

## Chapter 7 Section 2: The Constitutional Convention (pages 206-210)

In this section, we will:

- Identify the leaders of the Constitutional Convention.
- Explain the main differences between the two rival plans for the new Constitution.
- Describe the compromises the delegates had to reach before the Constitution could be signed.

Key vocabulary terms this section

- Constitutional Convention
- Virginia Plan
- legislative branch
- executive branch
- judicial branch
- New Jersey Plan
- compromise
- Great Compromise
- Three-Fifths Compromise

## The Delegates to the Convention

- The Constitutional Convention opened on May 25, 1787.
- Goal of the Convention was to revise the Articles of Confederation.
- Each state sent representatives except Rhode Island.
- 55 delegates. Many famous elders, some young political newcomers.
- Ben Franklin was the oldest delegate. George Washington was a delegate from Virginia.



Constitutional  
Convention video  
clip  
1:01



- James Madison of Virginia was a delegate. Keen mind on government. Often called the "Father of the Constitution."
- Convention lasted the summer of 1787; characterized by secret debates in very hot rooms!!

## Two Rival Plans

- After the convention began, it became apparent they would have to do more than revise the Articles of Confederation.
- They chose to write an entirely new constitution.
- Two main ideas were presented to replace the Articles.

Plan 1: The Virginia Plan

Plan 2: The New Jersey Plan

**Virginia Plan-** Two Virginians, Edmund Randolph and James Madison proposed a plan for the new government. This Virginia Plan called for a strong national government with 3 branches:

1) **Legislative Branch:** would pass the laws.

2) **Executive Branch:** would carry out the laws.

3) **Judicial Branch:** would serve as a system of courts that would decide if laws were carried out fairly.

- Under the Virginia Plan, the legislature would consist of two houses; a lower house called the **House of Representatives** and the upper house called the **Senate**.

- Seats would be awarded on basis of a state's population; the larger the state, the more representatives it would have. Under the Articles, each state had only one vote in the legislature, regardless of its population

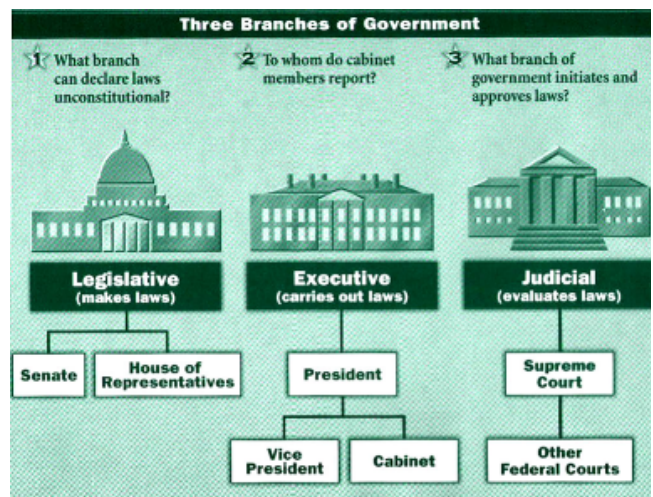
**Virginia Plan video**

**2:30**



**New Jersey Plan**-small states opposed the Virginia Plan. **WHY??**  
Let's read on page 208.

- William Paterson of New Jersey submitted a plan that had support of the smaller states.
- New Jersey Plan also called for three branches of government.
- Where it differed from the Virginia Plan is that it called for a legislature with only ONE House.
- Each state would have one vote in the legislature, regardless of its population.



## The "Great Compromise"

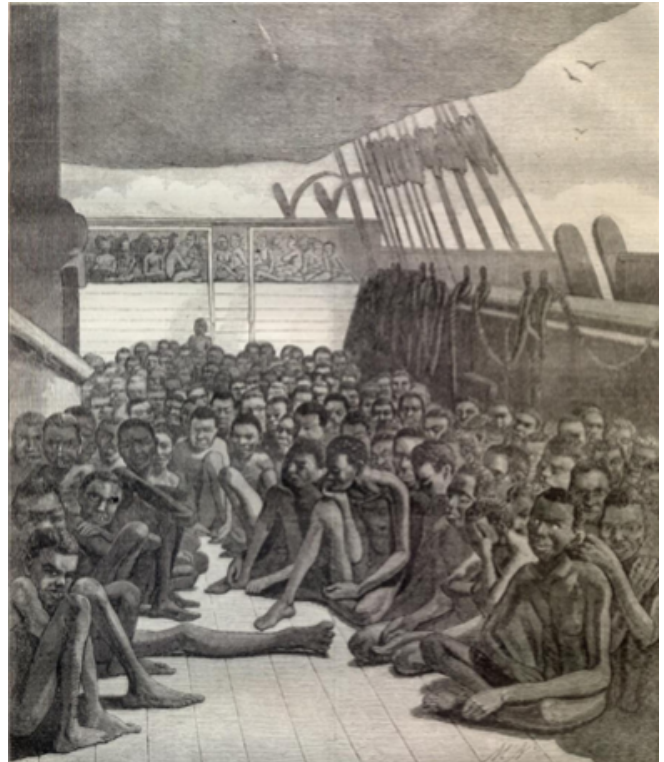
- For a while, no agreement could be reached at the Convention.
- Roger Sherman worked out a **compromise** that would satisfy both large and small states.
- A compromise is a settlement in which each side gives up some of its demands in order to reach an agreement.



- Sherman called for a two-house legislature.
- Members of the lower house, the House of Representatives, would be elected by popular vote.
- Seats in the lower house would be awarded to each state according to its population.
- Upper house, or Senate members, would be chosen by state legislatures.
- Each state would have two senators regardless of its size. This part of Sherman's plan appealed to small states.
- Narrowly passed on July 16, 1787.

## Northern & Southern States Compromise

- Northern and Southern states argued over slavery.
- Would slaves be counted as part of a state's population?
- Would the slave trade continue to bring enslaved blacks into the United States?



- Southerners wanted to include slaves in their state's population counts.

Why?



**THREE-FIFTHS  
COMPROMISE  
:50**



- Once again, the delegates at the Convention compromised. They agreed that  $\frac{3}{5}$  of the slaves in any state would be counted. If a state had 5000 slaves, 3000 would be included in the state's population count. This agreement became known as the Three-Fifths Compromise.

- Also, by 1787 some northern states had banned the slave trade from within their borders. Delegates from these states argued that the slave trade be banned in the entire nation.
- Southerners warned that a ban on slavery would ruin their economy because slavery was an economic way of \_\_\_\_\_ in the South.



- another compromise was reached between northern and southern states.
- Northerners agreed that Congress could not outlaw the slave trade for at least 20 years. After that, Congress could regulate the slave trade if it wished.
- Northerners also agreed that no state could stop a fugitive slave from being returned to an owner who claimed that slave.

## Signing the Constitution



Founding Fathers teachertube  
video  
3:00 to the tune of the  
"Preamble" from schoolhouse  
rock.



Let's wrap up by  
reading page 210 of  
our text.