

Constitution

The backstory

Introduction

Most history books tell the story of people and events of the past. ***U.S. Constitution: The Backstory*** presents a history of ideas. It explains the most important ideas of the Constitution of the United States and how they were developed. It also highlights the people and events that were important in the history of these ideas.

The Constitution of the United States was created as a plan for the new government of our nation. It was written in Philadelphia in 1787, more than 225 years ago. To study the Constitution and its history is to better understand our government and how it is supposed to work. Knowing our past will give insight into the rights and responsibilities that we have today.

This lesson series presents the why behind the what of our United States' Constitution and will help you develop a good understanding of the values upon which our Nation's government was founded. ***U.S. Constitution: The Backstory*** will teach the following:

- The colonies history and events that led up to the writing of the Constitution
- The relationship between the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution
- The four distinctive rights the Founding Fathers sought to protect through both documents
- The source from which rights derive
- The role of civic virtue and a common understanding of higher law
- The importance of preserving these founding principles for the next generation

What do you already know?

1. The signing of the Declaration of Independence took place on July 4, 1776. **True or False**
2. Thomas Jefferson is known as the "the Father of the Constitution". **True or False**
3. Constitutional government means that there are limits on the powers of the person or group running government. **True or False**
4. The Founders believed the Declaration of Independence to be the foundational document because upon which to establish our Constitution. **True or False**

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