could become too powerful, and it shared power between the central government and the states. James Madison is known as the Father of the Constitution because of his contributions.

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Lesson

ASK Students

What is the Great Compromise?

(allow students to respond)

TELL Students

James Madison, known as the Father of the Constitution, helped create the important rules for our country. He saw that the old rules were not working well, so he worked with others to make new ones. He was a smart man who knew a lot about how governments should work. He wrote the Virginia Plan, which was a plan for the new rules. He wanted to make sure all the states could work together. Before that, he was a leader in Virginia and helped make rules for his state. He even fought for religious freedom in Virginia, which means people could choose their own religion. Madison did many important things to help our country, and that is why he is called the Father of the Constitution.

ASK Students

What is the name of the document that ensured individual freedom and was written after the Constitution?

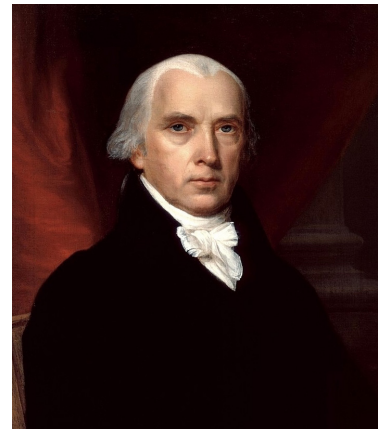
(allow students to respond)

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Lesson

TELL Students

James Madison helped make the Constitution for our country, but some people were worried that it gave the government too much power and might take away our rights. So, Madison listened to them and added special rules called the Bill of Rights. These rules make sure the government can't take our freedoms and protect our rights. Then, the Constitution was approved, and we got a new government. It all happened in 1789, and George Washington became our first President.



James Madison

ASK Students

Have you ever had a disagreement where you had to find a compromise to make everyone happy?

(allow students to respond)

WATCH

Scan Me!



Optional Course Videos:

Learn More With Liberty: James Madison and the Bill of Rights

Learn More With Liberty: James Madison Father of the Constitution

Learn More With Liberty: Community and the Creation of New Government

Please utilize this additional resource to further the discussion on course content with your students.

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Thank You Poster



TELL Students

Remind students that even though the 13 colonies were separate, they came together, or united, to fight for the United States.

Ask students to think of people in their community that help others.

As a class, **pick one community helper** (teacher, firefighter, doctor, congressional leader, or any other individual that resonates with the students).

Make a 'thank you' poster for the community member.

Have each student write one 'thank you' statement on the poster. Encourage students to be specific about their gratitude and to use complete sentences. Students may also draw a picture on the poster. If possible, invite the community member to your classroom and present the poster to them.

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Resource List

- 01 www.2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/ar/14313.htm
- 02 www.archives.gov/education/lessons/slave-trade.html
- 03 www.archives.gov/founding-docs/bill-of-rights/how-did-it-happen
- 04 www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution
- 05 www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/articles-of-confederation
- 06 www.bensguide.gpo.gov/j-states-ratification
- 07 www.constitutioncenter.org/blog/on-this-day-james-madison-introduces-the-bill-of-rights
- 08 www.constitutioncenter.org/the-constitution
- 09 www.everycrsreport.com/reports/R41357.html#fn6
- 10 www.heritage.org/the-constitution/commentary/what-the-constitution-really-says-about-race-and-slavery
- 11 www.history.com/topics/american-revolution/siege-of-yorktown
- 12 www.history.com/topics/early-us/federalist-papers
- 13 www.history.state.gov/milestones/1776-1783/continental-congress
- 14 www.loc.gov/exhibits/creating-the-united-states/convention-and-ratification.html
- 15 www.mountvernon.org/library/digitalhistory/digital-encyclopedia/article/shays-rebellion/
- 16 www.nps.gov/articles/constitutionalconvention-june20.htm
- 17 www.senate.gov/civics/common/generic/Virginia_Plan_item.htm

