**Anti-Federalist vs Federalist: Lesson Plan**

**Topic**

Federalists supported ratification of the new Constitution, and believed a more robust national government with greater powers was necessary to unite the individual states and create a stronger country. Anti-Federalists opposed ratification and believed power should be concentrated with the states rather than the federal government. They worried that a stronger federal government would be prone to tyranny and that the new Constitution did not include adequate protections for the rights of individuals and states.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible subjects/classes</th>
<th>Time needed</th>
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<tr>
<td>Government History, Politics</td>
<td>45-60 minutes</td>
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**Video link:**

[https://academy4sc.org/topic/anti-federalist-vs-federalist-the-debate-over-the-constitution/](https://academy4sc.org/topic/anti-federalist-vs-federalist-the-debate-over-the-constitution/)

**Objective:** What will students know/be able to do at the end of class?

Students will be able to...

- Explain the stances of Federalists and Anti-Federalists
- Discuss the relevance of the Federalist Papers and Anti-Federalist Papers
- Identify the legacy of the debate between Federalists and Anti-Federalists

**Key Concepts & Vocabulary**

Constitution, Constitutional Convention, ratification, Articles of Confederation

**Materials Needed**

If doing the “A Closer Look” activity, copies of the Federalist and Anti-Federalist Papers. The Federalist Papers can be found [here](https://academy4sc.org/topic/anti-federalist-vs-federalist-the-debate-over-the-constitution/), and the Anti-Federalist Papers can be found [here](https://academy4sc.org/topic/anti-federalist-vs-federalist-the-debate-over-the-constitution/).

**Before you watch**
Think-Pair-Share: Have students take a few minutes to write down anything they have heard about Federalists and Anti-Federalists. Have them then share with a partner. If time allows, have each pair share their ideas with the class.

While you watch

1. What was the principle disagreement between Federalists and Anti-Federalists?
2. Who were some prominent Federalists?
3. What was the main accomplishment of the Anti-Federalists?

After you watch/discussion questions

1. Why is the Bill of Rights important today?
2. Do you think Americans' experiences under British rule made some particularly worried about a tyrannous government? Why or why not?
3. What are some possible reasons for why Federalists were more organized and unified than Anti-Federalists? Do you believe the lack of unity hurt Anti-Federalists, and if so, how?

Activity Ideas

Debate: Assign half the class to be Federalists and the other half to be Anti-Federalists. Have students draft opening statements, arguments, rebuttals, and closing statements. Stage a debate between the two groups over whether or not to ratify the Constitution.

A Closer Look: Put students into small groups. Assign them small sections of the Federalist and Anti-Federalist Papers, and have them write a short paragraph summarizing what they read and, if applicable, contrasting the arguments made. Focus on Federalist 10, 39, 51, and 84. For the Anti-Federalist Papers, choose ones written by “Brutus,” especially Anti-Federalist 84, which argues in favor of the Bill of Rights.

Sources/places to learn more

5. “Would You Have Been a Federalist or an Anti-Federalist?” *Bill of Rights Institute*, Bill of Rights Institute, 30 July 2014, billofrights institute.org/would-you-have-been-a-federalist-or-an-anti-federalist/.