

## Constitution Scavenger Hunt

The Constitution is the founding document of the United States government. Even though it is over 200 years old, it still plays a central role in the function of this country. Learn more about the Constitution on the World Book Web and then find the answers to the following questions!

### Find It!

1. Who actually wrote the Constitution?
2. In case of a conflict between the national and state governments, who has the final authority?
3. Which state refused to attend the Constitutional Convention and why?
4. What past experiences could the Constitutional Convention delegates rely on to help them craft this new document?
5. Why did North Carolina and Rhode Island refuse to approve the Constitution and take part in the new government at first?
6. How does the Constitution protect the rights of those with the minority opinion?
7. What does the Constitution mean, in Section 2, when it speaks of “three-fifths of all other persons”.
8. What is a pocket veto?
9. Are political parties outlined in the Constitution?
10. Who has the final authority in interpreting the meaning of the Constitution?

### Did You Know?

- ◆ The second amendment, the right to bear arms, is the source of much debate in America. Some argue that this amendment grants ordinary citizens the right to own guns. Others argue that the amendment grants states the right to have state-run militias. The Supreme Court, while deciding very few cases concerning the second amendment, usually allows broad federal and state control of firearms.
- ◆ Amendment 15, giving slaves the right to vote, was ratified on Feb. 3, 1870. Seven Southern states tried to bypass it by adding grandfather clauses to their constitutions. One such clause gave the right to vote to people who could vote on Jan. 1, 1867, and to their family descendants. In 1915 and 1939, the Supreme Court of the United States declared grandfather clauses unconstitutional.
- ◆ In 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared December 15<sup>th</sup> Bill of Rights Day to make Americans increasingly aware of their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

## Learn More!

- ◆ In 1987, the United States celebrated the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Constitution with a huge celebration at the nation's capital. Click here to see a picture of that day!  
<http://worldbookonline.com/student/media?id=pc325153&st=constitution>
- ◆ The 2000 presidential elections were so close that it was weeks after Election Day before the winner was declared. Read more about this election and how the electoral college factored in the end result.  
<http://worldbookonline.com/student/media?id=sr601009&st=constitution>
- ◆ The original United States Constitution is kept on display at the National Archives in Washington DC. Click here to see other important documents in America's history that are kept at the National Archives.  
<http://worldbookonline.com/student/extmedia?id=ar382060&st=national+archives&em=ta382060a>

## Answer Key

1. Gouverneur Morris
2. The national government
3. Rhode Island refused to attend the Constitutional Convention because it did not want a national government to interfere with its affairs.
4. Many of the delegates had written constitutions for their own states. They also drew upon other constitutions in history like the Magna Carta and the Jamestown representative assembly.
5. They both refused to participate until a Bill of Rights had been included in the Constitution.
6. Those in the minority are protected by the separation and balance of the powers of government.
7. Here, the Constitution is referring to black slaves.
8. A pocket veto is when a president retains a bill, expecting that the Congress will adjourn within 10 days, so that it will not become law. It is used when the president does not want to sign a bill, but does not want veto is openly.
9. No. The Constitution only provides for a general method of electing a president.
10. The Supreme Court