

The Articles of Confederation

1.1B = Focus Question:

Was the Articles of Confederation an effective form of government? To what extent was the Articles of Confederation a success?

Directions: Each placard you will receive explains one of the features of the Articles of Confederation. Carefully examine the drawing on the placard, read the information on it, and discuss the accompanying question(s). Then complete the information in the appropriate place on the graphic organizer below.

PLACARD	FEATURE	WHY THIS WAS INCLUDED IN THE AOC	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS WITH THIS FEATURE	HISTORICAL CATEGORY
A	No Chief Executive		Lack of leadership from central government. No single leader for the government. Made decision making slow and inefficient	
B	Laws Needed approval by nine of the thirteen states	Wanted to protect individual states' power. Fear of a strong central government.		
C	Congress did not have the power to tax citizens. It could only request tax money from states		States often chose not to pay taxes, and the federal government didnt have the funds to operate effectively.	

PLACARD	FEATURE	WHY THIS WAS INCLUDED IN THE AOC	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS WITH THIS FEATURE	HISTORICAL CATEGORY
D	Congress did not have the power to draft an army. It could only request states to send men for military services.	Fear of a central government with a strong army that might take away citizens' rights.		
E	No national court system	Fear of a central government with a court system that might be unfair to the rights of states.		
F	Any amendments (changes) to the AOC must be approved by all 13 states		Nearly impossible to make changes to AOC. Any one state could stop an amendment that all the other states wanted.	
G	Congress did not have the power to collect state debts owed to the federal government	Fear of a strong central government that could force states to pay for things they didn't want.		
H	Congress did not have the power to settle disputes among states		Disputes among states often could not be resolved. Created disunity among the states.	

While the Articles of Confederation provided an initial political structure for the new nation it was largely considered a failure because...

The Articles of Confederation

1.1B = Focus Question:

Was the Articles of Confederation an effective form of government? To what extent was the Articles of Confederation a success?

Directions: Each placard you will receive explains one of the features of the Articles of Confederation. Carefully examine the drawing on the placard, read the information on it, and discuss the accompanying question(s). Then complete the information in the appropriate place on the graphic organizer below.

PLACARD	FEATURE	WHY THIS WAS INCLUDED IN THE AOC	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS WITH THIS FEATURE	HISTORICAL CATEGORY
A	No Chief Executive	<i>Did not want to have another powerful executive like King George III</i>	Lack of leadership from central government. No single leader for the government. Made decision making slow and inefficient	Political
B	Laws Needed approval by nine of the thirteen states	Wanted to protect individual states' power. Fear of a strong central government.	<i>Difficult to get nine states to agree on a new law. Central government unable to do very much (i.e. pass laws, decide on national policies)</i>	Political
C	Congress did not have the power to tax citizens. It could only request tax money from states	<i>Fear of being unfairly taxed by the central government, as they had been under British rule. (ex. Sugar, Stamp, Tea, etc.)</i>	States often chose not to pay taxes, and the federal government didnt have the funds to operate effectively.	Economic

PLACARD	FEATURE	WHY THIS WAS INCLUDED IN THE AOC	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS WITH THIS FEATURE	HISTORICAL CATEGORY
D	Congress did not have the power to draft an army. It could only request states to send men for military services.	Fear of a central government with a strong army that might take away citizens' rights.	<i>Left country vulnerable without a dependable military force. Lacked safety and security from British, French, and Native American populations in North America</i>	Military
E	No national court system	Fear of a central government with a court system that might be unfair to the rights of states.	<i>Disputes between states often could not be settled fairly. States often had different and contradictory laws. Lacked a central legal system or sense of justice</i>	Legal / Judicial
F	Any amendments (changes) to the AOC must be approved by all 13 states	<i>Wanted to make sure states had a strong say in the shaping of the government.</i>	Nearly impossible to make changes to AOC. Any one state could stop an amendment that all the other states wanted.	Political
G	Congress did not have the power to collect state debts owed to the federal government	Fear of a strong central government that could force states to pay for things they didn't want.	<i>Federal government often didn't have the funds necessary to operate effectively. Increasing national debt, basically the country was broke</i>	Economic
H	Congress did not have the power to settle disputes among states	<i>Wanted states to have the ultimate authority in resolving disputes. Keep political control with the people locally against an overpowering central government.</i>	Disputes among states often could not be resolved. Created disunity among the states.	Political

While the Articles of Confederation provided an initial political structure for the new nation it was largely considered a failure because...

- could not make political decisions or legislate effectively
- did not promote economic prosperity
- left the country vulnerable to military threats
- failed to create an equitable system of justice

Therefore the new American government under the AOC was not strong enough to support national unity and respond to domestic and foreign crises and many Americans called for changes to the AOC or a brand new form of government.