

NAME _____ CLASS _____ DATE _____

Read a Primary Source

Articles of Confederation

The 13 Articles of Confederation were the basis of the first government of the United States. The Articles did not mention an executive or judicial branch. This made it difficult for the new nation to govern itself effectively. However, the Articles provided a starting place for delegates to the Constitutional Convention.

Article II. Each state retains its sovereignty, freedom, and independence, and every power, jurisdiction, and right, which is not by this Confederation expressly delegated to the United States, in Congress assembled.

Article III. The said States hereby severally enter into a firm league of friendship with each other, for their common defense, the security of their liberties, and their mutual and general welfare, binding themselves to assist each other, against all force offered to, or attacks made upon them, or any of them, on account of religion, sovereignty, trade, or any other pretense whatever.

Article V. For the most convenient management of the interests of the United States, delegates shall be annually appointed in such manner as the legislatures of each State shall direct, to meet in Congress on the first Monday in November, in every year, with a power reserved to each State to recall its delegates, or any of them, at any time within the year, and to send others in their stead for the remainder of the year.

No state shall be represented in Congress by less than two, nor more than seven members; and no person shall be capable of being a delegate for more than three years in any terms of six years; . . .

In determining questions in the United States in Congress assembled, each State shall have one vote. . . .

reading for understanding

- 1 What did states keep when they joined the Confederation government?
- 2 What did the states agree to do when they joined the Confederation?
- 3 What does the phrase “for more than three years in any term of six years” mean?
- 4 Write one difference between the way the Articles establish Congress and the way the Constitution establishes it.