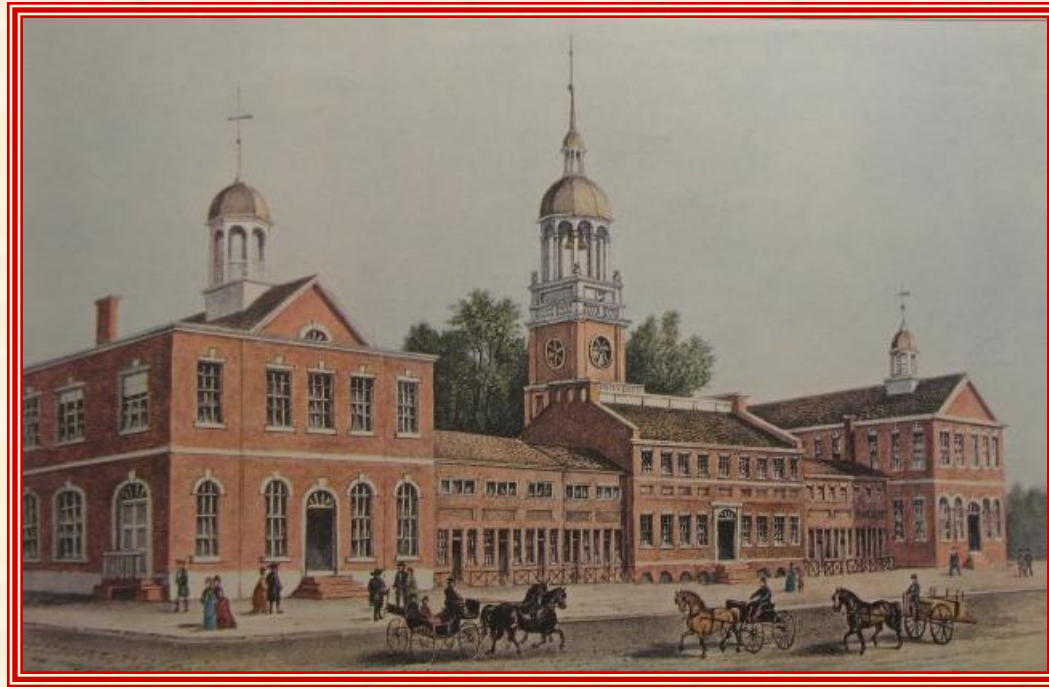


Foundations of Government



Chapter 2 – Civics

Ms. Rosenberg

*Chapter 2, Section 1:
Why Americans Have
Governments*



Levels of Government

- To govern is to rule – a government is set up to make and enforce rules
- Three levels of government:
 - 1) Local (city or town) – enforces rules for people in the community
 - 2) State – enforces rules for everyone in the state
 - 3) Federal – U.S. government enforces rules and laws for everyone in the country

Types of Governments

- Absolute Monarchy – a king or queen has all of the power, rules by force
- Dictatorship (totalitarian government) – a person or small group has total control over all aspects of peoples lives



Types of Governments



- Democracy – the people of a nation have a say in the decision making of a government
 - Direct Democracy – all citizens vote on laws and decisions for the community
 - ~ Works only in smaller communities since everyone needs to be able to gather in one place
 - Representative Democracy (Republic) – citizens vote and elect representatives to make decisions in the government for them
 - ~ The United States uses this form of government because we elect all of our local, state, and federal leaders

The Purpose of Government

- Help People Cooperate
 - People working together usually leads to better results
 - Strongest person tends to become the leader of a group and helps the group to survive
- Provide Services
 - Services people are usually unable to provide for themselves: education, military protection, fire/medical/police, transportation, etc.

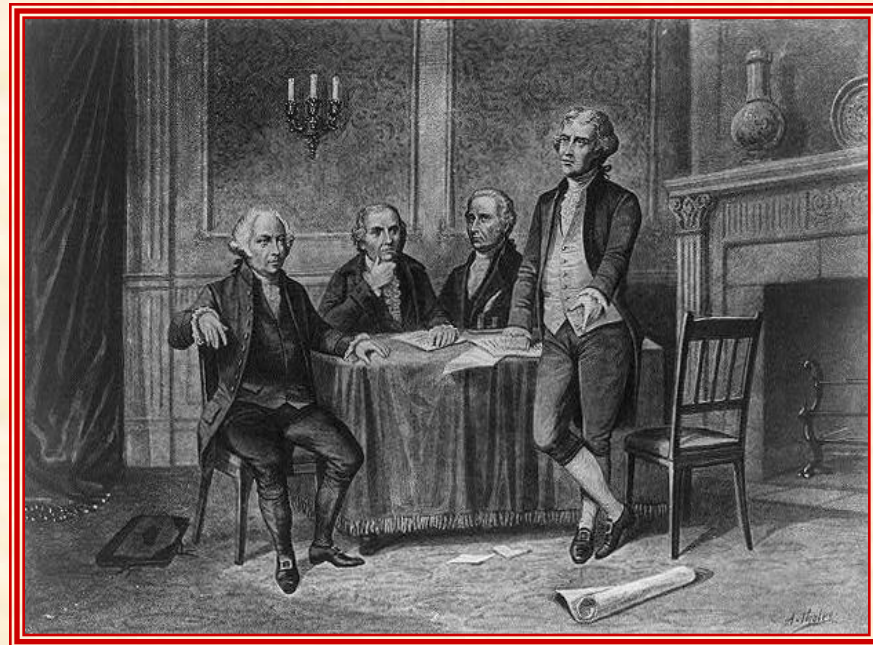
The Purpose of Government

- Provide Rules
 - Laws provide structure so people know what they can and cannot do. Laws avoid people doing things their own way.
 - A Constitution is a written plan of government that explains how the government is organized and what the most important laws are.
- Putting Ideals into Practice
 - The government tries to protect basic important beliefs of the country (in the US – the ideas of life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness are protected with certain freedoms in the Bill of Rights)

Summary

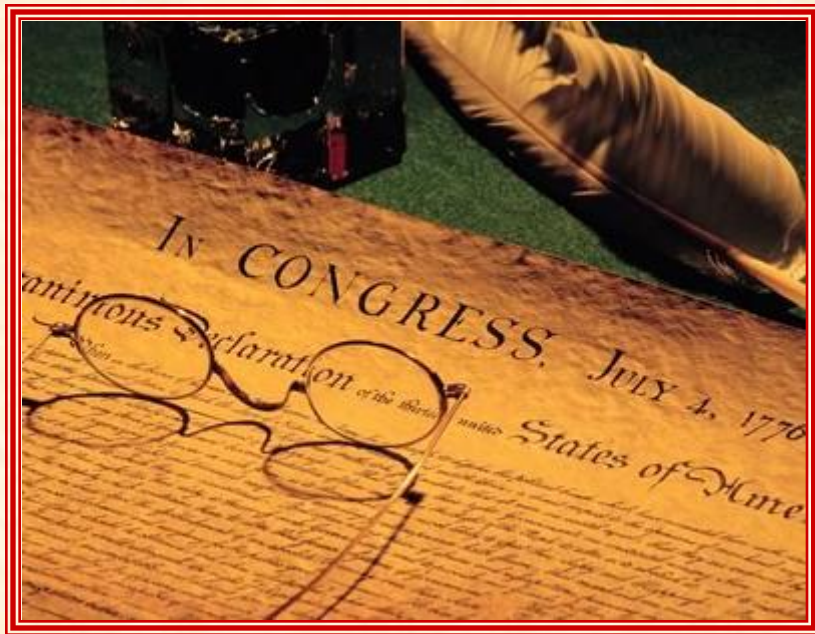
Why is it important to have a government?

Chapter 2, Section 2: The First American Government



Declaration of Independence

- The document that explained the reasons colonists had for wanting to be free from Great Britain
- American colonists believed that government should come from the agreement of the people but in this case, the people weren't asked for their input
- It declared that government is supposed to protect Human Rights (the basic rights granted to all people)



The Declaration of Independence

*Second Continental Congress
July 4, 1776
Philadelphia, PA*



Ideals of American Government

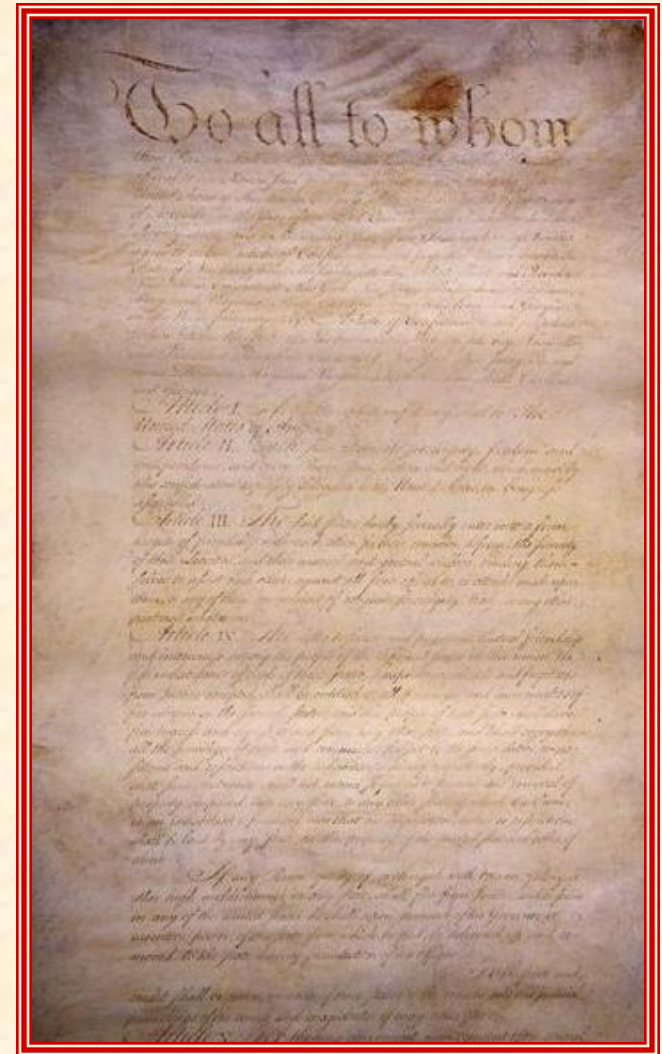
We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

~The Declaration of Independence

- All Americans are equal in the eyes of the law
- Americans have the basic rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness
- Even though it might be hard to achieve these, it was important enough to fight for

The Articles of Confederation

- The first government organized by America after winning independence from Britain
- The states were mostly independent because people feared a strong central government
- Each state had one vote in Congress, there was no president or national court – states had to enforce all laws



The Articles of Confederation

Problems:

- Hard to pass laws because 9 of 13 states needed to agree
- No one to make sure laws were followed
- No national courts to interpret laws or judge people
- Hard to change or modify the Articles
- Congress could not raise taxes, states were asked to provide money but no one could force them to do this

The Articles of Confederation

Problems:

- Congress had no money to pay back debt or pay for government programs
- Did not control trade between states or countries
- Each state had its own money
- States were more like independent countries rather than one unified nation – refused to obey Congress

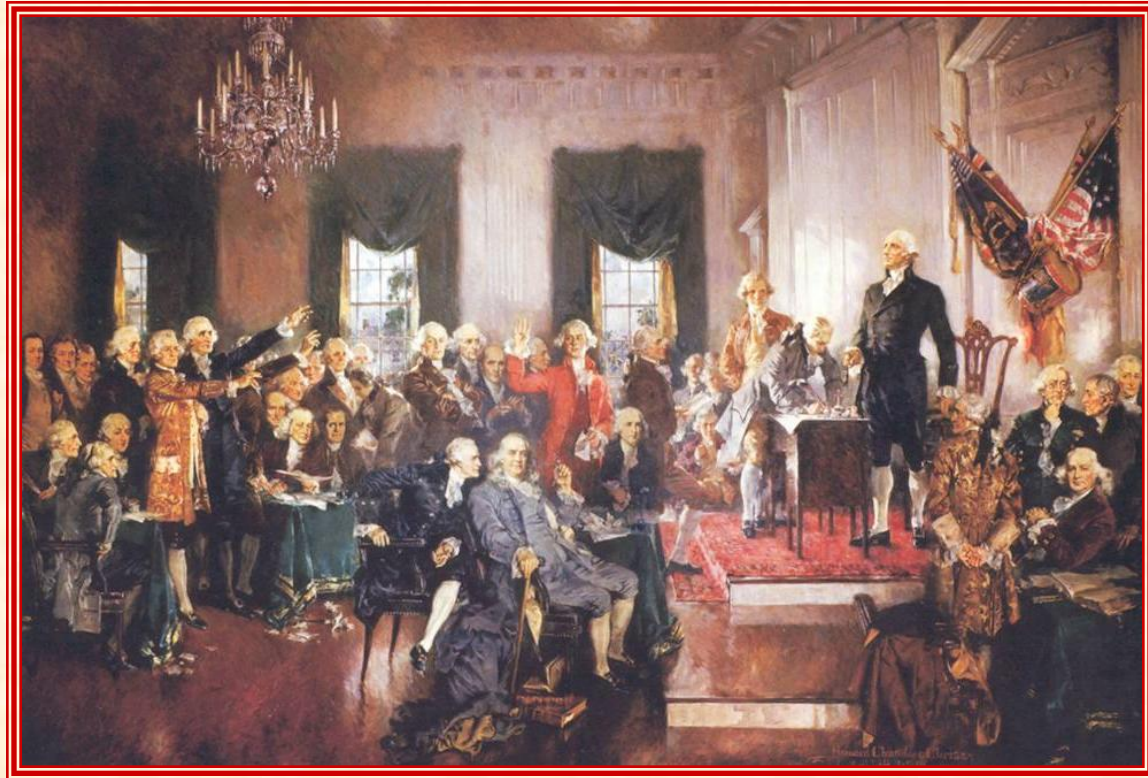
The Confederation Fails

- Because the states were afraid of a strong central government, it didn't have the power to operate properly
- As these problems created tension, state leaders began to realize they needed a stronger central government
- Representatives met in 1787 to improve the national government

Summary

Why did the Articles of Confederation fail?

Chapter 2, Section 3: A New Constitution



The Constitutional Convention

- 55 delegates from the states gathered to improve the national government in May 1787 at the Constitutional Convention
- They created the Constitution of the United States
- Important Delegates: George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, James Madison, Alexander Hamilton



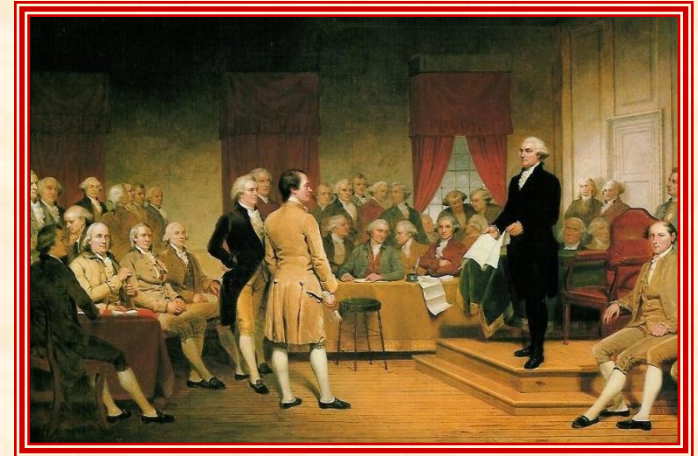
An English Heritage

- Wanted some rights the English had fought for many centuries earlier:
 - Magna Carta (1215) – declared all citizens were equal under the law, right to a trial
 - English Bill of Rights (1689) – right to request the government change laws, fair punishments
 - Bicameral Parliament – two house legislature



Secret Meetings

- The Constitutional Convention was held in secret so delegates
 - Could speak freely
 - Would not be pressured about issues
 - Would be able to change their mind
- James Madison kept detailed journals and notes about the Constitutional Convention so we can learn what happened



Writing the Constitution

- Wanted to balance a more powerful central government with ability of states to rule themselves – FEDERALISM (power is divided between national and state governments)
- Made many compromises
- Great Compromise – legislature (Congress) was divided into two houses:
 - Senate – States had equal representation
 - House of Representatives – Number of representatives was based on population of the state

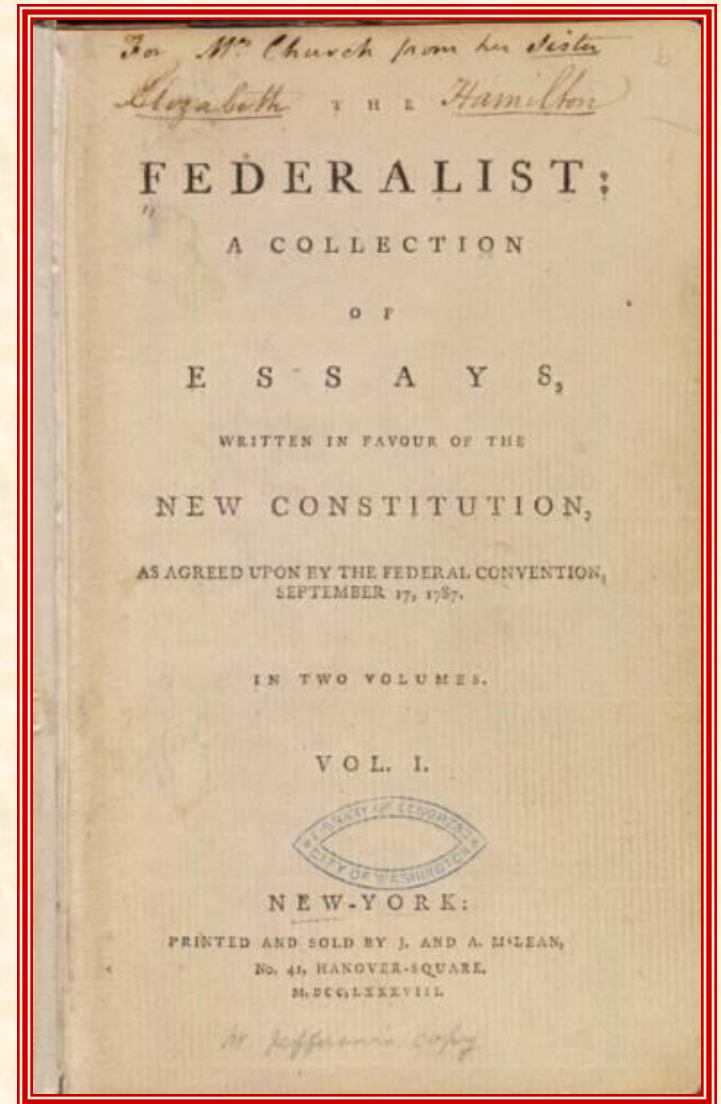
A Strong New Nation

- New powers given to the central government:
 - Easier to pass laws (needed simple majority)
 - Ability to tax
 - Regulate trade
 - Raise an army
 - Make/print money
 - President carried out laws
 - Supreme Court interpreted laws



Federalists vs. Anti-Federalists

- Not everyone agreed with the Constitution:
 - Federalists – supported, strong gov't was necessary to keep states together
 - Anti-Federalists – against, strong gov't would create the same problems they had with Great Britain



Ratification

- 9 out of 13 states had to ratify, or accept, the Constitution
- It took 2 years for enough states to ratify
- George Washington became the first president in 1789



Summary

How was the Constitution different from the Articles of Confederation?