

Federalists and Anti-Federalists



WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Enter the Time Machine



- The year is 1787
- The Revolutionary War is over, and the United States of America is now on its own to decide how to rule itself
- Being a new country isn't easy:
 - The states disagree about what kind of government they want
 - The framers disagree about what kind of government they want
 - People are becoming frustrated and rebelling against the current government

Enter the Constitution



- At the Constitutional Convention, representatives from each state (except Rhode Island) begin to write a list of rules to replace the weak Articles of Confederation
- Most delegates want a strong national government
- However, they also wanted to have strong local governments
- After much debate, the Constitution was finally signed in September 1787
- It was then sent to the states to be approved

But the story doesn't end there...

Enter the Anti-Federalists



- Some framers thought the Constitution gave the government too much power
- They argued that states should have more power because they were closer to the people...what could a national government possibly know about state and city problems?
- Also, there was no Bill of Rights – nothing that said what people can and cannot do
- Those opposed set out to campaign against the Constitution, arguing that it would create a government with so much power, it would just be like having a king again.

So...Do You Agree?



- What do you think...
 - Is the national government too big?
 - Do we really need a Bill of Rights?
 - What's better for the people – a strong national government or a strong state government?
 - At this point...would you vote to approve the Constitution as it is?

You have to wonder what the other side thinks...

Enter the Federalists



- The Federalists supported the Constitution as it was. After all, it was decided upon by representatives from each state
- The Constitution had a strong sense of CHECKS AND BALANCES, or a balance of power between the three branches of the national government and the local and state governments
- The Federalists wrote the “Federalist Papers” to encourage states to approve the Constitution

So...Do You Agree?



- What do you think...
 - Does the national government work fine the way it is?
 - Do we really need a Bill of Rights if everything is so well done in the Constitution?
 - At this point...would you vote to approve the Constitution as it is?

Wonder what happens next...

Enter the “Fight”



- The Constitution needed 9 of the 13 states to approve it in order for it to become law
- Both sides (the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists) tried to convince people their side was correct
- After great debate, the states finally ratified the Constitution...only if there was a Bill of Rights

Enter the Bill of Rights



- While Federalists didn't think it was really necessary, they agreed to add a Bill of Rights so that both sides would be happy
- The rights would be added as amendments... meaning they were seen as “official changes, corrections, or additions”
- The Bill of Rights were based upon the constitutions developed by the states
- There were a total of ten amendments added...and they became known as “The Bill of Rights”

Now let's debrief all of this...

Who Was Right?



- Which side had the best argument...the Federalists or the Anti-Federalists?
- Why?
- Does the Constitution really need a Bill of Rights? Why or why not?
- If you were alive back in 1787, how would you vote?

Assignment



In partners, create a two-sided poster. On one side, create an advertisement for the Federalist position. On the other side, create an advertisement for the Anti-Federalist position. You must include at least two arguments made by each side.