

# **The Constitution of the United States: An Introduction Study Guide**

**The Constitution of the United States: An Introduction  
by Floyd G. Cullop**

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# Contents

[The Constitution of the United States: An Introduction Study Guide.....1](#)

[Contents.....2](#)

[Plot Summary.....3](#)

[Part I: Introduction to the Constitution.....4](#)

[Part II: The Constitution Explained.....7](#)

[Part III: The Bill of Rights.....10](#)

[Part IV: Amendments Since the Bill of Rights.....12](#)

[Part V: The Constitution of the United States, Part VI: Know Your Q's and A's.....15](#)

[Characters.....18](#)

[Objects/Places.....20](#)

[Themes.....22](#)

[Style.....24](#)

[Quotes.....26](#)

[Topics for Discussion.....28](#)

# Plot Summary

"The Constitution of the United States: An Introduction" by Floyd G. Cullop was a book designed and written to serve a young adult audience or more specifically, students in grades 8 through 12. Floyd Cullop spent many years as a history teacher and has written a number of historically related works. As a history teacher Cullop encountered many students who had difficulty reading and understanding the Constitution of the United States and therefore decided to present the document in its entirety, along with clearly stated definitions and explanations of the text and what it means. By doing this Cullop is able to give students the opportunity to read and understand one of the most important historical documents in United States history, as well as the contract that outlines the rules and regulations of government that affect the daily lives of every citizen in the nation.

Cullop does an excellent job of explaining the text in an abbreviated manner so that is easily understandable, but significantly more interesting than a simple list of names and dates and rules.

Cullop breaks down the work into 6 parts:

Part I: Introduction to the Constitution, defines constitutional government, details the historical background of the Constitution and its predecessor, the articles of Confederation and perpetual union, and is finished with a list of fill in the blank questions and a list of important words and terms.

Part II: The Constitution Explained begins by dissecting and explaining the Preamble. Cullop was very clever in the design of this particular section in that he placed a quiz and a list of vocabulary words at the end of each article so that the student may not be overwhelmed by all of the information contained in the entire chapter and document. There are also sections throughout this part that name alternate resources for important information not actually listed in the text of the Constitution.

Part III: The Bill of Rights defines the Bill of Rights and contains an explanation of same. The Bill of Rights is probably the most famous part of the Constitution.

Part IV: Amendments Since the Bill of Rights defines and lists the constitutional amendments, from prohibition to the end of slavery to income taxed to the voting rights of women and blacks.

Part V: The Constitution of the United States contains the entire text of the Constitution of the United States in the manner in which it was written.

Part VI: Know Your Qs and As is a list of 203 questions and answers pertaining to the text of the Constitution, its background and historical importance.



# Part I: Introduction to the Constitution

## Part I: Introduction to the Constitution Summary and Analysis

Part one of "The Constitution of the United States: An Introduction" by Floyd G. Cullop starts by defining "Constitutional Government." The exact form of the government is often in question as it is not a clear textbook definition. Some say that the government of the United States is a democracy, where the people are responsible for self-government. Others say that the government is in fact a republic, a government in which elected officials act on behalf of the people. Cullop asserts that in fact of both of these are true and that the United States government is technically a democratic republic. There are two different kinds of democracy - indirect democracy, where the people elect officials in order to represent them in all aspects of government, which is what the United States has; and a direct democracy, in which the people handle government matters on their own behalf.

The United States government is located in Washington, the District of Columbia. It is referred to by many different names, including the United States government, the national government, the federal government, or the central government. The use of so many monikers is often confusing for students as many do not realize that these entities are one and the same. The most common names used are the United States government and the federal government.

The states that make up the United States are a federation, a group that gives certain specific duties and responsibilities to the central government. The way the federal government works is outlined in the Constitution, a contract between the people of the United States and the federal government. Cullop quotes Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg address, when the 16th president stated that the United States government is a "government of the people, by the people, for the people." What Lincoln meant is that the federal government is operated through the consent of the people.

Cullop states that the Constitution is meaningless unless it is enforced by the people which it represents. The people may help to enforce the Constitution by being informed, voting on all political elections, through lobbies (asserting political pressure), writing petitions, and expressing opinions to elected officials.

As one would expect, everyone involved in a democratic republic cannot be happy all of the time. The federal government is based on the concept that it should benefit the majority, which means that there always be people in the minority who are unhappy. This is not to suggest that the minority be ignored. This is one reason why elections are so important. Elections give every citizen the opportunity to make his voice known, and to choose the official that would best represent his interests. If a person's chosen candidate is not elected to office, there will be another election in which that person's representative may try once again to be elected by the majority vote.



The background of the Constitution is an important part of American history. The Constitution was not the first document governing the laws of the United States. The first agreement was called the "Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union." Eventually people just referred to it as the Articles of Confederation. The basis of the Confederation was to give a limited amount of power to the central government, allowing each state to keep the majority of laws and powers.

One of the reasons the people of the United States chose not to have a central government was that they were afraid it would receive too much power and that they would be trading one kind of tyranny for another. The new Americans had fought long and hard to rid themselves of the monarchy in England and were fearful that developing a central government would in fact put them in the exact same situation.

Under the Articles of Confederation, there would be no central power, no executive, and no judiciary. The government would be supervised by an assembly of people called a Congress although the Congress did not have the powers that are bestowed upon it today. The Congress could not make laws, raise an army, or introduce taxes. Because those involved in Congress were not bound by law to attend to meetings, it became common that a quorum could not be had, and therefore Congress was unable to make any decisions or carry out its laws. It was after the Revolutionary War that the people of the United States realized that the Articles of Confederation was not the best plan for the United States and was soon discarded. The Confederation was introduced in 1777, ratified in 1781, and fell by the wayside in 1789, when it was replaced by the Constitution.

The first major document of the United States government was the Declaration of Independence, which was signed in 1776, to separate itself from the rule of England.

In 1787, there was a convention in Philadelphia for the purpose of revising the Articles of Confederation. Attending the convention were delegates from each of the states except for Rhode Island. The meeting was supervised by many founding fathers including George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and Gouverneur Morris. Together the group decided to try a new type of government and constructed the Constitution.

The new constitution required that the federal government be comprised of three branches: the legislative branch, which would be responsible for making laws; the executive branch, which would be in charge of carrying out laws; and the judicial branch, the arm that would be responsible for explaining and interpreting the laws and carrying out justice in the court system. The Constitution would also call for a system of checks and balances. That simply means that the branches would have equal power and must keep each other in check.

As one might expect, drafting the Constitution was a difficult task, and there had to be three main compromises in order to arrive at a final decision. The compromises were:



1. The Great Compromise. Initially, each state had one delegate, regardless of the state's size or its population. The large states wanted representation to be calculated according to the state's population, yet the smaller states required equal representation. This problem was solved by giving the Congress two separate houses. The House of Representatives is a Congress of delegates that represent the population; the Senate is a Congress that has equal representation for each state.

2. The Commercial Compromise. The agricultural southern states and the industrial northern states had to compromise allowing Congress to regulate commerce between the states as well as foreign countries. However, Congress was not permitted to make laws regarding the taxation of exports or bringing slaves into the country prior to 1808. In order to ratify a treaty with a foreign nation it would be required that a two-thirds vote in the Senate would be required.

3. The Three-Fifths Compromise. The Southern states wanted to count slaves in with the population to gain more delegates in the House of Representatives, while the North did not. The Three-Fifths Compromise decided that each slave would be counted as the three-fifths of one person.

There was also in issue of how to construct a federal government, while allowing states to keep some of the important powers. Much like the House of Representatives and the Senate, this was accomplished by splitting the powers of government. There would be certain exclusive federal powers issued to Congress. There would be powers supervised by both state and federal governments known as concurrent powers, and any power not written into the Constitution would fall into neither of these groups and would be considered to be a power of the individual states and the people.

The Constitution could not be put into effect until it had been ratified by three fourths of the states. In this case, nine out of the thirteen states would have to agree upon the Constitution before it could be made law. This created two separate political groups, the Federalists, those who supported the concept of a federal government; and the anti-Federalists, a group that preferred to keep the powers in the individual states. This argument was responsible for creating two important historical documents: "The Federalist Papers," written by James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay, who were in favor of a central government; and "Lee's Letters from the Federal Farmer to the Republican," written by Richard Henry Lee, who did not support a central government. These two groups were the basis of the formation of two separate political parties.

The Constitution was ratified by July 2, 1788 and went into effect March 4, 1789.

At the end of part one is a quiz designed to test the knowledge presented thus far as well as a list of vocabulary words.

# Part II: The Constitution Explained

## Part II: The Constitution Explained Summary and Analysis

The first part of this section is titled "How the Constitution is Written." The final draft of the Constitution was written by Gouverneur Morris and is considered to be one of the most clearly written documents in existence. Gouverneur Morris put a great deal of thought into writing to the Constitution so that it could be easily understood and allow no room for interpretation. The United States Constitution is the oldest written constitution in use anywhere in the world. Since the Constitution was ratified, there have only been 26 changes to the text referred to as amendments. Today the Constitution consists of three parts: the Preamble, the main body, and the 26 amendments.

The Preamble is broken down into six parts by Cullop. Each entry is a reason why the Constitution was written and what the document was meant to represent.

1. "In order to form a more perfect union" refers to the concept that it was better to have one strong central government rather than 13 separate entities acting as their own governments as they were permitted under the Articles of Confederation.
2. "To establish justice" refers to developing a system of courts and laws that would treat all people as equal and allow fair treatment to each, even when accused of a crime. In other words, this is where the concept of "innocent until proven guilty" is created.
3. "To insure domestic tranquility" means that a central government would be able to settle problems between the states and prevent fighting within the union.
4. "To provide for the common defense" by developing a strong federal military; i.e., Army and Navy, the government would have the power and resources to defend the states if there was an attack by a foreign country.
5. "To promote the general welfare" means to help establish a better standard of living for the citizens through better government.
6. "To secure the blessings of liberty for ourselves and our posterity" refers to the protection of personal rights for each citizen forever.

The main body of the Constitution is separated into seven blocks, known as Articles. Each article is further divided in order to separate various ideas within the article.

Article I: The Legislative Branch of Government



This article is broken down into 10 sections. Section 1 outlines Congress, which is comprised of two bodies of delegates from each state, the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Section 2 defines the House of Representatives, the duties of its members, and outlines the requirements in order to become a part of the House.

Section 3 defines the Senate, the duties of its members, and outlines the requirements in order to become part of the Senate.

Section 4 describes congressional elections and meetings, including the fact that Congress is required to meet at least once a year.

Section 5 covers Congressional Rules, which includes elections and the qualifications of each member.

Section 6 details "Congressional Privileges and Restrictions" including salary and benefits.

Section 7, "Passing a Bill" describes how a bill must originate in the House of Representatives, although the Senate has the power to amend it. If a bill passes the majority vote in the House of Representatives is turned over to the Senate. If the Senate approves the bill it is sent on to the President of the United States, who will decide if the bill should be a law. The president may sign the bill, entering it into law, or he may choose to veto or refuse to sign it and return it to the House of Representatives, where it may be amended.

Section 8 discusses the powers of Congress. Section 9 discusses the powers denied Congress. Section 10 outlines the powers that are denied to the states, including the inability to print money, create its own treaty, or grant a title of nobility.

There is a section following each article, one that tests the knowledge gained by reading the article, as well as a list of important vocabulary words.

## Article II. The Executive Branch

The executive branch of the government is the entity that is responsible for enforcing federal law. Section 1 outlines the offices of the president and vice president and their roles in the executive branch. This section also outlines the requirements to become President of the United States, the President's and Vice President's annual salaries, and contains the presidential oath which must be taken before the president is inaugurated.

Section 2 details the powers of the president. These include the power to be the commander in chief of the military, the ability to set up a 12 member Cabinet of advisers, to be able to issue pardons, create treaties, appoint ambassadors with the approval of the Senate, and the ability to make temporary appointments if a government office is abandoned.





Section 3 outlines the duties of the president. Section 4 explains the act of impeachment, and the process of removing civil officers from the government if a criminal offense has occurred. The Congress is exempt from impeachment as they are the houses that enforce the impeachment.

#### Article III. The Judicial Branch

Section 1. The Federal Courts. The judicial branch has the power to interpret and uphold laws and include three made federal courts responsible for hearing criminal and civil cases. These are the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals, and the District Court. There are also four special federal courts that only hear certain types of cases. These include the Court of Claims, the Court of Customs and Patent Appeals, the Court of International Trade, and the Tax Court.

Section 2 outlines the jurisdiction of the federal courts, which includes all criminal and civil cases, as well as cases of equity.

Section 3 defines treason and punishment for prosecuting a traitor.

Article IV. Directions for the States includes four sections. Section one outlines the state laws, records, and court decisions. Section 2 outlines the rights of citizens. Section 3 explains the concept of new states and their requirements. Section 4 outlines guarantees made to the states.

Article V. discusses amending the Constitution. This section outlines the process by which the Constitution may be amended, and the procedure in which this can be accomplished.

Article VI. Ranking our Laws. This section discusses the nation's laws as they are ranked, highest to lowest. The highest laws in the land are those written into the United States Constitution. These are followed by United States laws and treaties, state constitutions, state laws, and local laws.

Article VII. Ratification. The article discusses the requirements for the ratification of the United States Constitution and lists the delegates that signed the historic document.

Throughout this section of the book are a series of quizzes and important vocabulary words.

# Part III: The Bill of Rights

## Part III: The Bill of Rights Summary and Analysis

Not long after the Constitution was ratified, citizens began to point out that there were many personal liberties that were not listed in the Constitution. Therefore, "The Bill of Rights" was added to the Constitution. The Bill of Rights is comprised of 10 amendments detailing inalienable rights for the citizens of the United States. This section of the Constitution is called The Articles of Amendment but they are generally referred to as the number of the amendment, e.g., the First Amendment.

### Amendment 1: Five freedoms

The five freedoms include the inability of Congress to pass a law determining a national religion or prohibiting citizens from worshiping how and when they please. Congress may not restrict freedom of speech or freedom of the press. No citizen may advocate overthrowing the government by war. Congress can not prevent peaceful assembly. Congress may not prevent any one from petitioning the government regarding any redress or grievance.

### Amendment 2: Right to Bear Arms

Any citizen may keep and bear arms for protection. The government may pass laws regarding the ownership of certain weapons in the way in which they are used.

### Amendment 3: Quartering Soldiers

No citizen shall be forced to supply room and board to soldiers except in the time of war. Even then, this is only acceptable if Congress passes a law to this effect.

### Amendment 4: Unreasonable Searches and Seizures

A citizen may not be the victim of an unlawful search or seizure of his person, home, documents, or other personal property. A written court order must be obtained with good cause in order to perform such a search; and the exact method and items to be seized must be written in to this warrant.

Amendment 5: Protection for a Person Accused of a Crime. This amendment outlines the process of being tried for a crime and the due process by which one is found guilty or not guilty. This amendment includes procedures and processes involving a federal court, grand jury, and the law that a person cannot be forced to testify against himself.

### Amendment 6: Rights of a Person Accused of Crime

This amendment is often referred to as the right to have a fair and speedy trial.

This amendment also states that those being tried have the right to an impartial jury, the right to hear the charges against him, the right to hear the testimony of witnesses, the right to have witnesses for the defense, and the right to have counsel.

Amendment 7: Civil Law outlines the process of the determination of common law is when there is a sum of money involved in the dispute.

Amendment 8: Bail, Fines; Cruel or Unusual Punishment

This amendment states that unreasonably high bail may not be required. It also states that there cannot be unreasonably high fines or cruel and unusual punishments inflicted upon the accused.

Amendment 9: Rights Not Listed

This amendment states that there are only a limited number of rights listed in the Constitution, and that people should be aware of their rights so that they may not be violated.

Amendment 10: Powers of the States and People

The 10th amendment states that any power that is not the exclusive power of the federal government is the power of the state and the people. These include taxation, marriage, divorce, inheritance, contracts, state courts, safety and public welfare.

# Part IV: Amendments Since the Bill of Rights

## Part IV: Amendments Since the Bill of Rights Summary and Analysis

This section lists the remaining amendments to the Bill of Rights and the dates on which they were executed.

### Amendment 11 (1798): Suits Against the States

This amendment changes Article 3, Section 2, and states that a civil or equity suit brought against a state by a citizen of another state or from a foreign country may be tried in federal court.

### Amendment 12 (1804): Electing the President and Vice-President

This amendment changes a part of Article 2, Section 1.

This amendment outlines the process by which a president and vice president are elected to office, including the importance of the electoral vote.

### Amendment 13 (1865): Slavery Ended

This amendment is broken down into two sections, outlawing slavery and involuntary servitude outside punishment for being convicted of a crime. This amendment also allows Congress to enforce the law, using appropriate legislation.

### Amendment 14 (1868): Citizens' Rights

This amendment is broken down into five sections. Section 1 outlines the definition and requirements for citizenship. Section 2 outlines elections and the process for official voting. Section 3 outlines the eligibility requirements to become a United States senator or representative, as well as other offices. This section was repealed in 1898. Section 4 promises to pay debts incurred during the Civil War. Section 5 gives Congress the power to enforce this amendment.

### Amendment 15 (1870): Voting Rights of Blacks

The 15th amendment declares that a citizen's right to vote cannot be removed due to race.

### Amendment 16 (1913): Income Tax



This amendment changes article 1 section 2, and declares that the government can collect taxes, regardless of a state's population. Income tax will be collected on a yearly basis, and the amount will be gauged on the basis of a citizen's earnings.

#### Amendment 17 (1913): Election of Senators

This amendment changes article 1 section 3, and declares that the Senate will be composed of two elected senators from every state who will serve a term of six years.

#### Amendment 18 (1919): Prohibition of Intoxicating Liquors

The 18th amendment states that the manufacture, sale and transportation of alcoholic beverages is illegal. The amendment was repealed in 1933.

#### Amendment 19 (1920): Right to Vote for Women

Previous to the 19th amendment, the right to vote for women was left up to the states. This amendment made it illegal to take away the right to vote due to a person's gender.

#### Amendment 20 (1933): Executive and Legislative Terms of Office

This amendment, divided into six sections, limits the terms of the executive and legislative branches of government.

#### Amendment 21 (1933): Repeal of Prohibition

The 21st amendment declared that prohibition of intoxicating liquors (amendment 18), was repealed and that states may make their own laws regarding the sale, manufacture and transportation of alcoholic beverages.

#### Amendment 22 (1951): President's Term is Restricted

The 22nd amendment declares that a president may not serve more than two terms.

#### Amendment 23 (1961): Right to Vote in the District of Columbia

This amendment outlines the guidelines for appointing electors in the District of Columbia, as it is not a state.

#### Amendment 24 (1964): Poll Tax Prohibited

A citizen may not be denied the right to vote because of delinquent taxes.

#### Amendment 25 (1967): Presidential Succession

This amendment outlines who will be in charge if the President is unable to fulfill his duties in office.

#### Amendment 26 (1971): Voting Age Lowered

In this amendment to be legal age to vote was lowered to 18 years old.



# Part V: The Constitution of the United States, Part VI: Know Your Q's and A's

## Part V: The Constitution of the United States, Part VI: Know Your Q's and A's Summary and Analysis

Part V: The Constitution of the United States contains a reprint of the exact text as it appears in the original document. Cullop has included this so students may test what they have learned in earlier chapters and put it to use in order to understand the document the way it was written.

This section starts with the preamble, which students may note is not labeled as such, but is simply what the introductory passage is called. The preamble is often recited in its entirety by history students and is by far the most well-known passage in the Constitution.

The preamble is one paragraph long, and read as follows:

"We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

The next section in the Constitution is the main body, which is comprised of seven articles and the amendments which also includes the Five Freedoms known as the Bill of Rights.

Unlike the preceding chapters, this section does not clarify any of the text but rather reprints all of the information contained in the Constitution in its original format and entirety.

Article number 1, broken down into 10 sections, details the formation and structure of Congress. The Constitution explains that the Congress is, in fact, two separate houses, the Senate and House of Representatives. The House of Representatives will house members elected every second year. The requirements for becoming a member of the House include: residency for a period of seven years or more, the member must be at least 25 years old and reside in the state which he represents. The three compromises are included in

Section 2, as are the means by which the number of representatives is chosen. The Constitution gives an example, stating that each state will have at least one representative and the representative shall represent approximately 30,000 people. Until the number of representatives can be decided by census, the Constitution outlines that Delaware, Rhode Island and Providence Plantations should each have one

representative; New Hampshire and Georgia should have three; New Jersey should have four; Connecticut, North Carolina and South Carolina should each have five; New York and Maryland should each have six; Pennsylvania should have eight; and Virginia should have ten representatives.

The article also outlines the structure of the Senate. It should be noted that the senators were originally chosen by the Legislature and were not elected officials. The Constitution states that the Senate it should be comprised of two senators from every state for a period of six years each.

The rest of the article outlines the balance of the Legislative branch and how it should be organized and operated.

Article 2 is broken down into three sections and outlines the structure of the executive branch, how it should be structured and operated. This includes information on the election of President and Vice President, both of whom shall be elected for the same term, which is a period of four years. There is also the explanation of the electors, known as the Electoral College.

The requirements to become president are as follows:

"No person except a natural born citizen, or a citizen of the United States, at the time of the adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the office of President; neither shall any person be eligible to that office, who shall not have attained to the age of 35 years, and have been 14 years, a resident within the United States."

Because the Vice President is second in command and may find it necessary to fill the office of president, the same requirements apply.

Article 2 also describes the duties of the president and what should happen in case the president becomes ill, dies, or is removed from office.

Article 3 is broken down into three sections, and outlines the structure and operation of the judicial branch.

Article 4 is divided into four sections, and outlines the structure of each state, as well as interstate laws including extradition and the formation of a new state.

Article 5 outlines the creation and passing of amendments to the Constitution.

Article 6 details the validity of the Constitution.

Article 7 defines the two thirds the votes necessary for ratifying the Constitution and the date of its approval.

Following are the 16 amendments numbered one through 26.





Part VI: Know your Q's and A's is a section comprised of 203 questions and answers based on the information in the Constitution of the United States. Also included are the answers to previous quizzes.

This section is extremely detailed and shows Cullop's many years of experience as a history teacher in both middle school and high school.

Some of the questions are very basic, while others are detailed and specific.

Examples of some of the basic questions are:

Definition of the Constitution; date the Constitution was written; who penned the Constitution; the date the Constitution was adopted; definition of the preamble; definition of Congress, the House of Representatives and Senate; who is the chairman in the House of Representatives; the three branches of the federal government; who is the president of the Senate; what is the bill; what is the veto; what is the Electoral College; what is the presidential line of succession; what are the powers and duties of the president; who are the members of the Cabinet; name of the three regular federal courts; what is the number of Supreme Court justices; what is treason; define income tax; what is the Bill of Rights; at what age may a citizen vote?

Some examples of the more difficult questions are:

How many delegates attended the Constitutional convention; how many representatives are there in the House of Representatives; what date was the constitution ratified; describe how it is possible that the vice president is also the president of the Senate; what is impeachment; what is congressional immunity; describe the process of originating a bill; define the implied powers of Congress; what happens if no presidential candidate receives the majority of electoral votes; who are members of the Cabinet; what are the amendments and the dates on which they were ratified; what three guarantees did Congress to make to the states; what are the salaries of Supreme Court justices and other federal judges; what is double jeopardy; and various questions on each of the amendments.

This section is particularly helpful due to the simple manner in which it is written. It allows students to study very specific aspects of the Constitution and its history, by separating the elements from the main document. It makes some parts of the document and their explanations easier to read and understand. For example, the presidential succession is clearly outlined. The succession, should the president become physically or mentally unable to serve, dies or is impeached, is as follows: the vice president, speaker of the House, president pro tempore of the Senate, the Cabinet in the order by which their offices or established except for the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, the Secretary of Transportation, and the Secretary of Health and Human Services who are not included in the line of succession.

Other sections that are clearly explained or the jurisdiction of the federal courts, the duties of each branch of government and the fail safes involved in operating each branch.



# Characters

## Gouverneur Morris

Gouverneur Morris (1752 - 1816) was an American statesman, politician and lawyer who was responsible for penning a significant portion of the United States Constitution. Previously, Morris was a member of the New York state Provincial Assembly and author of the 1777 Constitution of New York state.

Morris' mother, a Loyalist, allowed the British to use the family estate during the Revolutionary War and Morris left New York for Philadelphia, where he would work as a lawyer and businessman. Morris would come to represent Pennsylvania at the 1787 Constitutional Convention, also referred to as the Philadelphia Convention. Morris is credited with writing the Preamble to the Constitution as well as a great deal of the rest of the text that would become the ruling document of the American government. Morris was a firm believer that the people could not self-govern and that voting should be limited to land owners.

In addition to writing and signing the Constitution of the United States, Morris was also one of the original signers of the Articles of Confederation.

Morris also served as a U.S. Ambassador to France in the mid-1790s and his record of the French Revolution became an important historical document.

## Benjamin Franklin

Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) is one of the most recognizable figures in United States history. Dr. Franklin was a man of many talents and professions, including author, printer, inventor, statesman, politician, postmaster, speaker, and French ambassador. Franklin was also one of the original signers of the Declaration of Independence.

Many people associate Franklin with Philadelphia, although he was a native of England and resides in many places throughout the world, including Boston and Paris. There were many times throughout Franklin's career when he was all but penniless and was forced to go into the printing trade in order to survive. It was the knowledge gained in this vocation that permitted Franklin to publish his own works and also devise a system for printing the first paper money made in America.

Although Franklin was well known for his platitudes regarding wise and temperate behavior, he was not one to take his own advice. Franklin was in the habit of eating and drinking too much as well as cavorting with women to whom he was not married.

Franklin's colorful life experiences add to the history of the founding fathers and the struggles they went through in order to form a more perfect union.



## **Founding Fathers**

Founding Fathers - Group of political leaders that were responsible for the formation of the United States government.

### **John Adams**

John Adams - 1st Vice President; 2nd President of the United States.

### **James Madison**

James Madison - President of the United States, and co-author of the "Federalist Papers."

### **Alexander Hamilton**

Alexander Hamilton - Founding father, first Secretary of the Treasury, President of the United States, and co-author of the "Federalist Papers."

### **John Jay**

John Jay - One of the authors of the "Federalist Papers."

### **Richard Henry Lee**

Richard Henry Lee - Head of the Anti-Federalists.

### **Abraham Lincoln**

Abraham Lincoln - The 16th president of the United States.

### **Floyd G. Cullop**

Floyd G. Cullop - History teacher and author of "The Constitution of the United States: An Introduction."

### **George Washington**

George Washington - 1st President of the United States, General of the Continental army.

# Objects/Places

## The Constitution of the United States

The Constitution of the United States is a document that serves as the basis for the structure of the United States government from the federal level to the powers bestowed upon the individual states. The Constitution was not the first document drafted outlining the formation of the United States government. The first document was the Articles of Confederation, a system that was against a core government. The Articles of Confederation had many flaws and was eventually discarded in favor of a central government. The final draft of the Constitution was written by Gouverneur Morris, designed to be easily understood, removing any chance of misinterpretation. The Constitution stands as the oldest living Constitution still in effect in the world today.

The Constitution was signed by delegates of the individual states, some of which were also the founding fathers. These include George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, Benjamin Franklin, Robert Morris, Gouverneur Morris, and James Madison. The Constitution of the United States was ratified and entered into law on March 4, 1789.

Floyd Cullop's "The Constitution of the United States: An Introduction" was written as a way to help middle and high school students comprehend the basis and function of the United States government, whereas it was previously a mysterious document used simply as a political tool. The book clearly explains every term, concept, office and basis of the laws citizens rely on to rule their daily lives and protect their inalienable rights.

## Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania was the original capital of the 13 colonies and the United States. Philadelphia, located in eastern Pennsylvania on the Delaware River, is also known as the City of Brotherly Love. It is an important historical city and the center of many of the happenings that led to the formation of the United States of America. Philadelphia was originally chosen due to its convenient location and proximity to many of the founding fathers. It was also home to Benjamin Franklin, as well as many other statesmen. The city is considered to be the most historic in the country and includes many famous buildings and monuments including Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell, Betsy Ross' house, Carpenter's Hall, Penn's Landing, the United States Mint, Franklin Square, Penn's Landing, and the Free Quaker Meeting House.

Many historical meetings took place in Philadelphia, including the Philadelphia Convention. The Philadelphia Convention took place in 1787 so that the Articles of Confederation may be revised. Delegates came from each state except for Rhode Island. It was decided that the Articles of Confederation would be tabled and instead, the founding fathers and delegates would create a Constitution with three branches - the executive branch, the legislative branch, and the judicial branch.



Eventually the nation's capital was moved from Philadelphia to Washington, D.C.

## **England**

England is the country from which the United States seceded.

## **Rhode Island**

Rhode Island was the only state that does not send a delegate to the Philadelphia convention.

## **Washington, DC**

Washington, DC is the nation's capital.

## **House of Representatives**

House of Representatives is one half of the Congress, which is the legislative branch of the federal government.

## **Senate**

Senate is one half of the Congress, which is the legislative branch of the federal government.

## **The Congressional Record**

The Congressional Record is the document into which all happenings in Congress are recorded.

## **Monroe County, Tennessee**

Monroe County, Tennessee is the home to author Floyd G. Cullop.

## **The Articles of Confederation**

The Articles of Confederation was at the original governing document of the United States before the Constitution was ratified and adopted.

# Themes

## Unity

The Constitution was written to unite the citizens of the New World and allow them to form a government that represented their needs and ideals, while allowing them to shun the tyrannical rules of England. This unified effort to create a new country is what gave the founding fathers and the citizens of 13 colonies the ability and strength to beat seemingly unbeatable odds.

Maintaining unity in the new government was equally as important as developing a government that would be effective and beneficial to all.

Unity was jeopardized when the states could not agree on certain aspects of the new government. The Articles of Confederation had not worked, and therefore it was necessary to write a new document that would effectively allow the country to be governed under a set series of laws. There were fears that creating a central government would once again take away the freedom of the states and in order to maintain the unity there had to be some compromises. In the end there were three main compromises written in to the Constitution so that unity could be maintained in the states and allow the country to present a united front to all enemies foreign and domestic.

## Branches of Government

The Constitution of the United States clearly states that the government shall be comprised of and supervised by three branches of government: the Executive Branch, the Legislative Branch, and the Judicial Branch. These branches are of utmost importance as they formulate, create and enforce all laws. The Executive Branch consists of the President, Vice President, Speaker of the House, President Pro Tempore, and the President's Cabinet. The Legislative Branch consists of Congress, which is comprised of the House of Representatives and the Senate. The Judicial Branch consists of all courts, federal, state and local, which are ruled over by the Supreme Court.

The purpose for three main branches of government was to incorporate a system of "checks and balances." The term "checks and balances" simply means that each branch has its own equal set of powers, duties, and responsibilities and that none may assume total power in any area of the government. Each branch has the responsibility and power to keep the other branches in check.

All the basic structure of the branches may seem simple. The duties and responsibilities of each are quite complex when broken down. Aspect becomes even more applicable as the government grows.

## The Founding Fathers

The group of people who were instrumental in formulating the country and many of its vital historical documents, the Articles of Confederation, the Constitution of the United States and the Declaration of Independence are often referred to as the founding fathers. The term founding fathers is simple - these were men that, in a sense, gave birth to the country.

Typically the founding fathers were political leaders as well as businessmen or farmers.

The founding fathers did not operate of their own accord, however. There were many people involved in the formation of the country as well as the documents by which it would be ruled. However, there was a group of men dedicated to achieving independence from England and devising a plan which would allow such an event to occur.

There was often discord among the founding fathers, and many times compromises needed to be made in order to achieve the final goal. This is one reason the Constitution contains the three compromises. After the Constitution was ratified, two factions emerged: the Federalists, who were in favor of a central government, and the Anti-Federalists, who believed that the powers should remain in the individual states. This discord led to the development of two primary political parties.

Many of the founding fathers are referred to as a statesman and many held public office, from President to Vice President to members of the Cabinet, Congress or judiciary.

Some of the more popular founding fathers include: George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Paine, Gouverneur Morris, Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, James Madison, John Jay, Thomas Mifflin, Peter Lee, and Robert Morris.

# Style

## Perspective

"The Constitution of the United States: An Introduction" by Floyd G. Cullop is a non-fiction work that examines and explains the United States Constitution. Cullop is a history teacher from Monroe County, Tennessee, who has many years of experience in teaching middle and high school students, grades 8-12. The book was designed and written to target a young adult audience or more specifically, those students in middle school and high school.

Floyd G. Cullop has spent many years as a history teacher and has written a number of historically related works, including several on the Constitution as well as the "Constitution and the Supreme Court." As a history teacher Cullop has encountered many students who found it daunting to read and understand the Constitution of the United States and decided to present the document in its entirety and original form, along with clearly stated definitions and explanations of the text and what it means. Cullop's work enables students to read and understand one of the most important historical documents in United States history, and to comprehend the importance of document that outlines the structure and laws of government that affect each citizen's daily life.

In the first part of the book, Cullop does an excellent job outlining and explaining the Constitution's text in an abbreviated manner so that is easily understandable.

The student is also given the benefit of reading the document in its complete and unabridged form.

## Tone

The tone used in "The Constitution of the United States: An Introduction" by Floyd G. Cullop is objective throughout the entire work. Aside from the original text of The Constitution of the United States Cullop includes his own abridgement and explanation regarding the document.

It is important to know that Cullop is a history teacher of both middle school and high school students. This position allowed him to know the specific difficulties students were having with reading and understanding the Constitution and how that problem might be remedied. The only sense of a partisan tone is the feeling the reader gets from Cullop that many students have never read nor understand the Constitution and that the lack of that knowledge is unacceptable, particularly to a history teacher.

By supplying students with an easy to read version of the Constitution, Cullop clearly wants to educate students in an area that is vital to their every day lives.





The questions and answers in Part VI allow the reader a glimpse into Cullop's methods as a teacher. There are quite a few questions presented that require more than a standard answer, rather, they are not simple questions but focus on the finer points of the document. This shows that Cullop is a thorough teacher and author.

## Structure

"The Constitution of the United States: An Introduction" is a non-fiction work written by Floyd G. Cullop, a history teacher from Monroe County, Tennessee. The book is 154 pages in length. It is broken down six parts. The shortest part is 6 pages in length; the longest part is 50 pages in length. The average length of the six parts is 22 pages.

Part I: Introduction to the Constitution defines constitutional government and details the historical background of the Constitution.

Part II: The Constitution Explained dissects and examines each part of the Constitution from the Preamble to the Bill of Rights, Main Body, and Amendments.

Part III: The Bill of Rights defines and explains the list of inalienable rights granted to each citizen.

Part IV: Amendments Since the Bill of Rights defines and lists the constitutional amendments.

Part V: The Constitution of the United States contains the original text of the Constitution of the United States.

Part VI: Know Your Qs and As is a list of 203 questions and answers pertaining to the entire Constitution.

Contained in each part is a quiz and a list of important terms or vocabulary words.

Also contained in various sections are other sources of information related to but not found in the text of the Constitution, such as the list of Cabinet members and their duties.



## Quotes

"The first plan of national government the United States had was not the Constitution, but a plan called the Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union."

Page 14

"Until the Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776, the states had been under the rule of England, and at the time were fighting the Revolutionary war to remain free."

Page 15

"The main body of the Constitution is divided into seven blocks called articles."

Page 26

"Since the Civil War there have been no direct taxes other than the income tax and those collected in the District of Columbia."

Page 27

"Since 1913, when the 17th Amendment to the Constitution was ratified, senators have been elected by the people."

Page 29

"Each house makes the rules for its proceedings, punishes its members for disorderly behavior, and with a two-thirds vote may expel a member."

Page 31

"If a bill was introduced in the House of Representatives and passed by a majority vote, it goes to the Senate, where it must also get a majority vote to be sent to the president of the United States."

Page 36

"The Constitution makes no mention of political parties, but by and large, the nominating, campaigning, and voting are controlled part our two major political parties, the Democratic Party and the Republican Party."

Page 49

"I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of president of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

Page 52

"The judicial branch may be called upon to interpret a federal, state, or local law, and decide whether or not it is constitutional."

Page 59



"Treason against the United States is defined as levying war against the United States or giving aid and comfort to the enemies of the United States."

Page 61

"Congress cannot pass any law making any religion the religion of the United States, or take away the freedom to worship as one pleases."

Page 74

"Congress cannot take away or restrict freedom of speech or freedom of the press."

Page 74

"Any powers that are not the exclusive powers of United States Government, or that are not specifically denied the state's government by the Constitution, are the powers of the state, or of the people."

Page 78

# Topics for Discussion

What fact about the history of the Constitution have you learned that was previously unknown to you?

How were the Articles of Confederation important to the United States Government?

Which do you feel is the most misinterpreted Amendment?

How does something become a law?

Do you agree with the punishment set forth for treason? Discuss.

Which branch of the government do you feel is the most important?

Do you feel that the restriction on the terms for the presidency is fair? Explain.

How might the government be different today if there had been no Constitutional Amendments?

Why is the President Pro Tempore important?