



## Constitution Hotseat Challenge

**Supplies:** 100 index cards (50 per team), spare sheet of paper (1 sheet per team; students can provide this), whiteboard/chalkboard, 2 printed copies of the handout at end of the activity

### Directions (can be altered to fit classroom set-up)

1. Break students up into two groups/teams. Have one team sit on one side of the classroom, and the other team on the other side.
2. Give the class three minutes for each team to compile a list of everything they know about the Constitution.
  - a. This list must be done on ONE sheet of paper per team, so suggest that students elect a “scribe” to take notes.
  - b. Explain to the students that this sheet of paper will help their respective team win the game if they are thorough, and encourage them to think of everything that they can and not share facts with the other team.
3. While the students are collaborating, draw a jeopardy board on the whiteboard, like the following:

Category 1: The Father of the Constitution	Category 2: The Founding Fathers	Category 3: Conflict and Compromise	Category 4: The Constitutional Convention	Category 5: The Constitution
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9
10	10	10	10	10

4. Place two desks at the front of the room with chairs, with the desks facing each other if possible.
5. Have each team’s scribe place their “cheat sheet” on the desk at the front of the room closest to their team’s side.

## 6. Game Rules

- a. The questions are jeopardy style
  - i. One person per team comes up to the front of the room per round.
  - ii. The winning team from the previous round picks the category and point amount. (For the first round, the teacher may flip a coin, or employ another unbiased method of choosing)
- b. After the teacher reads the corresponding question, the students write the answers down on index cards as quickly as possible. They may use their personal knowledge OR the cheat sheet, but cannot collaborate with their team members. As soon as they have written their answers, they flip over the index card and raise their hand.
- c. The student who raises his/her hand first may attempt to answer the question using their index card.
  - i. If correct, the student's team wins the corresponding points.
  - ii. If incorrect, the opposing team's student may attempt to answer.
    1. If correct, the opposing team's student wins the points.
    2. If incorrect, the question is reserved as a potential final jeopardy question.
- d. When all of the normal questions have been answered or attempted, the Final Jeopardy round begins. The same rules apply, except the students may now collaborate with TWO other people from their team.
  - i. Each team may nominate the additional two people themselves.
  - ii. After each group of three has been finalized, the teacher selects one of the unanswered or attempted questions to serve as the final jeopardy question OR may use the final jeopardy template at the end of this activity.

## **Jeopardy Questions**

### Category 1: The Father of the Constitution (10 questions)

1. Who is considered the Father of the Constitution? *James Madison*
2. What state is James Madison from? *Virginia*
3. Did Madison favor a strong national government, or stronger state governments when the Constitution was drafted? *A strong national government.*
4. What was Madison's biggest fear when he went to the Constitutional Convention? *That the states would break up and the country would be bankrupt.*
5. Madison eventually became President of the United States. Who was the President before him? *Jefferson.*
6. Madison worked very hard to get George Washington to attend the Convention. Why did Madison want George Washington present so badly? *Madison knew that Washington's popularity would come in handy when trying to adopt the Constitution.*
7. How old was Madison in 1787. Hint: He was one year older than the required age to run for President. *The required age is 35; Madison was 36.*
8. Was Madison a Federalist or an Antifederalist? *Federalist*
9. What important publication did Madison begin writing with his peers to convince the public to ratify the Constitution? *The Federalist Papers. BONUS: He worked closely with Alexander Hamilton and John Jay.*
10. Why is Madison considered the Father of the Constitution? *Because he helped persuade delegates to abolish the Articles of Confederation, helped draft the Virginia Plan, and was instrumental in getting the Constitution ratified. He also gave countless speeches, and was popular among the other delegates.*

### Category 2: The Founding Fathers (10 questions)

1. Sometimes the delegates at the Constitutional Convention are called something other than "Founding Fathers." What else are they called? Hint: It begins with "F" also. *Framers.*
2. Name 4 people were at the Constitutional Convention. *Answers may include Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, Edmund Randolph, George Washington, Samuel Adams.*
3. What was the most popular profession of the delegates to the convention? *The majority of them were lawyers (34 out of 55).*
4. Who was the oldest member of the Constitutional Convention? *Benjamin Franklin*
5. What is the average age of the delegates to the Constitutional Convention? *44.*
6. Who presided over the Constitutional Convention? *George Washington*
7. Who actually wrote the first draft of the constitution? *The Committee of Detail*
8. Who actually wrote the preamble to the constitution? *The Committee of Style*
9. Was Thomas Jefferson a member of the Constitutional Convention? *No, he was serving as American Minister to France at the time.*
10. Who presented the plan for a Bicameral Legislative Branch AND what was the plan called? *Edmund Randolph, the Virginia Plan (James Madison drafted the plan but did not present it or sponsor it at the convention)*

Category 3: Conflict and Compromise (10 questions)

1. True or False: There was no conflict at the beginning of the convention between the small states and large states? *False.*
2. True or False: There was a conflict between Northern States and Southern States. *True.*
3. What was the Virginia Plan? *A bicameral legislature with representation based on population.*
4. What was the New Jersey Plan? *A unicameral legislature with each state having equal representation regardless of population.*
5. What role did Alexander Hamilton play? *He believed that neither the Virginia Plan nor the New Jersey Plan were adequate to secure 'good government.'*
6. What was the Connecticut Compromise? *In the Senate each State should have two members, and that in the House the number of Representatives was to be based upon population. Thus the rights of the small States were safeguarded, and the majority of the population was to be fairly represented.*
7. What did the Federalists believe? *They wanted a stronger national government for the U.S.*
8. What did the Antifederalists believe? *They opposed the creation of a stronger U.S. federal government.*
9. What was the Massachusetts Compromise? *The anti-Federalists agreed to support ratification of the constitution, with recommendations for amendments should the document go into effect. The Federalists agreed to support the proposed amendments, specifically a bill of rights.*
10. What was the  $\frac{3}{5}$  Compromise? *Slaves were counted as  $\frac{3}{5}$  of a person for congressional representation of states in the South. BONUS: Congress was also not permitted to ban the slave trade until 1808.*

Category 4: The Constitutional Convention (10 questions)

1. What year did the Constitutional Convention occur? *1787.*
2. How long did it take to write the Constitution? *Less than 100 days.*
3. Where did the delegates to the Constitutional Convention assemble? *In Philadelphia, in the State House where the Declaration of Independence was signed.*
4. What is another name for the Constitutional Convention? *The Second Continental Congress OR The Philadelphia Convention*
5. How were delegates to the Constitutional Convention chosen? *They were appointed by the legislatures of the different States.*
6. Were there any restrictions as to the number of delegates a State might send? *No.*
7. Which State did not send delegates to the Constitutional Convention? *Rhode Island.*
8. What document previously served as the governing document of the United States before the Constitution was enacted? *The Articles of Confederation*
9. Did the members of the Constitutional Convention intend to write a new Constitution when they first met? *No, the plan was to amend and change the Articles of Confederation.*
10. Did some of the delegates to the convention refuse to sign the Constitution? *Yes - 3.*

Category 5: The Constitution (10 questions)

1. How many constitutional amendments have been repealed? *One, the 18th Amendment.*
2. How is an amendment repealed? *By adopting another amendment.*
3. Is the right to privacy an enumerated right in the constitution? *No.*
4. Does the constitution give us our rights and liberties? *No, the Constitution guarantees them and makes them secure, but we had our rights and liberties before the Constitution existed.*
5. What is the Bill of Rights? *The first 10 amendments to the Constitution*
6. Do the Bill of Rights restrict state powers or federal powers? *Federal powers.*
7. Is there a clause in the Constitution prohibiting members of certain religious denominations from becoming President of the United States? *No. Art. VI, cl. 3 of the Constitution provides that "no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office of public Trust under the United States."*
8. What are the first three words of the Constitution? *We the People*
9. What are the three branches of government as outlined in the Constitution? *Legislative, Judicial, Executive*
10. Name all five freedoms enumerated in the First Amendment. *Freedom of speech, religion, press, assembly and petition.*

Source: Online Exhibits: The Charters of Freedom,  
[http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution\\_q\\_and\\_a.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution_q_and_a.html) (last visited Jul. 8, 2015).

**FINAL JEOPARDY**

Fill in the blanks as accurately as possible. The team with the answers closest to the real version wins! You have 2 minutes.

\_\_\_\_\_ , in order to form a more  
\_\_\_\_\_, establish \_\_\_\_\_,  
insure domestic tranquility, provide for the  
common \_\_\_\_\_, promote the general  
\_\_\_\_\_, and secure the \_\_\_\_\_ of  
\_\_\_\_\_ to ourselves and our \_\_\_\_\_,  
do ordain and establish this \_\_\_\_\_  
for the \_\_\_\_\_ of America.