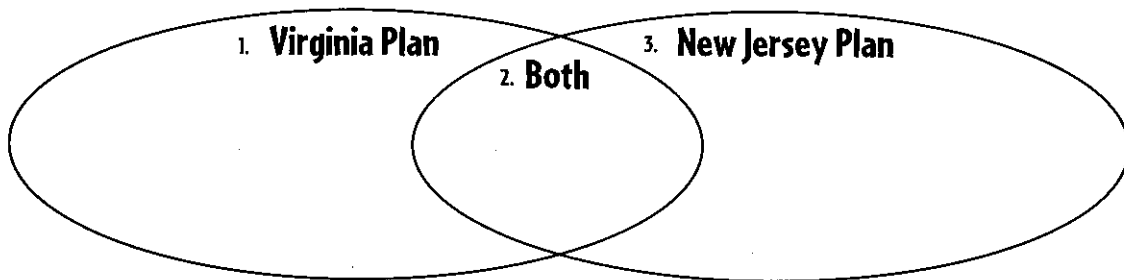


The Road to the Constitution

Big Idea

As you read the section summary, complete the graphic organizer by identifying similarities and differences between the Virginia Plan and the New Jersey Plan.



Notes

Read to Learn

The Philadelphia Convention *(pages 72-73)*

Identifying the Main Idea

Write the main idea of the passage.

Americans soon understood that the Articles of Confederation needed to be changed. In 1787, 12 of the 13 states sent delegates, or representatives, to Philadelphia for this purpose. Rhode Island did not send delegates because it opposed a stronger central government.

Most of the 55 men who gathered in Philadelphia had political experience. Native Americans, African Americans, and women were not part of the political process so none attended.

George Washington was elected to run the meeting. He called on speakers and made sure that the meeting ran smoothly. The delegates agreed that each state would have one vote and that a majority would decide any issue. Because it was important that the delegates feel free to voice their ideas, the meetings were kept secret. Although the weather was hot, doors and windows remained shut and guarded.

The delegates planned to revise the Articles, but they soon decided to ignore the Articles and to write a new constitution. This decision gave birth to the **Constitutional Convention**.

Creating the Constitution (pages 74–76)

Drawing Conclusions

Why were the delegates willing to compromise with one another in drafting the Constitution?

The goal of the delegates was to make a constitution that all states would approve. Delegates from large states liked the Virginia Plan. This plan called for a bicameral congress. Also, votes in the congress would be based on each state's population. Delegates from small states liked the New Jersey Plan. Under this plan, the congress would have only one house and each state would have equal votes.

For weeks, the delegates argued about the two plans. Finally, Roger Sherman suggested a **Great Compromise**, or a plan in which each side gives up something to get something in return. Sherman proposed a bicameral congress. States would get equal votes in the Senate. Votes in the House of Representatives would be based on each state's population.

Other compromises followed. In the **Three-Fifths Compromise**, delegates agreed to count every five enslaved people as three free people when figuring a state's population. They agreed that Congress would control trade between the states and with other countries and that exports would not be taxed. They also agreed that Congress would not interfere with the slave trade before 1808. The delegates formed the **Electoral College**. This is a system in which voters choose electors who in turn choose the president and the vice president.

Balancing Viewpoints (pages 77–78)

Making Comparisons

Complete the following sentences: Federalists believed that _____

Anti-Federalists believed that _____

As the delegates worked out the details of the Constitution, some returned home. On September 17, 1787, 39 delegates signed the Constitution. Then, they traveled home to ask state officials to approve the Constitution. If nine states gave approval, the Constitution would become law.

The Constitution met with mixed reactions. Those who supported it called themselves **Federalists**. They liked how the Constitution divided power between the national and state governments. **Anti-Federalists** believed that the Constitution gave too much power to the national government. They also wanted the Constitution to include a bill of rights.

Again, compromise brought the two sides together. If the Constitution was approved, Federalists promised that a bill of rights would be added. On June 21, 1788, the ninth state, New Hampshire, approved the Constitution, and the United States of America was born.

