



Social Studies - Grade 7 - 20 Weeks  
7th Grade

NYS Performance Indicators	Objectives	Text Resources	Resources (Suggested Activities)	Cross-Curriculum Connections	Assessment Items
<p>SS5.1.4C SS5.1.3C SS5.1.3B SS5.1.2D SS5.1.2C SS5.1.2B SS5.1.1D SS5.1.1B SS5.1.1A SS1.1.4D SS1.1.4B SS1.1.3C SS1.1.3B SS1.1.3A SS1.1.2B SS1.1.1B</p>	<p><b><u>GOVERNMENT/CONSTITUTION (40-45 DAYS)</u></b></p> <p><b>I. The Articles of Confederation and the Critical Period</b></p> <p><b>Objectives:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To understand the earliest formal structure of the United States government as expressed in the Articles of Confederation</li> <li>To consider the nature and evolution of constitutional democracies</li> </ol> <p><b>Content Outline:</b></p> <p><b>A. Need for a formal plan of union</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Historical precedent: the Albany Plan of Union</li> <li>Development of state constitutions</li> <li>Inadequacy of Continental Congress as a national government</li> </ol> <p><b>B. Development of a formal plan of government</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft and debate in Congress, 1776-1777</li> <li>Ratification by the states, 1778-1781; period of operation, 1781-1789</li> </ol> <p><b>C. The structure of government under the Articles of Confederation</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Congress was the only branch of government</li> <li>Each state had equal representation</li> <li>Congress's power under the Articles included:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Making war and peace</li> <li>Conducting foreign and Native</li> </ol> </li> </ol>		<p><u>Interactive Constitution</u></p>	<p><b>ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is a government?</li> <li>- How did the first United States government operate?</li> </ul> <p><b>CLASSROOM IDEAS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a Venn diagram to show the powers of the national government and the powers of the state governments under the Articles of Confederation.</li> <li>• Debate the pros and cons of the Articles of Confederation.</li> <li>• Chart the weaknesses and achievements of the Articles of Confederation government.</li> </ul> <p><u>Suggested Documents:</u> Albany Plan of Union (1754), Articles of Confederation</p>	

	<p>American Indian affairs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. The settlement of disputes between and among states</li> <li>d. Issuance of currency and borrowing</li> </ol> <p><b>D.</b> The Articles suffered from many weaknesses</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Indirect representation</li> <li>2. No coercive power; decisions more advisory than binding: e.g., Shay’s Rebellion</li> <li>3. Lack of national executive and judicial functions</li> <li>4. Lack of taxing power</li> <li>5. Difficulty in passing legislation</li> </ol> <p><b>E.</b> The Articles did have several achievements and contributions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Land Ordinance of 1785 and the Northwest Ordinance, 1787</li> <li>2. Developed the privileges and immunities of citizenship</li> <li>3. Developed the concept of limited government</li> </ol>				
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<p><a href="#">SS5.1.4C</a>  <a href="#">SS5.1.3C</a>  <a href="#">SS5.1.3B</a>  <a href="#">SS5.1.2D</a>  <a href="#">SS5.1.2C</a>  <a href="#">SS5.1.2B</a>  <a href="#">SS5.1.1D</a>  <a href="#">SS5.1.1B</a>  <a href="#">SS5.1.1A</a>  <a href="#">SS1.1.4D</a>  <a href="#">SS1.1.4B</a>  <a href="#">SS1.1.3C</a>  <a href="#">SS1.1.3B</a>  <a href="#">SS1.1.3A</a>  <a href="#">SS1.1.2B</a>  <a href="#">SS1.1.1B</a></p>	<p><b>II. The New York State Constitution of 1777</b></p> <p><b>Objectives:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To understand the earliest formal structure of the New York State government, as expressed in the first New York State Constitution</li> <li>2. To compare and contrast the development and evolution of the United States and New York State constitutions</li> <li>3. To understand how the United States and New York State constitutions support majority rule but also protect the rights of the minority</li> </ol> <p><b>Content Outline:</b></p> <p><b>A.</b> Adopted by convention without submission to popular vote</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Included Declaration of Independence</li> <li>2. Influence of leaders such as John Jay</li> </ol> <p><b>B.</b> Chronology of the document</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Draft and debate in convention, 1776-1777</li> <li>2. Period of operation, 1777-1822</li> </ol> <p><b>C.</b> Form of early State government</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Similar to colonial government</li> <li>2. Governor with limited authority and</li> </ol>			<p><b>ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How did the New York State Constitution reflect the principles embodied in the Declaration of Independence?</li> <li>- How are the New York State Constitution and the United States Constitution alike? How are they different?</li> <li>- The Declaration of Independence ended the legality of colonial government. Students should understand that all states developed new institutions and laws and that several, such as New York, influenced the writing of the United States Constitution.</li> </ul> <p><b>CLASSROOM IDEAS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a three-way Venn diagram to compare the Articles of Confederation, the New York State Constitution, and the United</li> </ul>	
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	<p>three-year term</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Inclusion of rights and liberties</li> <li>4. First system of State courts</li> <li>5. Limited franchise</li> <li>6. Bicameral legislature: Senate—four-year term; Assembly—one-year term</li> </ol> <p><b>D. Effectiveness</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Smoother functioning than national government under the Articles of Confederation</li> <li>2. Cumbersome administrative procedures</li> <li>3. Excessive use of veto procedures</li> <li>4. A model for the United States Constitution of 1787</li> </ol>			<p>States Constitution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate the positive and negative aspects of the State laws.</li> <li>• Diagram the three branches of the new State government.</li> </ul> <p>Suggested Documents:          United States Constitution, New York State Constitution of 1777, Articles of Confederation, Declaration of Independence</p>	
<p><a href="#">SS5.1.4C</a>  <a href="#">SS5.1.3C</a>  <a href="#">SS5.1.3B</a>  <a href="#">SS5.1.2D</a>  <a href="#">SS5.1.2C</a>  <a href="#">SS5.1.2B</a>  <a href="#">SS5.1.1D</a>  <a href="#">SS5.1.1B</a>  <a href="#">SS5.1.1A</a>  <a href="#">SS1.1.4D</a>  <a href="#">SS1.1.4B</a>  <a href="#">SS1.1.3C</a>  <a href="#">SS1.1.3B</a>  <a href="#">SS1.1.3A</a>  <a href="#">SS1.1.2B</a>  <a href="#">SS1.1.1B</a></p>	<p><b><u>GOVERNMENT/CONSTITUTION CONT'D</u></b></p> <p><b>III. The Writing, Structure, and Adoption of The United States Constitution</b></p> <p><b>Objectives:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To understand the importance of the events that took place during the writing and adoption of the United States Constitution and to recognize their significance beyond their time and place</li> <li>2. To explain what citizenship means in a democratic society, how citizenship is defined in the Constitution and other laws of the land, and how the definition of citizenship has changed in the United States and New York State over time</li> <li>3. To understand that the New York State Constitution, along with other documents, served as a model for the development of the United States Constitution</li> <li>4. To compare and contrast the development and evolution of the constitutions of the United States and New York State</li> <li>5. To define federalism and describe the powers granted to the national and state governments by the United States Constitution</li> </ol> <p><b>Content Outline:</b></p> <p><b>A. Annapolis Convention, 1786</b></p>			<p><b>ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Why was a new constitution necessary?</li> <li>- How does the Constitution embody the principles of the Declaration of Independence?</li> <li>- How do federalism and separation of powers promote those principles in the Constitution?</li> </ul> <p><b>CLASSROOM IDEAS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold a mock constitutional convention in the classroom. Assign roles.</li> <li>• Examine compromises made by federalists and anti-federalists, slave owners and non-slave owners in the Constitution.</li> <li>• Write the Preamble in your own words and memorize it.</li> <li>• Make a graphic organizer of Articles I, II, and III.</li> <li>• Write the Bill of Rights in your own words.</li> <li>• Illustrate one of the first 10 amendments.</li> <li>• Have a Bill of Rights guessing gallery.</li> <li>• Use primary sources such as the Federalist Papers to identify key issues in the</li> </ul>	

1. Impracticality of correcting weaknesses in Articles of Confederation
  2. Need for an improved form of government without losing key elements of a new philosophy of government
  3. Decision to write a constitution
- B.** Constitutional Convention: setting and composition
- C.** Major issues
1. Limits of power: national versus state
  2. Representation: slaves and apportionment
  3. Electoral procedures: direct versus indirect election
  4. Rights of individuals
- D.** The need for compromise
1. The issue of a “federal” or a “national” government
  2. The Great Compromise on representation
  3. The three-fifths compromise on slavery
  4. The commerce compromises
- E.** The underlying legal and political principles of the Constitution
1. Federalism
  2. Separation of powers
  3. Provisions for change
  4. Protection of individual rights
- F.** The Constitution and the functioning of the federal government
1. The Preamble states the purpose of the document
  2. The structure and function of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches (Articles I, II, III)
  3. The relation of states to the federal union (Article IV)
  4. Assuming the responsibility for a federal system (Article VI)
- G.** The Constitution as a living document
1. The elastic clause and delegated power facilitate action
  2. Amendment procedure as a mechanism for change (Article V)
  3. The Bill of Rights
  4. Supreme Court decision (e.g., *Tinker v. Des Moines School District*, 1969)
- H.** The evolution of an “unwritten constitution”
1. Political parties
  2. The President’s cabinet
  3. President’s relation to Congress

convention debates and the ratification debates. Hold a mock ratification convention for New York State.

- Propose new amendments to the Constitution.

Suggested Documents: United States Constitution (1789), Bill of Rights, the Federalist Papers

This section focuses upon the basic civic values of the American people (Standard 5: Civics, Citizenship, and Government) as implemented through laws and practices.

As a “living document,” the Constitution should be revisited throughout grades 7 and 8 as questions of the federal government are examined, as well as when amendments are added.

Suggested Document: Excerpts from the Federalist Papers

4. Committee system in Congress
  5. Traditional limitations on Presidential term
- I. The ratification process**
1. The debates in the states, especially New York State
  2. The Federalist Papers
  3. Poughkeepsie Convention
    - a. Federalists—Hamilton
    - b. Anti-Federalists—Clinton
  4. Formal ratification of the Constitution and launching of the new government
  5. The personal leadership of people like Washington, Franklin, Hamilton, Madison

### Vocabulary

Constitution, Iroquois Confederacy, Albany Plan of Union, Articles of Confederation, The Great Compromise, The three-fifth Compromise, Federalism, Separation of Powers, Legislature, Executive, Judiciary, Congress, Senate, House of Representatives, President, Supreme Court, Amendment, Bill of Rights, bicameral, preamble, checks and balances, ratify, popular sovereignty

### Technology Links

[www.laughtergeneology.com/bin/histproof/misc/const\\_ny.html](http://www.laughtergeneology.com/bin/histproof/misc/const_ny.html)  
[www.archives.gov/national\\_archives\\_experience/constitution.html](http://www.archives.gov/national_archives_experience/constitution.html)  
[www.cameron.edu/~stew/sm/ch2/sld001.htm](http://www.cameron.edu/~stew/sm/ch2/sld001.htm)  
[http://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson\\_images/lesson401/ThreeHandouts.pdf](http://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson_images/lesson401/ThreeHandouts.pdf)  
[http://edsitement.neh.gov/monthly\\_feature.asp?id=34](http://edsitement.neh.gov/monthly_feature.asp?id=34)  
<http://search.yahoo!igans.yahoo.com/search/ligans?p=The+U.+S.+Constitution>  
[www.socialstudiesforkids.com/articles/ushistory/makingoftheconstitution3](http://www.socialstudiesforkids.com/articles/ushistory/makingoftheconstitution3)  
[http://edsitement.neh.gov/view\\_lesson\\_plan.asp?id=425](http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=425)  
[www.kidsgov/k-history.htm](http://www.kidsgov/k-history.htm)  
<http://web.nmsu.edu/~jbronste/federal.html>  
[www.jburgd12.k12.il.us/jjhs/Wbt/Foundations/ratify.htm](http://www.jburgd12.k12.il.us/jjhs/Wbt/Foundations/ratify.htm)  
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