

American Government & Politics: A Christian Worldview:
Choose a Constitution! (15-20 minutes)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS/KEY

Goal

Students compare two constitutions and discuss which one better protects individual rights and limits the functions of government.

Instructions

1. Read the instructions together, and tell students to individually complete the handout. (Give them 5–7 minutes to finish.)
2. Have students in pairs or small groups discuss their answers.
3. Ask for volunteers offer their answers, and discuss as a class.

Wrap-Up/Final Direction

After finishing and discussing as a class, ask students these questions:

- If the object is to protect individual liberties and minimize the powers that government has, which constitution does a better job? *AWV, but students should clearly see that the agreement/constitution on the right does a better job of this.*
- Do either of these lists of approaches/powers/rights look familiar? *AWV, but the one on the left is the U.S. Constitution, and the one on the right is the Articles of Confederation.*

Tell students: “Our next book section discusses the Articles of Confederation, and we’ll be discussing it in our next class.”

American Government & Politics: A Christian Worldview – Choose a Constitution!

You live in an area where several states/nations have discussed associating with each other under an agreement or constitution—even possibly calling the group of states/nations by another name. Compare the below two agreements/constitutions. In the blank column by each nation’s list of sections is a blank square where you can put a check mark to indicate that you prefer that approach over the other one. When you finish, tally up the check marks and put the total for each agreement/constitution at the bottom of the page.

Issue	Check below if you prefer →	The Constitution of the United Provinces of Cliftonia	The Constitution of the Republic of Scottenwald	Check below if you prefer ←
TAXES		Congress has the right to tax individuals if it wants to.	Congress might request the states to pay taxes.	
NATIONAL COURTS		A national court system resolves issues between citizens and states.	There is no national court system.	
REGULATING TRADE		Congress has the power to regulate trade between states.	There is no power for anyone to regulate interstate trade.	
THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH		A President heads the Executive branch. He chooses advisors and limits the power of lawmakers and courts.	There is no executive with any real power. The President merely presides over Congress.	
AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION		Congress must get 2/3 of its members to agree, plus 3/4 of state legislatures or national conventions must agree.	All states must agree to support a constitutional amendment before it becomes law.	
REPRESENTATION OF STATES		Bigger states have more votes than smaller states, but equalized by giving all states equal votes in part.	Each state has one vote, regardless of the state’s size.	
RAISING AN ARMY		Congress has the power to raise an army if it wishes to.	Congress cannot draft troops and depends on states for armies.	
TRADE AMONG STATES		Trade among the states may be controlled by Congress.	There is no authority that controls trade among states.	
SOVEREIGNTY		The national constitution is sovereign and the supreme law of the land.	There is no sovereign power except states’ powers.	
PASSING LAWS		To pass a law, a majority of Congress, plus the signature of the President, is required.	To pass a law, approximately 70 percent of the states must approve of the proposed law.	
Total checks for the constitution of the United Provinces of Cliftonia: _____		Total checks for the constitution of the Republic of Scottenwald: _____		