

Debates of the Constitutional Convention

Directions: the Constitutional Convention of 1787 started some very serious debates among our Founding Fathers. The choices they made created the government we have today. You are going to put yourself in the shoes of the Founding Fathers. Read each topic of debate below and the two choices the Founding Fathers have. Circle which choice you would have made if you were a Founding Father and then explain why you made that choice.

Topic of Debate	Choice #1	Choice #2	Why did you make this choice?
Federalism or Anti-Federalism (Who in our government should have more power: states or national government?)	Federalism – power of the government is shared between the national government and the state governments. The national government maintains more power than the state governments, but the states still get a say.	Anti-Federalism – the state governments keep more power than the national government. This idea was thrown around for fear that a strong national government could turn into a tyrant king again.	
Representation of States (States are going to get a say (votes) in our government, but should the amount of say they get be equal among all states or should the population of the state matter?)	Proportional Representation – states with bigger population should get more votes than states with smaller populations because they have more people to represent.	Equal Representation – all states should get the same number of votes regardless of population so that smaller states will not be outvoted by larger states.	

<p>Slaves and Representation in Government</p> <p>(States that practiced the institution of slavery wanted their slaves to count toward their population numbers, thereby potentially giving them more votes.)</p>	<p>Slaves should count toward representation numbers – Slave holding states pay to support the institution of slavery, which is similar to using tax money to support actual citizens of the state.</p>	<p>Slaves should not count toward representation numbers – Slaves are not citizens, they do not get to vote, so why would they count in representation numbers?</p>	
<p>Commerce and the Slave Trade</p> <p>(Should the federal government have the right to control commerce and the slave trade?)</p>	<p>Pro-federal government control – the national government should be able to set taxes on large amount of goods coming in and out of the country & they should outlaw the slave trade.</p>	<p>Anti-federal government control – the national government should not be able to tax large amounts of imports and exports (this right should be given to the states) & they should not outlaw the slave trade because slaves support the economy of many Southern states.</p>	