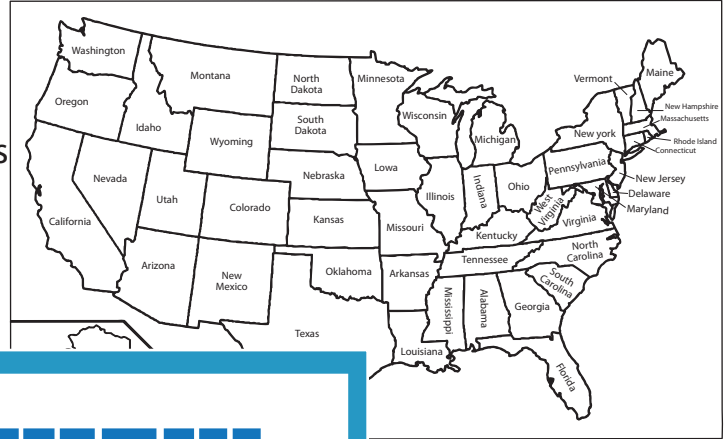


The Great Compromise of 1787

by Katie Clark

Back when America was a new country, the leaders were not sure how to set up their government. It was during this time they were busy writing the Declaration of Independence. Men including George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and Benjamin Franklin worked hard



But choosing what to do was difficult. The Americans had gained their independence from the British monarchy but not given the people the right to pay their taxes, but not

The American people wanted a government that would protect them, as well.

One of the biggest problems was that some states like Virginia had a large population. Bigger states like Virginia wanted a government system that allowed the states with more people to get more say in how things were run.

However, the people in New Jersey wanted an equal say in how things in the new country were handled. They felt their needs were just as important as the needs of the people in the bigger states.

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These different points of view led to two very different plans being drawn. They were called the Virginia Plan and the New Jersey Plan.

The leaders did not know which plan to choose. The people in larger states thought that if they were giving more money in taxes then they should have more control. The people in the smaller states did not want to be forgotten, though. They did not want things to return to the way they had been when they were under British rule. They didn't want to pay taxes and have no representation.

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state. This would make the larger states happy.

This new plan was called the Great Compromise. It was a way to show favor to both small and large states. It was a way to be fair to everyone and not only to some.

At last, the leaders of the young country cast their votes on whether the Great

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Compromise was a good plan. The plan was accepted by a majority of one single vote!

The government America had chosen would be a bicameral government. This meant it would be run by two houses of legislators rather than only one.

Both the House and the Senate have their own set of responsibilities.

For instance, only the House of Representatives can initiate bills that pertain to spending and revenue. Only the Senate can confirm the appointment of a new Supreme Court justice. Now both the large and the small states have a say in how the government is run.

The Great Compromise became the foundation on which the government of the Great Compromise can still stand today.

It affects how both large and small states make both large and small states favor from whichever side they are on of all the people rather than just the large states.

It also affects how the Great Compromise paved the way for the electoral college, which is a way for both large and small states to have a voice in the way the national executive is chosen.

These examples are only a handful the ways the Great Compromise affects America. Overall, it was a unique bill that helped shape an already unique government.

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Name : _____

The Great Compromise of 1787

1) What did the British monarchy do to Americans before they became free from the British?

2) What problem did the states face when they met in 1787 to form a new government?

3) How did the Americans solve this problem?

4) What is an electoral college?

5) Describe how the Great Compromise is an excellent representation of the great American Spirit.

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The Great Compromise of 1787

1) What did the British monarchy do to Americans before they became free from the British?

The monarchy had taxed the people, but not given them any representation. This means they made the colonists pay their taxes, but none of the tax money went to help the colonists.

2) What problem did the large states have with the government they wanted, while forming the government?

The problem was that the large states like Virginia and smaller states like New Jersey would not have an equal say in decision making.

3) How did the American Revolution solve the problem of the New Jersey Plan, the American Revolution?

By introducing the Great Compromise, which created a bicameral legislature with equal representation for all states.

4) What is an electoral college? How does it solve the problem of the New Jersey Plan, the American Revolution?

This is a way for the people to elect the president. It gives each state an equal voice in the way the national executive is chosen.

5) Describe how the Great Compromise is an excellent representation of the great American Spirit.

Answers may vary.

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