

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer Key: Republic Roadtrip: A 7th Grade Quest for the Constitution

Synthesize the high-stakes debates of 1787 and defend the fragile legal architecture of a new nation in this high-level civic challenge.

1. In the 'Great Compromise,' why was the creation of the Senate particularly crucial for the ratification of the Constitution?

Answer: A) It ensured that larger states could not unilaterally dominate smaller states in the legislative process.

The Senate grants each state two seats regardless of population, providing a check on the House of Representatives where larger states hold more power.

2. The _____ was a critical addition demanded by Anti-Federalists like George Mason to prevent the federal government from overreaching its authority.

Answer: C) Bill of Rights

Anti-Federalists feared the Constitution lacked specific protections for individual and state liberties, leading to the first ten amendments.

3. The Three-Fifths Compromise was primarily a debate about the morality of slavery rather than a dispute over political representation and taxation.

Answer: B) False

While deeply rooted in the institution of slavery, the compromise was a cold political calculation regarding how enslaved populations would count toward a state's seats in Congress.

4. How did the 1787 Northwest Ordinance influence the future geography and social structure of the United States?

Answer: B) It established a process for territories to become states and prohibited slavery in the region.

The Ordinance set a precedent for how the nation would expand and was the first federal action to limit the spread of slavery in new territories.

5. To convince the public of the Constitution's merits, Alexander Hamilton and John Jay teamed up to write a series of essays known as the _____.

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Answer: C) Federalist Papers

These 85 essays are still used today to interpret the original intent of the Constitution's framers.

6. Under the Articles of Confederation, the central government lacked the power to levy taxes directly on citizens.

Answer: A) True

The Articles required the federal government to request funds from the states, which often refused, leading to massive national debt.

7. Which event served as the ultimate proof to many leaders that the Articles of Confederation were failing to maintain public order?

Answer: B) Shays' Rebellion

Shays' Rebellion featured armed farmers closing courts; the inability of the central government to quickly provide a military response highlighted federal weakness.

8. The _____ gave the President the authority to deport non-citizens deemed 'dangerous' and made it a crime to criticize the government.

Answer: C) Alien and Sedition Acts

Passed in 1798, these acts were highly controversial and led to the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions regarding state nullification.

9. Patrick Henry was an ardent Federalist who believed a strong central government was the only way to protect the Union.

Answer: B) False

Patrick Henry was a leading Anti-Federalist who famously said he 'smelt a rat' regarding the Constitutional Convention's shift toward a strong central authority.

10. The Whiskey Rebellion was a significant turning point in the Early Republic because it demonstrated that:

Answer: A) The federal government had the power and will to enforce its laws.

Unlike Shays' Rebellion, the federal government under Washington successfully suppressed the Whiskey Rebellion, proving the strength of the new Constitution.

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