

American Government & Politics: A Christian Worldview:
Federalist or Antifederalist? (10–15 minutes)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS/KEY

Goal

Students analyze viewpoints about centralized government power and constitutional interpretation.

Instructions

1. Divide students into pairs.
2. Read the instructions together as a class.
3. Give student pairs about 8–10 minutes to answer the questions and discuss their answers together.
4. Ask for volunteers to offer their answers, and discuss as a class.

Questions/Key

1. “The national government needs implied powers not directly written in the Constitution.” (Nationalist)
2. “States should keep most governing powers.” (Federalist)
3. “The Constitution should only allow powers specifically listed.” (Federalist)
4. “A stronger central authority prevents disorder.” (Nationalist)
5. “Local governments understand their citizens better than distant rulers.” (Federalist)
6. “The Articles of Confederation were too weak.” (Nationalist)
7. “Government power naturally expands if not restrained.” (Federalist)
8. “National unity requires broader federal authority.” (Nationalist)

Wrap-Up/Final Direction

- It’s good for students to get into the habit of using “Nationalist” and “Federalist” as labels to more accurately describe the two groups.
- Ask students: “Why do names matter in politics? What are some names that those who favor limited government or the rights of the unborn or Christianity are often called by their opponents? (Students might answer “racist,” “anti-choice,” “fascist,” “anti-science,” “homophobic,” etc.)

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Read the following statements, and decide whether each reflects a Federalist (Nationalist) or an Antifederalist (strict federalist) point of view.

1. “The national government needs implied powers not directly written in the Constitution.”
2. “States should keep most governing powers.”
3. “The Constitution should only allow powers specifically listed.”
4. “A stronger central authority prevents disorder.”
5. “Local governments understand their citizens better than distant rulers.”
6. “The Articles of Confederation were too weak.”
7. “Government power naturally expands if not restrained.”
8. “National unity requires broader federal authority.”



Now, write a brief (one-sentence) summary that describes the general philosophy of both Federalists and Nationalists: