

Chapter **8** Section 2 (pages 228–233)

Creating the Constitution

BEFORE YOU READ

In the last section, you read about the problems the nation faced under the Articles of Confederation.

In this section, you will learn how these problems led to the creation of the Constitution.

AS YOU READ

Use this chart to take notes on how the following plans and compromises helped to form a new plan of government.

PLAN/COMPROMISE	WHAT IT CALLED FOR
Virginia Plan	
New Jersey Plan	
Great Compromise	
Three-Fifths Compromise	

TERMS & NAMES

Constitutional Convention

Meeting in Philadelphia called to change the Articles of Confederation

James Madison One of the leaders of the Constitutional Convention

Virginia Plan Plan that called for representation in the legislature to be based on states' population or wealth

New Jersey Plan Plan that called for each state to have equal representation in the legislature

Great Compromise Called for a two-house legislature with representation based on population in one house and equal representation in the other house

Three-Fifths Compromise Called for counting three-fifths of the slave population for representation and taxation

A Constitutional Convention Is Called (pages 228–229)

Why did Alexander Hamilton want the states to send representatives to Philadelphia?

In September 1786, *delegates* from five states met in Annapolis, Maryland. They wanted to help promote trade among the states by creating national trade laws. But creating such changes would require *amending* the Articles of Confederation. Under the Articles, the national government had no power to regulate trade among the states.

The Annapolis delegates called for the states to send representatives to Philadelphia the following May to discuss such changes. In the meantime, Shays's Rebellion broke out. Fearing the rebellion might spread, 12 states sent delegates to Philadelphia in 1787.

1. Why did 12 states send delegates to Philadelphia in 1787?

The Convention's Delegates (page 229)

What were the delegates at the Constitutional Convention like?

Fifty-five delegates came to the **Constitutional Convention** in Philadelphia. They were an impressive group. About three-fourths had been representatives to the Continental Congress.

Most of the nation's leaders were there, including George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and **James Madison**.

But not every American leader was there. Thomas Jefferson and John Adams were not at the meeting because they were overseas. Patrick Henry refused to go because he opposed the Convention.

In addition, there were no women, blacks, or Native Americans invited to participate in the Convention.

2. Who were some of the famous men at the Constitutional Convention?

The Delegates Assemble; The Convention Begins

(pages 229–230)

How did the delegates want to change the Articles of Confederation?

At first, the delegates did not have a clear idea about what they wanted to do. Some thought they would amend the Articles. Others thought they would set up a whole new government. They all agreed that the plan should protect people's rights. They all believed that the government needed to be strong enough to protect people's rights. But it should not be too strong to be controlled by the people.

The first order of business at the Convention was to elect a president. Every single delegate voted for George Washington. Next, the delegates had to decide on the rules for the Convention. The delegates decided that in order for everyone to speak freely and not be pressured by the politics of the time, the discussions would remain secret.

3. What kind of government did the delegates want to set up?

The Virginia Plan; The Great Compromise

(pages 230–232)

What was the Great Compromise?

The first speaker at the Convention, Virginia's Edmund Randolph, proposed a whole new plan of government. The plan is known as the **Virginia Plan**. It called for three branches of government. The legislature would be made up of two houses and representatives from each state would be based on the state's population.

The larger states supported the plan. The smaller states opposed the plan because they believed that the larger states would have the most power.

New Jersey delegate William Paterson presented a different plan. It was called the **New Jersey Plan**. This plan called for a one-house legislature in which each state would have one vote. After some debate, the Virginia Plan won. The **Great Compromise** solved the problem of representation in the legislature. According to the compromise, the House of Representatives would

be based on state populations. But each state would have an equal number of votes in the Senate.

4. How did the Great Compromise settle the issue of representation in the legislature?

Slavery and the Constitution

(pages 232–233)

How did the Convention address the issue of slavery?

Next, the Convention had to decide who would be counted in the population of each state. The Southern states wanted slaves to be counted for representation but not taxation. The Northern states, who had fewer slaves than the Southern states, wanted slaves to be counted for taxation but not for representation. After some debate, the delegates reached the **Three-Fifths Compromise**. It said that three-fifths of the slave population would be counted to determine representation in the legislature and taxation. The Convention also agreed that Congress could not ban the slave trade until 1808.

5. What issue did the Three-Fifths Compromise settle?

Regulating Trade

(page 233)

Who would control trade?

The delegates gave the national government the power to regulate trade. The national government could pass laws on how goods could be *exported*.

On September 15, 1787, all but three of the delegates voted to support the Constitution in its final form. Washington sent it to the Confederation Congress, and Congress sent it to the states to be ratified.

6. According to the new Constitution, who had the power to regulate trade?