**CONSTITUTIONAL RATIFICATION DEBATE**

**Created by Geri Hastings**.

**Period 3: 1754-1800**

**Key Concept 3.2: The American Revolution’s democratic and republican ideals inspired new experiments with different forms of government.**

II. E) In the debate over ratifying the Constitution, Anti-Federalists opposing ratification battled with Federalists, whose principles were articulated in the Federalist Papers (primarily written by Alexander Hamilton and James Madison). Federalists ensured the ratification of the Constitution by promising the addition of a Bill of Rights that enumerated individual rights and explicitly restricted the powers of the federal government.

**Primary Historical Thinking Skill(s**): Argumentation, analyzing historical sources and evidence

**Learning Objective:**

**NAT-2.0: Explain how interpretations of the Constitution and debates over rights, liberties, and definitions of citizenship have affected American values, politics, and society.**

**Debate Question:** Should the Constitution of the United States be ratified?

**Time Frame:** October, 1787

**Place:** Philadelphia, PA

**Debate Moderator:** George Washington

**Scenario:** Although in reality the Constitution had to be ratified by each state in special ratifying conventions called expressly for that purpose, this is a hypothetical debate in which Federalist and Anti-Federalist leaders from many states have assembled to discuss their beliefs and air their grievances.

**Content Information:** Students will be assigned an historical character for this AP U.S. History debate. Using **at least one primary source** and a minimum of two secondary sources (no traditional encyclopedias, internet encyclopedias, or your textbook; **at least one print source must be used and listed),** students should:

1- identify their character as Federalist or Anti-Federalist.

2- identify the state which their character represents - with particular attention to the state’s geography, economy, population and social structure.

3- identify the character’s occupation and socio-economic background

4- discover whether the character was a member of the Constitutional Convention what his role was at the convention. If the person was not a member of the Convention find out why.

5- determine whether the character was a member of the state’s ratifying convention and how he voted.

6- analyze and evaluate the character’s arguments for and against ratification.

In order to do a thorough job you will be given 1, 83 minute period of class/library time and 1 full period for the debate. Any work not completed in the library will need to be completed at home.

**Useful sources include, but are not limited to:**

***The Annals of America*** (a multi volume reference set of primary sources arranged chronologically and thematically and containing an index).

Bailey, ***The American Spirit*,** Vol. I

***The Dictionary of American Biography***

***Eyewitness and Others***, Vol. I

Feder, ***Viewpoints, U.S.A.***

Frazier, ***Voices of America: Readings in American History***

Leone, Bruno (ed.). ***The Creation of the Constitution: Opposing Viewpoints***. San Diego, CA: Greenhaven Press, 1995.

Siemers, David J. ***The Antifederalists.*** New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003*.*

A **bibliography** with a minimum of 3 sources (one of which must be a primary source: \*star the primary source and **one which must be a print source**), must be part of your character’s resume. The bibliography must follow the MLA format which you have been given. As always, works cited in bibliographies are placed in alphabetical order according to the author’s last name or the title of the book if there is no author. Book and magazine titles must be underlined or italicized. **Of your three sources one must be a print source - book, magazine etc.** When alphabetizing a bibliography, the words “The,” “A.” or “An” are ignored at the beginning and the next word is used to determine the alphabetical order. **\*\*\*\*\*You may use your textbook, but you may not cite your text as a source. No traditional encyclopedias may be cited as sources.**

**Procedure:** Students may use note cards only - no papers or books. They may not read directly from the note cards unless they are quoting something brief and specific. They must speak during the debate as if they are the actual persons they are portraying. Each student will be given a name tag and a list of debate participants and must refer to other students by the name that is on the name tag. Before each student speaks, he/she should stand, introduce himself/herself, and deliver a little background information about the character he/she is portraying. Any student can begin the debate. When the first student finishes the next student (preferably from the opposition) should either address what has been said, or express another concern. Students should also take notes during the debate. The debate/discussion will be monitored so that everyone has at least one opportunity to speak and so that no one person monopolizes discussion. Students who do not participate in the debate will receive a grade of 0.

**Resume:** A resume must be submitted on the day of the debate that mirrors the model you have been given. Please **put your name in the upper right hand corner.** Each character must have 3 references that reflect his/her ideas and section of the country. These references must be chosen from among the list of debate participants. Should you use someone outside the list, please see your instructor before you submit the resume.

**Federalists Anti-Federalists Anti-Federalists**

Oliver Ellsworth Melancton Smith Centinel ++(Samuel Bryan)

John Jay John Mercer Mercy Otis Warren

James Madison William Lenoir George Clinton (Cato)

Alexander Hamilton Robert Yates (Brutus) Joshua Atherton ++

Edmund Pendleton George Mason Samuel Nasson\*

Benjamin Rush Luther Martin Z

Tenche Coxe Samuel Adams++ Edmund Randolph

James Wilson John Lansing William Findley (1741-1821)

John Dickinson Thomas Jefferson

Ben Franklin Richard Henry Lee

John Langdon James Winthrop

John Adams Patrick Henry

Jonathan Smith Amos Singletary (Singletree)

James Iredell General William Thompson \*\*

Elbridge Gerry

\* found in Bailey, *American Spirit*

\*\*found in *Eyewitness and Others: Readings in American History,* *Volume I*

++There are primary sources but they are difficult to locate.

**Debriefing session:** A debriefing session will take place on the day following the debate. In the debriefing session students will need to identify the areas of concern that came to light during the ratification debate. They will also discuss the merits of the Federalist and Anti-Federalist arguments as well as reasons why the Federalists were successful.