

Roots of American Democracy

★ CITIZENSHIP AND YOU ★

When our nation's Founders met, they drew inspiration from ancient Greece and Rome and Great Britain. Contact a local historical society to learn more about your community's founders and history.



To learn more about the roots of American democracy, view the *Democracy in Action* electronic field trip 1: Independence Hall.

FOLDABLES™

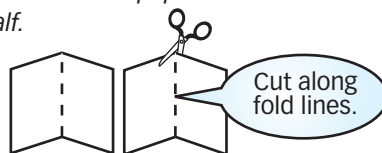
Study Organizer

Sequencing Events Study Foldable Make this foldable to help you sequence the events that led to the creation of our American democratic system.

Step 1 Fold two sheets of paper in half from top to bottom.



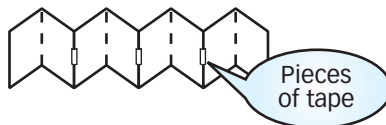
Step 2 Turn the papers and cut each in half.



Step 3 Fold the four pieces in half from top to bottom.



Step 4 Tape the ends of the pieces together (overlapping the edges very slightly) to make an accordion time line.

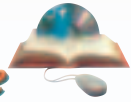


Reading and Writing

As you read the chapter, sequence the events that led to the writing of the Declaration of Independence and the formation of America's first government by writing a date and event on each part of the time line.



CIVICS
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Chapter Overview Visit the *Civics Today* Web site at civ.glencoe.com and click on **Chapter Overviews—Chapter 2** to preview chapter information.



SECTION

1

Our English Heritage

GUIDE TO READING

Main Idea

English settlers in the American colonies established traditions of representative government that they had learned in England.

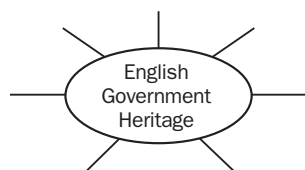
Key Terms

monarch, legislature, Parliament, precedent, common law, colony, charter, compact

Reading Strategy

Organizing Information

As you read, complete a web diagram like the one below by listing the features of English law that the colonists brought with them to America.



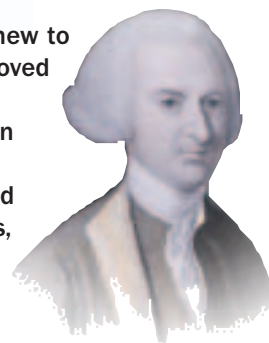
Read to Learn

- What were the English traditions of limited and representative government?
- How did colonists transplant English ideas of government to America?



Americans in Action

While framing the Articles of Confederation, the delegates used all that they knew to create a document that could and would be approved by the states. Despite his desire to be free from the laws of Great Britain, John Dickinson recognized the value of those laws. In praise of Britain's laws, he wrote that "no nation has existed that ever so perfectly united those distant extremes, private security of life, liberty, and property, with exertion of public force . . . or so happily blended together arms, arts, science, commerce, and agriculture." Dickinson later urged his fellow delegates, in the spirit of moderation, to ratify the Constitution even if it wasn't perfect.



John Dickinson

Influences From England's Early Government

Many of the rights that American citizens enjoy today can be traced back to the political and legal traditions of England. When English people began settling here in the 1600s, they brought with them a history of limited and representative government.

For centuries before the first English people arrived in America, England was ruled by a **monarch**—a king or queen. However, noble families also had considerable power. The monarch gave them ownership and control of vast lands in exchange for their loyalty, tax payments, and promises of military support.

The Magna Carta

King John, who inherited the throne in 1199, treated the nobles harshly. They rebelled in 1215 and forced the king to sign an agreement called the **Magna Carta** (Latin for "Great Charter"). This document protected the nobles' privileges and upheld their authority. It also granted certain rights to all landholders—rights that eventually came to apply to all English people. These rights included equal treatment under the law and trial by one's peers.



The Magna Carta was a contract that limited the power of the monarch by guaranteeing that no one would be above the law, not even the king or queen. 📖 See the Appendix to read this document.

Parliament

Henry III, the king who followed John, met fairly regularly with a group of nobles and church officials, who advised the king and helped govern the realm. Over the years, the group grew in size and power, expanding to include representatives of the common people. By the late 1300s, the group had developed into a **legislature**—a lawmaking body—known as **Parliament**.

For the next few centuries, the English monarch cooperated with Parliament. In the mid-1600s, however, serious power struggles began. Eventually, in 1688, Parliament removed King James II from the throne and invited his daughter Mary and her husband William to rule instead. In doing so, Parliament demonstrated that it was now stronger than the monarch.

This peaceful transfer of power, known as the Glorious Revolution, changed the idea of government in England. From that time on, no ruler would have more power than the legislature.

To clarify the new relationship, Parliament drew up the English Bill of Rights in 1689. This document stated that the monarch could not suspend Parliament's laws; the monarch also could not create special



Magna Carta The English nobles forced King John to sign the Magna Carta. **Why did the nobles draw up the Magna Carta?**

courts, impose taxes, or raise an army without Parliament's consent. The Bill of Rights also declared that members of Parliament would be freely elected and be guaranteed free speech during meetings, that every citizen would have the right to a fair trial by jury in court cases, and that cruel and unusual punishments would be banned.

Common Law

In its earliest days, England had no written laws. People developed rules to live by, however, and these customs came to have the force of law. In addition, as a system of courts arose, the courts' decisions became the basis of a body of law. When judges were asked to decide a case, they would look for a **precedent**, or a ruling in an earlier case that was similar. If someone were accused of trespassing, for example, the judge would see if anyone had ever faced a similar charge and what the outcome had been. The judge would then make a consistent ruling.



Seal of William and Mary



This system of law, based on precedent and customs, is known as **common law**. It rests on court decisions rather than regulations written by lawmakers.

England’s system of common law came about without being planned. Because it worked well, this system of law has remained in place to this day. Our own laws about property, contracts, and personal injury are based on English common law.

Reading Check Evaluating Why was the English Bill of Rights important to English citizens?

Bringing the English Heritage to America

In the 1600s and 1700s, England was busy establishing colonies in America. A **colony** is a group of people in one place who are ruled by a parent country elsewhere.

Although the early colonists made their lives far from home, they remained loyal subjects of England, with a strong sense of English political traditions. They accepted common law and believed that the ruler was not above the law. They also expected to have a voice in government and other basic rights.

Sources of American Law

COMMON LAW

- ★ Made by judges in the process of resolving cases, this law is sometimes called case law. It was brought to America from English courts.

EQUITY LAW

- ★ This law is a system of rules that resolves disputes on the basis of fairness. It was developed in the king’s courts in England and merged with common law in America.

CONSTITUTIONAL LAW

- ★ America’s fundamental and most important source of law was written in 1787 and has been changed by 27 amendments.

STATUTORY LAW

- ★ This law is made by legislatures at the national, state, and local levels. It is based on the Roman practice of writing down the laws of their senate.

The Virginia House of Burgesses

The first permanent English settlement in North America was Jamestown, in what is now the state of Virginia. Jamestown was founded in 1607 by the Virginia Company, a group of merchants from London, with a charter from King James I. A **charter** is a written document granting land and the authority to set up colonial governments. The Virginia Company’s charter also promised the colonists “all liberties . . . as if they had been abiding and born within this our Realm of England.”

At first the Jamestown colony was managed by a governor and council appointed by the Virginia Company. In 1619, however, the colonists chose two representatives from each county to meet with the governor and his council. These 22 men were called burgesses, and they formed the House of Burgesses, the first representative assembly, or legislature, in the English colonies. The House of Burgesses had little power, but it marked the beginning of self-government in colonial America.

In 1624 King Charles I canceled the Virginia Company’s charter and made Virginia a “royal colony,” a colony that would be controlled by the crown. The king

Evaluating Charts

There are many kinds of law. This chart describes four sources of American law. Of these four bodies of law, which do you think is growing fastest today?



House of Burgesses


Representatives of the people of Jamestown met at the House of Burgesses to deal with problems like hunger, disease, and attacks by Native Americans. **Why was the House of Burgesses important in American history?**



appointed a new governor, but he allowed the House of Burgesses to continue as an elected legislature.

The Mayflower Compact


In 1620, shortly after the House of Burgesses was formed, a new group of colonists, known as the Pilgrims, arrived in America. They built a settlement called Plymouth hundreds of miles north of Virginia. Today this area is in the state of Massachusetts, a part of New England.

Even before their ship, the *Mayflower*, reached America, the Plymouth colonists realized they needed rules to govern themselves if they were to survive in a new land. They drew up a written plan for government. Forty-one of the men aboard signed the **Mayflower Compact**.  [See the Appendix to read this document.](#)

A **compact** is an agreement, or contract, among a group of people. The Mayflower Compact stated that the government would make “just and equal laws . . . for the general good of the colony.” The signers pledged to obey those laws. The compact set up a direct democracy, in

which all men would vote, and the majority would rule. (As was common at this time, only adult males were permitted to vote.)

The Mayflower Compact established a tradition of direct democracy that you can still see in New England today. Throughout the colonial period—and in New England today—citizens met at town meetings to discuss and vote on important issues.

 **Reading Check Explaining** How was the Mayflower Compact an example of direct democracy?

Early Colonial Governments

The success of the Jamestown and Plymouth colonies led to the formation of other settlements in America. By 1733, 13 English colonies stretched from Massachusetts in the north to Georgia in the south. Following the examples of the House of Burgesses and the Mayflower Compact, each new colony set up its own government.

Although there were differences among them, there were many similarities as well. Each colony had a governor, who was either elected by the colonists or appointed by the



Mayflower Compact

Tompkins H. Matteson painted *Signing the Compact on Board the Mayflower*. Colonists on board the *Mayflower* signed the agreement to set up a civil government and obey its laws. **Why do you think the colonists felt they needed to draw up the Mayflower Compact?**



Colonial-era quill pen

English king. Each colony also had a legislature, with representatives elected by the free adult males. Many of the colonial legislatures were modeled after the English Parliament.

As years passed, the colonial governments took on more power and responsibility while the king and Parliament were preoccupied with matters at home in Great Britain (the country was renamed in 1707 when England unified with Scotland). The colonists in America soon grew used to

making their own decisions. They built towns and roads. They organized their own churches, schools, hospitals, and fire departments. They built a thriving economy and felt comfortable solving problems without help from Britain.

Reading Check **Concluding** Why did the American colonists grow used to making their own decisions?

SECTION 1 ASSESSMENT



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Checking for Understanding

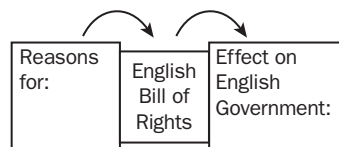
- Key Terms** Using all of the following terms, write complete sentences that relate to England's political legacy to the United States: **monarch, legislature, Parliament, precedent, common law, colony, charter, compact.**

Reviewing Main Ideas

- Explain** What is the historical significance of Virginia's House of Burgesses?
- Summarize** What did the Mayflower Compact do?

Critical Thinking

- Drawing Conclusions** Explain the significance of the Glorious Revolution.
- Determining Cause and Effect** Explain the reasons for and the effects of the English Bill of Rights by completing a graphic organizer like the one below.



Analyzing Visuals

- Identify** Review the four sources of American law in the chart on page 30. What is equity law and where did it come from?

★ BE AN ACTIVE CITIZEN ★

- Use Primary Sources** Read the Mayflower Compact. How many men signed it? When and where did they sign it? What ideas do you see in the compact that also exist in the government of the United States?

The Birth of a Democratic Nation

GUIDE TO READING

Main Idea

When Great Britain attempted to exert tighter control over the American colonies, the colonists, who were used to running their own affairs, resisted and eventually declared independence.

Key Terms

mercantilism, boycott, repeal, delegate, independence

Reading Strategy

Cause and Effect As you read, complete a chart like the one below by explaining how the colonists responded to British actions.

British Actions	Colonists' Responses

Read to Learn

- How did the British government try to tighten control over its American colonies?
- How did American colonists resist and reject the British crackdown?



Americans in Action

Some people in Pennsylvania did not want Charles Thomson to be a delegate to the First Continental Congress. Thomson had actively and publicly resisted Britain's attempts to control the North American colonies. On the first day of assembly, however, the Congress unanimously elected Thomson as secretary. He served in that post through the duration of the Continental Congresses—from 1774 through 1789. Thomson is the little-known designer of the Great Seal of the United States.



Charles Thomson



Colonial Resistance and Rebellion

The First Continental Congress assembled because Americans began to demand more rights. Why did Americans demand more rights? Separated from Great Britain by more than 3,000 miles (5,556 km) of vast ocean and left largely to their own devices, the American colonists gained valuable experience in self-government. They took on more power and responsibility. They learned how to manage their own affairs, and they liked having local control. By the mid-1700s, however, the British government began to tighten its grasp on the American colonies.

After 1760, when George III took the throne, the British adopted a policy called mercantilism in which they tried to squeeze as much wealth as possible out of the British colonies in America and from other colonies around the world. **Mercantilism** is the theory that a country should sell more goods to other countries than it buys. For mercantilism to be successful, Great Britain needed the colonies to be a source of cheap, raw materials. Parliament required the American colonies to sell raw materials, such as cotton and lumber, to Great Britain at low prices. The colonists also had to buy British products at high prices. As a result, colonial businesses suffered.



The English Colonies



Interpreting Maps

The locations of the different English colonies influenced the way of life in each colony. Whereas the economy of the New England Colonies depended on fishing and shipbuilding, the Southern Colonies grew rice and tobacco. What were the 13 English colonies and what were their main products?

The situation worsened after 1763. Great Britain had fought a long, costly war against France—the French and Indian War—winning French territory in North America. To cover the costs of ruling these new lands and to pay off its heavy war debts, Britain placed steep taxes on the American colonies. In 1765, for example, Parliament passed the Stamp Act, which required colonists to attach expensive tax stamps to all newspapers and legal documents.

The colonists resented the British taxes. Because they had no representatives in Parliament, as people living in Great Britain did, the colonists believed that Parliament had no right to tax them. They summed up their feelings with the slogan “No taxation without representation!”

In protest, many colonists decided to **boycott**, or refuse to buy, British goods. Rebellious colonists began using homespun cloth and drinking coffee instead of British tea. The boycott had its intended effect; Parliament agreed to **repeal**, or cancel, the Stamp Act and other taxes.

Parliament, however, soon passed new tax laws to replace the Stamp Act. The same day it repealed the Stamp Act, Parliament passed the Declaratory Act of 1766, which stated that Parliament had the right to tax and make decisions for the American colonies “in all cases.” Then, in 1767, Parliament passed a set of laws that came to be known as the Townshend Acts. These laws levied new taxes on goods imported to the colonies. The taxed goods included basic items, like glass, tea, paper, and lead, that the colonists needed because they did not produce them. These new laws further angered the colonists. The colonists responded by bringing back the boycott that they had used against the Stamp Act.

Relations between Great Britain and the colonists worsened. In 1773 Parliament passed another measure. The Tea Act gave the British East India Company the right to ship tea to the colonies without paying most of the taxes usually placed on tea. The act also allowed the company to bypass colonial merchants and sell tea directly to shopkeepers at low prices. This made the East India Company tea cheaper than any other tea in the colonies, giving the British company a very favorable advantage over colonial merchants.



Fact Fiction Folklore

Independence Day

Although we celebrate American independence on July 4th, the official vote actually took place on July 2, 1776. After much discussion, on July 4, the Congress voted to accept the final version of the Declaration. Not every representative signed the document. Many didn't sign until August 2, and some never signed the document at all.

Colonists immediately condemned the act as just another attempt to crush their liberty. Colonists blocked all East India Company ships from colonial ports, with the exception of the ships that arrived at the Boston port.

In 1773 a group of colonists dressed as Native Americans dumped 342 chests of British tea into Boston Harbor. The colonists did this to protest further taxes on tea. In reaction to this protest, known as the Boston Tea Party, Parliament passed the Coercive Acts, which Americans called the Intolerable Acts. These laws

restricted the colonists' rights, including the right to trial by jury. The Intolerable Acts also allowed British soldiers to search, and even move into, colonists' homes.

Movement Toward Independence

The colonial governments banded together to fight the Intolerable Acts. In September 1774, 12 of the colonies sent **delegates**, or representatives, to Philadelphia to discuss their concerns. These representatives—from every colony except Georgia—wanted to establish a political body to represent American interests and challenge British control.

The First Continental Congress

The meeting in Philadelphia, known as the First Continental Congress, lasted seven weeks. During that time, the delegates sent a document to King George III demanding



Boston Tea Party Protestors in Boston destroy a ship's cargo of East Indian tea. **What do you think was the purpose of the Boston Tea Party?**



that the rights of the colonists be restored. They also made plans to extend the boycott of British goods. When the Congress ended, the delegates vowed to hold another meeting if their demands were not met by the following year.

King George responded with force. In April 1775, two battles between British and colonial soldiers took place in Massachusetts at Lexington and Concord. These became the first battles of the Revolutionary War. Until this time, most colonists still thought of themselves as loyal subjects of Great Britain. Now, with British soldiers shooting at Americans, many colonists began to question their attachment to Britain. People began talking about **independence**, or self-reliance and freedom from outside control.



COMMON SENSE;
ADDRESSED TO THE
INHABITANTS
OF
AMERICA.
IN AN ADDRESS
TO THE
SUBJECTS
I. Of the Right and Justice of Cause to grant
with certain Reservations to the English Colonies.
II. Of Liberty and Slavery.
III. Thought on the present State of American Affairs.
IV. Of the Justice, Ability, and Necessity of
separating themselves from Great Britain.
V. A NEW SYSTEM, with several Additions to the first
of the Work. Printed in Philadelphia, by B. Franklin,
Printer to the Assembly, in the Year 1776.
VI. & The Price of the whole per Copy is 100
Copies of one Copy.

Thinking About Independence Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense* persuaded many colonists to break away from Great Britain. **How did Paine refer to King George III in his pamphlet? Why do you think he did this?**

The Second Continental Congress

In May 1775, colonial leaders convened the Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia. Not every member of the Congress favored independence. Some believed the colonists could never win a war against Great Britain. Others were still loyal to their home country. The Congress spent many months debating over the best course of action.

Meanwhile, support for independence grew. In January of 1776, an American colonist named Thomas Paine inspired many other colonists by publishing a pamphlet titled *Common Sense*. In it Paine called for complete independence from Britain. He argued that it was simply “common sense” to stop following the “royal brute,” King George III. Paine called the colonists’ actions a struggle for freedom.

 See the **American History Primary Source Document Library CD-ROM** for the complete document.

By 1776 more than half of the delegates of the Second Continental Congress agreed with Paine that the colonies must break away from Britain.

Reading Check Explaining Why did colonists gather at the Second Continental Congress?

The Declaration of Independence

The Congress, acting now as a government for the colonies, appointed a committee to write a document that would officially announce the independence of the United States. Thomas Jefferson, however, did almost all the work. His draft of the Declaration of Independence explained why the United States of America should be a free nation.

The Declaration argued that the British government did not look after the interests of the colonists. The authors included a long list



of abuses by King George III and called him a “Tyrant . . . unfit to be the Ruler of a free People.” The document was much more than a list of complaints, though.

Democratic Ideals

The second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence set forth the colonists’ beliefs about the rights of individuals. It said:

“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 paragraph went on to say:

“That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or abolish it, and to institute new Government. . . .”

 See the **American History Primary Source Document Library CD-ROM** for the complete document.

In other words, the purpose of government is to protect the rights of the people. Moreover, government is based on the consent of the people. The people are entitled to change or overthrow a government if it disregards their rights or their will.

These ideas were not new. Thomas Jefferson was particularly influenced by John Locke, a seventeenth-century English philosopher, and a later philosopher, William Blackstone. In his *Second Treatise of*

American Biographies


Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826)


Thomas Jefferson disliked public life. “I had rather be shut up in a very modest cottage, with my books, my family and a few old friends,” he once wrote.

Jefferson had the wealth and social standing to live as he wished. His mother, Jane Randolph Jefferson, belonged to one of Virginia’s leading families. His father, Peter Jefferson, was a successful surveyor, explorer, and tobacco planter. However, abuses of power by the British pulled Jefferson from his beloved home at Monticello, Virginia, and launched him into a lifelong political career.

Jefferson held a variety of public offices. They included representative to the Virginia House of Burgesses, governor of Virginia, member of the Continental Congress, U.S. minister to France, secretary of state, vice president, and president of the United States. Yet, when writing the words for his tombstone, Jefferson mentioned none of these offices. Instead he wrote simply:

*Here was Buried Thomas Jefferson,
Author of the Declaration of
Independence, of the Statute of Virginia
for Religious Freedom and Father of the
University of Virginia.*





Government, published in 1690, Locke wrote that good government is based on a social contract between the people and the rulers. The people agree to give up some of their freedom and abide by the decisions of their government. In return, the government promises to protect the lives, property, and liberty of the people. If the government misuses its power, the people



TIME

Political Cartoons



and it seems to be directed toward money and
"Making the world a more convenient
Schemes for men with little hope of regain-
ing the country." —Benjamin Franklin, 1754

Analyzing Visuals This image was created in the 1750s by Benjamin Franklin, who is considered the father of political cartooning in America. Why do you think Franklin chose to depict the snake in several pieces instead of as a connected whole?

should rebel. Locke also wrote that all people should equally enjoy the rights to life, liberty, and property.

An Uncertain Future

The Second Continental Congress approved the Declaration of Independence, with a few changes, on July 4, 1776. The American colonies were now independent

states—at least in theory. True freedom, though, would not come until the war ended and Great Britain officially recognized the United States as a rightfully independent nation.

Reading Check Summarizing According to the Declaration of Independence, what is the purpose of government?

SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT

CIVICS Online | **Study Central™** To review this section, go to civ.glencoe.com and click on **Study Central™**.

Checking for Understanding

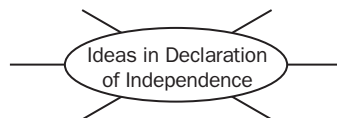
- 1. **Key Terms** Write complete sentences that include each pair of terms below. boycott, repeal; delegates, independence

Reviewing Main Ideas

- 2. **Explain** Why did Great Britain raise taxes on the American colonists after 1763? What effect did this have on the colonists?
- 3. **Identify** What British legislation prompted colonists to hold the First Continental Congress?

Critical Thinking

- 4. **Making Inferences** Assume the role of a British government official in 1774, and write a press release explaining why the Coercive Acts were necessary.
- 5. **Categorizing Information** In a web diagram like the one below, list the ideas of government found in the Declaration of Independence.



Analyzing Visuals

- 6. **Interpret** Reexamine the political cartoon on this page. What do the labels or initials represent?

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- 7. **Use Primary Sources** Read the Declaration of Natural Rights in the Declaration of Independence (second, third, and fourth paragraphs on page 44). Select what you think is the single most important idea and explain how that idea affects your life today.

The Nation's First Governments

GUIDE TO READING

Main Idea

In 1777, the Second Continental Congress drafted the Articles of Confederation, thereby creating a weak national government. By 1780, all 13 of the original states had written constitutions.

Key Terms

constitution, bicameral, confederation, ratify, amend

Reading Strategy

Comparing and Contrasting Information

As you read, create and complete a chart similar to the one below, listing features of state constitutions and the Articles of Confederation.

State Constitutions	Articles of Confederation

Read to Learn

- How did the original states fashion their constitutions?
- Why were the Articles of Confederation ineffective?



Americans in Action

Josiah Martin, the royal governor, ruled the colony of North Carolina with authority granted to him by the British king. However, Martin grew more and more nervous as the American colonists discussed independence and protested against what they called corrupt colonial government. On July 15, 1775, the colonists took action, and Martin was forced to flee with his family. He made it to safety aboard the British warship *Cruizer*. Martin was to be the last royal governor of North Carolina.



Coat of arms for king of England

Early State Constitutions

Even before the Declaration of Independence was signed, American colonists discussed the possibility of independence, and American leaders began preparing new state constitutions to replace the old colonial charters. As royal governors like Josiah Martin worried about their futures, some Americans saw the need for a central government that would unify and strengthen the 13 states.

In January 1776, New Hampshire became the first colony to organize as a state and craft a detailed, written plan for government, or **constitution**. By 1780 the other former colonies had followed suit.

The new state constitutions set up similar systems of government. Each state had a legislature to create laws, and most of these legislatures were **bicameral**, like the English Parliament; that is, they were divided into two parts, or houses. The members of each house of state legislatures were chosen by different methods. Each state also had a governor, who was elected either by the legislature or by the citizens. The governor's job was to carry out the laws. Finally, each state had judges and courts to interpret the laws—to decide what the laws meant and how they applied to each new situation.

Most state constitutions included a bill of rights, guaranteeing certain basic freedoms and legal protections to the state's citizens. Some of these rights, such as trial by jury and



protection of personal property, can be traced back to the Magna Carta and the English Bill of Rights.

The Massachusetts Constitution

In 1780 Massachusetts became the last of the original 13 states to draw up its constitution. The document, the only one still in effect today, was unusual in three notable ways.

First, instead of making the legislature supreme, as most of the other states did, Massachusetts distributed power more evenly among the legislature, the governor's office, and the courts. Second, the governor and the courts were given the authority to check the legislature. Third, the Massachusetts constitution was created not by the legislature but through a special convention of delegates elected for that purpose. The document was then approved by a vote of the state's citizens.

The Massachusetts constitution would later become an important model for the U.S. Constitution, our country's framework for government. At the time, however, the states had loosely unified under a different framework of government called the Articles of Confederation.

Reading Check **Describing** What were the basic characteristics of governments that most states created?

Five-shilling note from Massachusetts, 1782



Economics and You

Customs Duties

Customs duties, or taxes on imports, formed a large portion of government revenue for the United States during its early years. Today, customs duties account for only about 1 percent of total government revenues. Speculate on the most important sources of government revenue today. Save your ideas for review as you read other chapters in this book.

The Articles of Confederation

Although each state was well prepared and eager to govern itself when independence was declared, a state could not do some things on its own. It could not raise and maintain a large army, for example, and Americans realized that 13 small, separate forces would be no match for the mighty British army. Americans realized that if they wanted to win the war with Great Britain, they needed a single, strong army under central control.

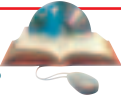
For this and other reasons, the Second Continental Congress made plans for a union of the states. In 1777 the Congress detailed these plans in a document called the **Articles of Confederation**, the first constitution of the United States of America.

A **confederation** is a group of individuals—or, in this instance, individual state governments—who band together for a common purpose. The Articles of Confederation established a system for cooperation, or “league of friendship,” among independent states.

The Articles set up a one-house legislature in which each state had one vote. This Congress was the only government body with control over the army and authority to deal with foreign countries on behalf of the states. These central powers were quite limited, though.



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Student Web Activity Visit civ.glencoe.com and click on **Student Web Activities—Chapter 2** to learn more about our nation's first government.

As a result of their bad experiences with the British government, the 13 states refused to give the Congress two important powers. It

had no power to enforce its laws and no power to tax. The Articles allowed the Congress to ask the states for money but not to demand it. The Congress could not, in fact, require the states to do anything.

Weaknesses of the Articles

By 1781 all 13 states had **ratified**, or approved, the Articles of Confederation. Within the next few years, however, it became clear that the Articles had some serious problems.

To begin with, the Congress could not pass a law unless 9 states voted in favor of it. Any attempt to **amend**, or change, the Articles required a unanimous vote of all 13 states. These strict voting requirements made it difficult for the Congress to accomplish anything.

Even when the Congress managed to pass laws, it could not enforce them. Unlike the state constitutions, the Articles did not provide for a governor or for courts. If a state decided to ignore a law, the Congress could do nothing about it.

A Shaky National Government

The United States was able to overcome their weaknesses and win the Revolutionary War. A peace agreement with Great Britain, called the Treaty of Paris, was signed in 1783.

Independence, however, did not put an end to America's struggles. For one thing, the country faced serious financial troubles. Unable to collect taxes, the

Congress had borrowed money to pay for the Revolutionary War against Great Britain. It had run up a debt that would take years to repay.

The state governments had also fallen into deep debt. They taxed their citizens heavily as a result, driving many farmers out of business and sparking widespread resentment. The states also taxed goods from other states and foreign countries, hurting trade. The Confederation Congress had no power to remedy these problems.



Weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation

LACK OF POWER AND MONEY

- ★ Congress had no power to collect taxes.
- ★ Congress had no power to regulate trade.
- ★ Congress had no power to enforce its laws.

LACK OF CENTRAL POWER

- ★ No single leader or group directed government policy.
- ★ No national court system existed.

RULES TOO RIGID

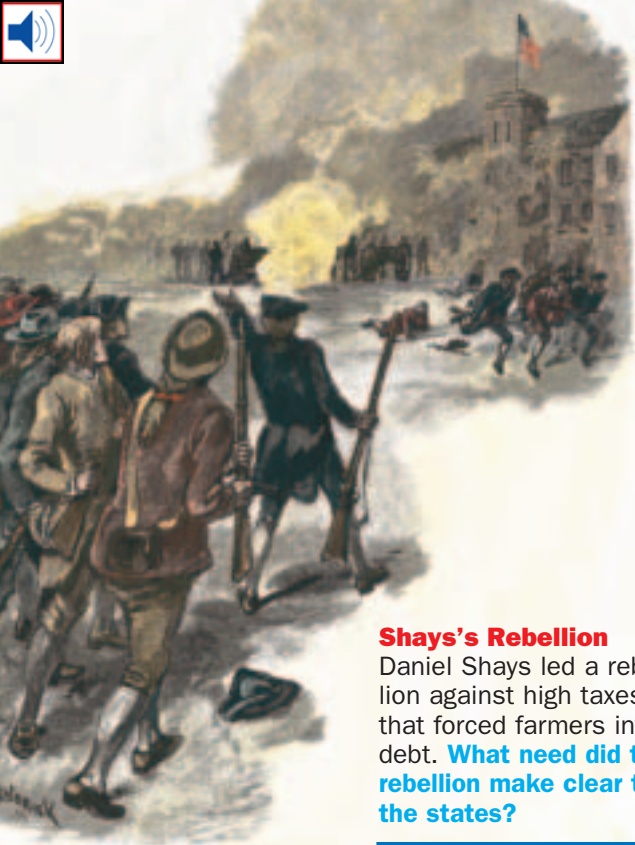
- ★ Congress could not pass laws without the approval of 9 states.
- ★ The Articles could not be changed without the agreement of all 13 states.

Evaluating Charts

The Articles did not serve the needs of the new nation. Why was it so difficult to pass laws under the Articles of Confederation?



The Articles of Confederation



Shays's Rebellion

Daniel Shays led a rebellion against high taxes that forced farmers into debt. **What need did the rebellion make clear to the states?**

taxes, led one of the most alarming disturbances. When Massachusetts courts threatened to take his farm away as payment for his debts, Shays felt the state had no right to punish him for a problem the state had created. Many other people agreed. Shays led an armed uprising of about 1,200 Massachusetts farmers on a federal arsenal. Although the rebellion, known as Shays's Rebellion, was quickly stopped, it sent a wake-up call through the country.

Many political leaders, merchants, and others were already arguing for a stronger national government. As George Washington wrote,

“I do not conceive we can exist long as a nation without having lodged somewhere a power, which will pervade the whole Union.”

Even worse, it could do nothing about the public's insecurity. Americans feared that the government could not protect their safety or their property. During 1786 and 1787, riots broke out in several states. Daniel Shays, a farmer who like many Americans had fallen into debt because of heavy state

In 1787, 12 of the states sent delegates to a meeting in Philadelphia to revise the Articles of Confederation.

Reading Check Explaining Why did Americans decide to revise the Articles of Confederation?

SECTION 3 ASSESSMENT

CIVICS Online Study Central™ To review this section, go to civ.glencoe.com and click on **Study Central**™.

Checking for Understanding

- 1. Key Terms** Write a paragraph related to early governments in the United States using all of the terms listed below.
constitution, bicameral, confederation, ratify, amend
- 2. Identify** What was the first written constitution of the United States?
- 3. Contrast** How did the Massachusetts state constitution (1780) differ from most of the other state constitutions?

Reviewing Main Ideas

Critical Thinking

- 4. Drawing Conclusions** Why do you think most early state constitutions made the legislature supreme?
- 5. Categorizing Information** On a graphic organizer like the one below, list the needs for the Articles of Confederation as well as its weaknesses.

Articles of Confederation	
Need for Articles:	Weaknesses of Articles:

Analyzing Visuals

- 6. Infer** Review the weaknesses of the Articles on page 41. Why did Congress have to borrow money to pay federal expenses, thereby going into debt?

★ BE AN ACTIVE CITIZEN ★

- 7. Research** Search your local newspaper for an article about federal taxes or regulations. How might this story be different if the U.S. government still operated under the Articles?

Critical Thinking SKILLBUILDER

Analyzing Primary Sources

Why Learn This Skill?

You missed the school basketball game last week and want to know how well the team played. How will you find out? You probably would ask a schoolmate who went to the game. You might also ask a student from the opposing team's school. Their accounts would be on-the-scene, eyewitness accounts known as primary sources, but they may differ. Primary sources provide different perspectives about an event or issue.

Learning the Skill

To analyze primary sources, follow these steps:

- First determine if the information at hand is a primary or a secondary source. On-the-scene and eyewitness accounts are primary sources. Accounts prepared by persons who may have researched an event at a later time are secondary sources.
- Determine the identity of the person giving the account.
- Identify the person's purpose for creating the account.
- Look for information that may be based on the author's opinion rather than factual evidence.
- Draw conclusions about the reliability of the source material.

Continental currency



Practicing the Skill

In December 1777, during the Revolutionary War, General George Washington wrote a letter from his camp at Valley Forge to the Continental Congress. Read the excerpt below and answer the following questions.

Yesterday afternoon . . . I order'd the troops to be in readiness, . . . but . . . the men were unable to stir on [account] of provision, . . . Soap, vinegar and other articles allowed by Congress we see none of . . . the first indeed we now have little [use for due to] few men having more than one shirt, many only a [portion] of one, and some none at all . . . men now in camp [are] unfit for duty because they are bare foot and otherwise naked . . . numbers are [made unfit] on [account of scarce] blankets, being obliged to set up all night by fires, instead of taking comfortable rest in a natural way . . . I much doubt the practicability of holding the army together much longer.

- 1 Why did Washington write to the Continental Congress?
- 2 Is Washington's letter a primary or secondary source?
- 3 How do you think the letter might have influenced the Continental Congress?

Applying the Skill

Select a primary source account from a printed news article. Use the steps you have learned to analyze it. Bring the article to class to share your conclusions with your classmates.



Practice key skills with Glencoe's **Skillbuilder Interactive Workbook CD-ROM, Level 1.**



The Declaration of Independence

In Congress, July 4, 1776. The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,

What It Means

The Preamble The Declaration of Independence has four parts. The Preamble explains why the Continental Congress drew up the Declaration.

impel force

What It Means

Natural Rights The second part, the Declaration of Natural Rights, lists the rights of the citizens. It goes on to explain that, in a republic, people form a government to protect their rights.

endowed provided

What It Means

List of Grievances The third part of the Declaration lists the colonists' complaints against the British government. Notice that King George III is singled out for blame.

usurpations unjust uses of power

[Preamble]

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the Powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which **impel** them to the separation.

[Declaration of Natural Rights]

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.

That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,

That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute **Despotism**, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.

[List of Grievances]

Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and **usurpations**, all having



in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would **relinquish** the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right **inestimable** to them and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their Public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative Powers, incapable of **Annihilation**, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and **convulsions** within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for **Naturalization of Foreigners**; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary Powers.

He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the **tenure** of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislature.

He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil Power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their acts of pretended legislation:

For **quartering** large bodies of troops among us:

relinquish *give up*
inestimable *priceless*

annihilation *destruction*

convulsions *violent disturbances*

Naturalization of Foreigners *process by which foreign-born persons become citizens*

tenure *term*

quartering *lodging*





For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from Punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:

For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world:

For imposing taxes on us without our Consent:

For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury:

For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences:

For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to **render** it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies:

render *make*

For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:

For suspending our own Legislature, and declaring themselves invested with Power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

abdicated *given up*

He has **abdicated** Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

perfidy *violation of trust*

He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & **perfidy** scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

insurrections *rebellions*

He has excited domestic **insurrections** amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

petitioned for redress *asked formally for a correction of wrongs*

In every stage of these Oppressions We have **Petitioned for Redress** in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free People.

unwarrantable jurisdiction *unjustified authority*

Nor have We been wanting in attention to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an **unwarrantable jurisdiction** over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of **consanguinity**. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

consanguinity *originating from the same ancestor*



[Resolution of Independence by the United States]

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the **rectitude** of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do.

And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the Protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

John Hancock
President from
Massachusetts

Georgia
Button Gwinnett
Lyman Hall
George Walton

North Carolina
William Hooper
Joseph Hewes
John Penn

South Carolina
Edward Rutledge
Thomas Heyward, Jr.
Thomas Lynch, Jr.
Arthur Middleton

Maryland
Samuel Chase
William Paca
Thomas Stone
Charles Carroll
of Carrollton

Virginia
George Wythe
Richard Henry Lee
Thomas Jefferson
Benjamin Harrison
Thomas Nelson, Jr.
Francis Lightfoot Lee
Carter Braxton

Pennsylvania
Robert Morris
Benjamin Rush
Benjamin Franklin

John Morton
George Clymer
James Smith
George Taylor
James Wilson
George Ross

Delaware
Caesar Rodney
George Read
Thomas McKean

New York
William Floyd
Philip Livingston
Francis Lewis
Lewis Morris

New Jersey
Richard Stockton
John Witherspoon
Francis Hopkinson
John Hart
Abraham Clark

New Hampshire
Josiah Bartlett
William Whipple
Matthew Thornton

Massachusetts
Samuel Adams
John Adams
Robert Treat Paine
Elbridge Gerry

Rhode Island
Stephen Hopkins
William Ellery

Connecticut
Samuel Huntington
William Williams
Oliver Wolcott
Roger Sherman

What It Means

Resolution of Independence

The final section declares that the colonies are "Free and Independent States" with the full power to make war, to form alliances, and to trade with other countries.

rectitude *rightness*

What It Means

Signers of the Declaration

The signers, as representatives of the American people, declared the colonies independent from Great Britain. Most members signed the document on August 2, 1776.



Assessment & Activities

Review to Learn

Section 1

- The Magna Carta limited the power of the monarch.
- By the late 1300s, Parliament had grown into the lawmaking body of England.

Section 2

- Although American colonists had learned to manage their own affairs, the British government tightened its control over the colonies in the mid-1700s.
- Great Britain did this by enforcing steep taxes on the colonists, which the colonists protested.



Section 3

- The first constitutions of the American states set up a legislature, a governor, and court systems. Most included a bill of rights.
- By 1781 all 13 states had ratified the Articles of Confederation. The first government of the United States, set up by the Articles of Confederation, had limited powers.



FOLDABLES™ Study Organizer

Using Your Foldables Study Organizer

Create a matching quiz of about 10 questions using your foldable. Trade quizzes with a classmate and see how you do on your classmate's quiz.

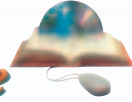
Reviewing Key Terms

Write the chapter term that matches each definition below.

1. the refusal to purchase certain goods
2. a written plan of government signed by the colonists of Plymouth, Massachusetts
3. a legislature consisting of two parts, or houses
4. the English legislature
5. the document that explained why the United States should be a free nation
6. the agreement that King John of England was forced to sign in 1215, which limited the power of the monarch
7. to change
8. a court ruling in an earlier case
9. to cancel
10. the first written constitution of the United States

Reviewing Main Ideas

11. What principle of English government did the Glorious Revolution establish?
12. What is a system of law based on precedent and customs called?
13. What is historically significant about Virginia's House of Burgesses?
14. What changed the relationship between Great Britain and the American colonies after 1763?
15. How did colonists react to the Stamp Act in 1765?
16. What were the Intolerable Acts and how did colonists react to them?
17. How did the first Massachusetts state constitution differ from most other state constitutions of the time?
18. Why were the Articles of Confederation important? What were the primary weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation?



Self-Check Quiz Visit the *Civics Today* Web site at civ.glencoe.com and click on **Self-Check Quizzes—Chapter 2** to prepare for the chapter test.

Critical Thinking

- 19. Analyzing Information** The Articles of Confederation denied Congress the power to collect taxes. Could a government survive today without this power? Why or why not?
- 20. Determining Cause and Effect** Analyze the effects of British actions against the colonists by completing a graphic organizer like the one below.



Practicing Skills

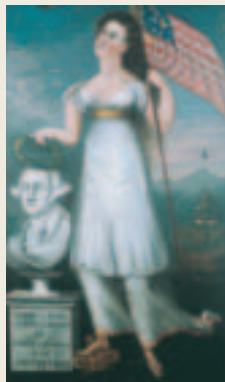
- 21. Analyzing Primary Sources** Read the Declaration of Independence on pages 44–47. State the main idea of the document. Then list at least five details that support the main idea.

Economics Activity

- 22.** One response of the colonists to the Stamp Act was a boycott of certain British goods. Boycotts can be an effective economic weapon when used by groups to influence government policy. Find an example of a twentieth-century boycott. What were the goals of the organizers? How successful was the boycott?

Analyzing Visuals

- 23.** This painting from the 1770s uses symbols to represent the nation. What does the woman represent? What is she stepping on? What do all the symbols represent?



★ CITIZENSHIP COOPERATIVE ACTIVITY ★

- 24.** The United States was born out of a protest movement against the British government. Research recent protest movements with a classmate. Compare the tactics of the colonists to the tactics used by recent protestors.



Technology Activity

- 25.** Use the Internet to research the constitutions of the original 13 states. Create and fill out a table in a word processing document with five columns labeled State, Date of First Constitution, Date of Current Constitution, Number of Constitutions, and Number of Amendments.

Standardized Test Practice

Directions: Choose the *best* answer to the following question.

Many of the early state constitutions included a bill of rights. What was the purpose of these bills of rights?

- F** to set up three branches of government
- G** to guarantee certain basic freedoms and rights to citizens
- H** to guarantee the power of the legislature
- J** to declare independence from Great Britain

Test-Taking Tip

Read the question carefully. If you do not immediately recognize the correct answer, then eliminate answers that you know are incorrect and narrow your choices.