

3rd Grade

# Discover America

Course 6 - Teacher Guide



**COURSE 6: CREATING THE  
AMERICAN GOVERNMENT**

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3rd Grade

# Teacher Guide



## Key Themes

- Freedom
- Independence

## Core Values

- Community
- Life
- Liberty

# Learning Objectives

## Students will be able to:

- Define life.
- Explain how the Constitution was created.
- Define the Bill of Rights.
- Explain how the Bill of Rights was created.
- List two reasons why the Constitution and Bill of Rights were necessary.



# Creating the American Government - 3rd Grade

## Key Terms

- 01 **Bill of Rights** - a list of rights that American citizens have.
- 02 **checks and balances** - a system to ensure that no branch of government has too much power.
- 03 **constitution** - a set of rules that guides how a country works.
- 04 **executive branch** - President and Vice President of the United States.
- 05 **government** - a system of rules and the people who make and enforce them.
- 06 **judicial branch** - the branch of government that reviews laws and determines if they are fair.

# Creating the American Government - 3rd Grade

# Introduction

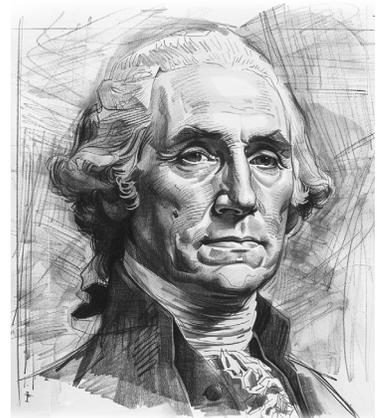
## **ASK** Students

What do you remember about the American Revolutionary War?

(allow students to respond)

## **TELL** Students

During the American Revolutionary War, George Washington and his army had a really hard job because they had to fight against the strong British army, which was experienced and had a lot of money. They had some tough times in the war, like when they tried to go to Canada and lost at the Battle of Quebec. Then, at the Battle of Long Island, they were almost beaten, but some brave soldiers from Maryland helped save the day.



**George Washington**

# Creating the American Government - 3rd Grade

# Introduction

## **ASK** Students

What do you think 'protection of freedoms' means?

What are 'freedoms?'

Ask students to watch another Star Spangled Adventures video to learn more about this important word and what it means.

(allow students to respond)

## **WATCH**

Star Spangled Adventures Episode:  
*The Constitutional Convention*



Scan Me!

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# Lesson

## ASK Students

What are some 'freedoms' that the colonists valued?

(allow students to respond)

## TELL Students

The colonists valued life. The word "life" means experiencing the world, how we live, and how we spend our time. It's a bit like a mystery! We can ask ourselves some questions to understand it better, like who is important in our life, what affects us every day, and how other people like teachers and leaders can impact us.

In early America, life was a bit tough because the **government** wasn't very organized, and it had some challenges.

## ASK Students

What was created to improve the quality of life for the colonists?

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

(allow students to respond)



U.S. Constitution

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# Lesson

## TELL Students

A long time ago in 1787, there was a very important meeting called the Constitutional Convention. Imagine it like a big gathering of smart people who wanted to make some new rules for the United States. These rules were written down on a special paper called the **Constitution**.

One of the most famous leaders, George Washington, was there, and he signed his name on this important paper. In fact, 38 other people out of the 55 who were at the meeting also signed it! They wanted to make sure that everyone agreed with these new rules, so they didn't just decide by themselves. They sent the Constitution to all the different states to see if at least nine of them liked it too. Luckily, by June 21, 1788, nine states said yes, and that's when the new rules became real. Then, on March 4, 1789, the special day arrived, and the Constitution and the new way of running the country came into effect.

On April 30, 1789, George Washington became the very first President of the United States. These new rules were really important because they made sure that no one had too much power, and they divided the government into three parts: one to make laws, one to carry out laws, and one to decide what the laws mean.

## WATCH

Learn More With Liberty Videos:  
*The Creation of a New Government*  
*The Constitutional Convention*



Scan Me!

# Creating the American Government - 3rd Grade

# Lesson

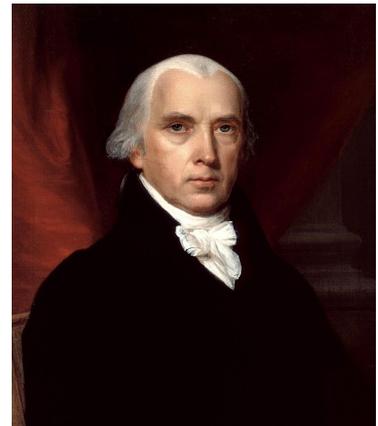
## ASK Students

What are **checks and balances**?

(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 like 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.



James Madison

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# Lesson

## ASK Students

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

(allow students to respond)

## TELL Students

## WATCH

### Optional Course Videos:

*Learn More With Liberty: The Bill of Rights and Way of Life*

*Learn More With Liberty: Why Life Matters: The Constitution*

Scan Me!



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

# Creating the American Government

# Care Challenge

## TELL Students

Please think about your life and the people you know.

Each person in your life makes a difference. They can influence others for good or they can influence others for bad. You have this same opportunity.

The little things you do can make a big difference to people around you.

### **You matter!**

There is an African proverb quoted by the Dalai Lama that says, “If you think you’re too small to make a difference, you haven’t spent the night with a mosquito.”

What do you think this means?

Guide students to understand that everyone has the opportunity to make the world a better place. Ask students to think of a friend or family member who needs encouragement. As a class, brainstorm ways they can **show** someone they **care** (bake cookies, create and deliver a card, visit someone who is ill). Encourage students to make a plan to encourage someone and implement it this week.

Check back with students to discuss throughout the week.

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# Knowledge Check

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

*Read each question and answer set carefully. Circle the correct answer.*

- 01 In what building did the Constitutional Convention take place?  
a) The Old Pennsylvania State House  
b) The Philadelphia Town Hall  
c) The Pennsylvania Grand Hotel
- 02 Who was considered to be the Father of the Constitutional Convention?  
a) George Washington  
b) Thomas Jefferson  
c) James Madison  
d) Benjamin Franklin
- 03 Which plan served as the basis for the new system of government?  
a) The New York Plan  
b) The New Jersey Plan  
c) The Virginia Plan  
d) The Massachusetts Plan
- 04 How many of the 13 states needed to approve the Constitution for it to be ratified?  
a) 7  
b) 9  
c) 11  
d) 13
- 05 Which of these is NOT a branch of the federal government?  
a) The state branch  
b) The legislative branch  
c) The executive branch  
d) The judicial branch

# Creating the American Government - 3rd Grade

## Answer Key

- 01 In what building did the Constitutional Convention take place?  
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b) The legislative branch  
c) The executive branch  
d) The judicial branch

# Creating the American Government

# Resource List

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

