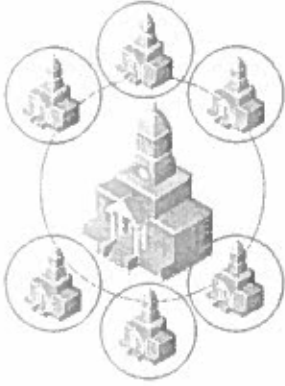


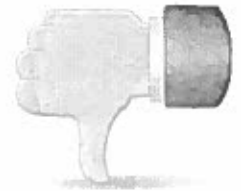
## Who Needs a Central Government?



In America's earliest days, the Founders experimented with several types of government. The first one was organized under an agreement called the **Articles of Confederation**. It created a central government that had very little power. Individual state governments kept most of the power. This gave the states a lot of independence, but it also created problems. So the Founders tried again, and this time they wrote the **Constitution**. Signed by representatives from every state, the Constitution created a stronger central government that shared power with the states. The Constitution couldn't be passed until it was approved by the states, and when it was sent out for approval, a raging debate started! Many people feared a strong central government, so they feared the Constitution.

## Anti-Federalists: Down with Central Government!

In a system where a central government shares power with smaller units of government, such as states, the term **federal** refers to the central government. On one side of the Constitution debate, **anti-federalists** wanted a small central government. They believed local governments best understood what citizens needed and would best protect citizens' freedom. Anti-federalists opposed parts of the Constitution they thought limited the power of the states. They feared that a strong central government would overpower state governments, and eventually state governments would lose their independence and influence. They also didn't like that the original Constitution did not guarantee citizens any specific rights. They feared that a central government would become so powerful it would be just like having a king.



## Federalists: Yay for Central Government!

**Federalists** wanted a strong central government. They believed that a strong central government was necessary if the states were going to band together to form a nation. A strong central government could represent the nation to other countries. It could also control individual states that would not cooperate with the rest. Federalists also believed that a strong central government could best protect individual citizens' rights and freedoms. Federalists were not afraid of the central government created by the Constitution because it had three branches—the executive, legislative, and judicial—that could limit each other's power. That way, the central government could not become too powerful.



## A Battle on Paper

With no TV or internet in the 1780s, the two sides duked it out in newspapers and pamphlets. James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay used the fake name 'Publius' to write 85 letters supporting the Constitution. These were published in newspapers and are called the **Federalist Papers**. Anti-federalists responded with their own series of letters and essays arguing that the Constitution was a threat to liberty.



## A Compromise

In the end, federalists agreed to add ten **amendments**, or changes, to the Constitution. Known as the **Bill of Rights**, these amendments guaranteed a list of rights to citizens. The anti-federalists were pleased with this addition because the Bill of Rights limited the central government's power.



# Federalists & Anti-Federalists

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Who Would Say That?** Read each statement. If it sounds like something a Federalist would have said to support the Constitution, write **F** in the box. If it sounds like something an Anti-Federalist would have said to complain about the Constitution, write **A** on the line

\_\_\_ 1. The Constitution gives the federal government enough power to overpower the states.

\_\_\_ 2. It will not be possible for the federal government to overpower the states, because the states are a necessary part of the federal government.

\_\_\_ 3. The Constitution contains no Bill of Rights to protect individual liberties like freedom of speech, trial by jury, and the right against searches and seizures.

\_\_\_ 4. The Constitution says federal laws are "the supreme law of the land," so the federal government could just take complete control.

\_\_\_ 5. Nothing in the Constitution says the federal government has power to limit peoples' freedoms in the first place.

\_\_\_ 6. The Constitution gives the federal government just a few powers that are very well defined.

\_\_\_ 7. The President created by the Constitution is really just a king.

\_\_\_ 8. A strong President is necessary to protect the country against foreign attack and make sure laws are carried out properly.

\_\_\_ 9. The Constitution creates a Supreme Court that is too powerful because the judges don't answer to anyone.

\_\_\_ 10. The Constitution already contains a few rights, so we may as well add a whole Bill of Rights.

\_\_\_ 11. The Supreme Court is the weakest branch of government because it doesn't control the military and can't pass laws.

\_\_\_ 12. The Constitution forbids creating titles of nobility like "Duke" or "King," so the government will always belong to the people.

\_\_\_ 13. The United States is too large to have a central government. People won't know their leaders and will lose control over the government.

\_\_\_ 14. The Constitution is a Bill of Rights because it guarantees citizens a role in government.

**Sound Off: Do We Need the Bill of Rights?** Explain whether you agree with a famous federalist:



Alexander Hamilton

*The Preamble (opening) of the Constitution says, "We the People...do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." The people created this Constitution. That is enough to make sure the government will never violate peoples' rights. We don't need an extra Bill of Rights!*

If the Bill of Rights was REMOVED from the Constitution, would you feel secure that the "We the People" preamble protects your rights?

Sure! I would feel secure because...  No way! I'd be worried because...

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Bill of Rights**  
Freedom of speech  
Freedom of religion  
Freedom of the press  
No unreasonable searches  
Right to due process of law  
No cruel punishments  
Right to a lawyer  
Right to a fair trial