American History I

Mr. West

Unit 2 Test Study Guide

Use this study guide in combination with your notes to prepare for the test on Thursday, 12/14!

**Birth of a Nation Part I: French and Indian War**

* Before the French and Indian War, the British Empire let the colonists take care of their own affairs (“**salutary neglect**”)
* Under **mercantilism**, England started to take a more active interest in the colonies’ activities
  + Mercantilism was the popular economic system at the time, placing importance on gold and silver
  + Mercantilism stated that you should always have more exports (items going out of your country) than imports (items coming in), and that the government should be in charge of key industries
* Both the French and the English colonists claimed land west of the Appalachian Mountains in the 1740s. This land was known as Ohio Country.
* This led to conflict known as the **French and Indian War**, which was part of the Seven Years War fought in Europe
* It featured the French and most of the Native Americans (“Indians”) versus the British and the colonists
* The British had the larger Army and better Navy, and the French had better leaders and the support of more Native Americans
* The war started when George Washington, then a militia captain, took over a French fort, which he later lost to the French.
* At the beginning, the French won the most, because of their Native American tribes
* Benjamin Franklin created the **Albany Plan of Union** (1754) in an attempt to unite the colonies to be more effective in the war. It was rejected by the colonies.
* The British eventually got better leaders and defeated the French. The war officially ended with the signing of the Treaty of Paris (1763)
* **The Proclamation of 1763** said that colonists could not move past the Appalachian mountains (it was reserved for Native Americans). This made the colonists angry, as this was primarily what they fought in the war for.
* In 1765, Britain introduced the **Quartering Act**, which said that public spaces (barns, inns, taverns, etc.) had to allow British soldiers to stay there, as well as provide them with food and drink
* Also in 1765, the **Stamp Act** was passed, the first direct tax on the the colonists. This put a tax on 50+ different items colonists used. The British citizens had been paying similar taxes for years.
* The colonists thought this new tax unfair, and created a new “battle cry”: “**No taxation without representation**!”

**Birth of a Nation Part II: Taxes and Conflict**

* 9 colonies formed a congress in response to the Stamp Act, and sent a request to Parliament to repeal (undo) the tax, as they did not have direct representation in Parliament. Parliament ignored their request.
* The colonists began to boycott British goods, and the “**Sons of Liberty**” encouraged homemade goods, as well as punished tax collectors
* Under economic pressure, Parliament repealed the Stamp Act in 1766, but passed the **Declaratory Act**, stating that they could tax the colonies.
* In 1767, Prime Minister Charles Townshend (leader of Parliament) passed what are known as the “**Townshend Acts**”, which placed taxes on things like paper, glass, and tea.
* Colonists boycotted again, and Townshend sent British troops to Boston in 1768.
* In 1770, Bostonians angry at the troops began to throw snowballs, rocks, and clubs at them. The troops accidentally fired into the crowd, killing 5 colonists. This was known as the “**Boston Massacre**”.
* Paul Revere used this to make propaganda in order to make the colonists angry.
* Governments of the 13 colonies began the **Committees of Correspondence**, which allowed them to remain in touch with each other. This was the beginning of what would a formal government between them.
* In 1773, a group of men led by Samuel Adams dumped hundreds of crates of tea into the **Boston Tea Party**, in what became known as the Boston Tea Party.
* In response, Parliament passed the **Coercive Acts** in 1774, which were known as the “Intolerable” Acts to the colonists
* The Intolerable Acts banned town meetings in Massachusetts, made it so British soldiers could only be tried for crimes in England, closed the Boston harbor until they paid back the lost tea, and that British soldiers could live in people's’ homes without their permission.
* In September 1774, 12 of the 13 colonies (Georgia didn’t go) sent delegates to Philadelphia to discuss the issues. This **First Continental Congress** said they would defend each other, and sent a petition to England to undo the Intolerable Acts
* The King and Parliament responded by sending more troops to the colonies
* British General Thomas Gage wanted to capture rebel leaders and weapons in Concord, MA. Paul Revere and two others rode ahead to warn the colonists
* British troops first met resistance in **Lexington**. The colonists were outnumbered and quickly routed
* British troops then arrived at **Concord**, where they met much great resistance. The colonists defeated the British, and chased them off. These two events were known as the “**shot heard around the world**”, and is considered the start of the American Revolution.

**Birth of a Nation Part III: The American Revolution**

* Advantages of the British: Larger army, best navy in the world, hired German mercenaries called the Hessians.
* Disadvantages of the British: Weak leaders, couldn’t put all their resources in the American Revolutionary War, had no real plan for winning the war.
* Disadvantages of the Americans: Didn’t have “real soldiers” (soldiers were militiamen who fought for a couple of years, then went home, also were unwilling to fight difficult battles at first), soldiers were also poorly trained and ill-equipped (some were barefoot in the snow), the “national” money used quickly became worthless
* Advantages of the Americans: They fought for a good cause, they became better trained, there was no single place for the British to attack, and George Washington was an excellent leader
* **George Washington**: Lost more battles than he won, had little humor and a bad temper, but he was able to inspire his troops and lead them to victory, and he never gave up.
* **Second Continental Congress** met in May, 1775. All the colonies came together and wrote the “**Olive Branch Petition**”, which attempted to maintain peace with Britain
* King George responded by sending the “**Proclamation of Rebellion**”, which required action against the colonial “traitors”
* The Second Continental Congress became the “government” for the colonies during the war
* They adopted the **Declaration of Independence** on July 4th, 1776 (it was finished July 2nd)
* Many colonists didn’t want to rebel at first. Some remained loyal to Britain and were called “**loyalists**” or “Tories”. Most didn’t care one way or the other
* **Thomas Paine** wrote Common Sense, which came out January 1776. It became the most popular published work in the colonies, and convinced many people to support the war effort
* Paine argued that Britain didn’t have a right to abuse the colonies, or to control them any longer
* **Thomas Jefferson** was the primary author of the Declaration of Independence, and took inspiration from **John Locke**, who wrote about the “social contract” which says governments are meant to protect people’s rights and lives, and that people should rebel if they don’t do that.
* Declaration of Independence claimed its separation from Great Britain, listed 27 grievances, and also stated the natural right to “Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness”. Be familiar with the different parts of the Declaration, but you don’t have to memorize it!
* The French greatly assisted the colonies, providing much of the gunpowder and weapons that the colonists used.
* The war technically lasted from 1775 to 1783, but the last major battle was in **Yorktown**, 1781, where the French and Americans forced British general Cornwallis to surrender.
* North Carolina was the first colony to declare independence, with the **Mecklenburg Resolves (1775)** saying the colonial government was the only lawful one, and the **Halifax Resolves (1776)** declaring independence from Britain 3 months before the Declaration of Independence.

**Early American Governments and the Articles of Confederation**

* The **House of Burgesses** (1619) in Virginia was the first colonial form of government
* The Pilgrims created the **Mayflower Compact**, which established direct democracy in the colonies. This was practiced through town hall meetings.
* In 1776, colonies started to organize as states and write constitutions, which are written contracts of government
* Constitutions state what governments can and cannot do, and set up “branches” of government. This are generally **legislative** (law-making, congress), **executive** (law-enforcing, president, governor) and **judicial** (law-interpreting, courts). Having three branches like this is called **separation of powers**
* The 2nd Continental Congress adopted the **Articles of Confederation** in 1781. It created a loose alliance of independent states.
* Each state retained its sovereignty (was fully in charge of itself) and joined in a “firm league of friendship” with each other
* The Articles could only be altered by all of the state legislatures agreeing
* Allowed people to freely travel from one state to the next, and set up a national congress where each state had one vote. Only congress could declare war or interact with foreign powers
* Since the colonists had bad experience with Britain, they wanted a weak government
* Articles of Confederation couldn’t tax, which put them in debt, had no real power, and couldn’t easily change
* The **Northwest Ordinance** (1787) was the most important thing the Articles created, and it established how we admit new states to the country.
* **Shay’s Rebellion** was a farmer uprising that the national government couldn’t put down, and proved that the Articles were too weak.

**Road to Philadelphia and Constitutional Plans and Compromises**

* In May of 1787, 12 states (Rhode Island didn’t participate) sent delegates to Philadelphia to fix the Articles of Confederation
* 55 men met there, including Benjamin Franklin, already well into his 80s
* The delegates chose George Washington to lead the convention, and each state had one vote. The delegates also agreed that the Articles were too flawed, and that a new government had to be created.
* There we no official records of the constitutional convention, what we know about it comes from James Madison’s journal.
* The first plan was proposed by James Madison, and was known as the Virginia Plan.
* Under the **Virginia Plan**, there would be an executive (president), but it would be selected by Congress, and would follow Congress’s will. Congress would be bicameral (two houses), with representation in both houses being chosen based on the state’s population (**proportional representation**). The lower house would be elected by the people, and the upper house would be elected by the lower house.
* William Paterson created an alternative plan, known as the “Small State Plan” or the “New Jersey Plan”
* Under the **New Jersey Plan**, it was closer to the Articles of Confederation. There would still be only one house in Congress, and each state would have the same number of representatives (**equal representation**). They also wanted an executive who listened to congress, and also proposed judges who would serve for life.
* A third plan proposed by Alexander Hamilton was known as the **British Plan**, because it modeled the British form of government. It took away state sovereignty, and made the executive very powerful, and he was elected for life and had veto power. Congress was bicameral and would elect state governors.
* **The Great Compromise**, also known as the Connecticut Compromise, was created by Roger Sherman. It stated that Congress would be bicameral, with the lower house (House of Representatives) being chosen based on proportional representation, and the upper house (Senate) being chosen based on equal representation, with two senators per state.
* Slavery was an issue for the constitution. Slaves made up 40% of the total population in some southern states. The next question was how to count slaves in terms of population
* The South wanted them counted for representation purposes, but not for tax purposes. The North was the opposite.
* The **Three-Fifths Compromise** stated that five slaves will count as three free persons (or 3/5s) for purposes of Congress representation
* Southern States threatened to leave the Union if slavery was banned. They also feared Congress would try to regulate the slave trade. The **Slave Trade Compromise** stated that Congress can regulate exports and foreign trade, but cannot tax imports or ban the slave trade for 20 years (1808)
* The Constitutional Convention also created the **Electoral College** as a compromise on how the executive is elected. Citizens first vote for the executive, and then electors, chosen by state legislatures, are supposed to vote based on how the citizens vote.

**Deconstructing the Constitution**

* The **Preamble**: First part of the Constitution. Outlines purpose and goals of the Constitution. Be familiar with what it says!
* **Article I: The Legislative Branch**. Creates a bicameral Congress and states how its members are chosen. States the powers Congress does and does not have.
* **Article II: The Executive Branch**. Creates the executive branch, as well as the roles of President and Vice President. It states how they are elected, and how they can be removed.
* **Article III: The Judicial Branch**. Creates the judicial branch, which makes sure laws are fair. Creates the **Supreme Court**, and allows for other federal courts. Lists the responsibilities for federal courts as well as the types of cases they hear.
* **Article IV: Focus on the States**. All states must respect other states’ laws, court decisions, and records (**“Full Faith and Credit Clause”**). Explains how new states are added.
* **Article V: Amending the Constitution**. The Constitution can amended by either 2/3rd vote in Congress or 2/3rds vote by state legislatures. Either way, 3/4ths of all states must ratify it to make it into law.
* **Article VI: The Supreme Law of the Land**. If a state law or decision conflicts with national/federal law, the federal law will prevail. This is called **National Supremacy**. Also, there is no religious test for public office.
* **Article VII: Approving the Constitution**. The Constitution would come into effect when 9 of 13 states ratified it.
* **Popular Sovereignty**: Power lies with the people. Shown in **“We the People”**. Power is exercised by voting.
* **Rule of Law:** Laws apply to everyone, including those in government.
* **Separation of Powers:** Power is shared among the three branches of government
* **Checks and Balances:** Each branch is able to check(limit) the other branches
* **Federalism**: Power is shared between the federal and state governments
  + **Enumerated/Expressed Powers**: Powers explicitly given to the federal government
  + **Reserved Powers**: Powers not given to the federal government are reserved for the state governments
  + **Concurrent Powers**: Powers shared by the national and state governments

**Federalists, Anti-federalists, and the Bill of Rights**

* **Federalists**: Supported the Constitution and a Strong Central Government. Claimed that a strong central government would best serve the interests of, and protect, the people
* Federalist leaders included **James Madison**, **Alexander Hamilton**, and **John Jay**
* **Anti-federalists**: Opposed the Constitution. Anti-federalists wanted a small and weak central government. They claimed that too big of a government could not help the needs of a diverse group of people.
* Anti-federalist leaders were **Thomas Jefferson**, **Patrick Henry**, and **James Monroe**
* The **Federalist Papers** convinced many people to support the Constitution. The inclusion of the **Bill of Rights** convinced enough people to support the Constitution for it to be passed.
* The Bill of Rights are the First Ten Amendments to the Constitution
* **First Amendment**: Five Basic Freedoms
* **Second Amendment:** A well regulated militia, right to bear arms
* **Third Amendment:** No quartering of soldiers in homes during peacetime
* **Fourth Amendment**: No unreasonable search and seizures, no warrants without probable cause
* **Fifth Amendment**: Trial by Grand Jury, no double jeopardy, no self-incrimination, eminent domain
* **Sixth Amendment:** Speedy & Public Trial, Impartial jury, confront and call witnesses,
* **Seventh Amendment:** Trial by jury in cases exceeding twenty dollars
* **Eighth Amendment**: No cruel or unusual punishment, no excessive punishment or fines
* **Ninth Amendment:** Citizens have rights other than those listed in the Constitution
* **Tenth Amendment:** States have powers not expressly listed in the Constitution (States Rights Amendments)

**Nationbuilder in Chief**

Review the packet. Key points are:

* George Washington’s Presidency
* Lots of Debt
* Alexander Hamilton: Department of Treasury
* U.S. Army and Navy: Whiskey Rebellion
* Washington stepped down after two terms
* John Adams stepped down after losing