

Constitution Day Trivia

Q: Why is Constitution Day celebrated on September 17?

A: The letter of transmittal for the new Constitution to the Congress that existed under the Articles of Confederation was dated September 17, 1787.

(Source: <https://www.archives.gov/files/boston/education/teachable-texts/10-constitution-facts.pdf>)

Q. How were deputies to the Constitutional Convention chosen?

A. They were appointed by the legislatures of the different States.

Q. Where and when did the deputies to the Constitutional Convention assemble?

A. In Philadelphia, in the State House where the Declaration of Independence was signed. The meeting was called for May 14, 1787, but a quorum was not present until May 25.

Q: True or False, Benjamin Franklin wanted America to have a king, not a president.

A: False

Q. Who was called the "Father of the Constitution"?

A. James Madison, of Virginia, because in point of erudition and actual contributions to the formation of the Constitution, he was preeminent.

Q: Did Benjamin Franklin approve of the bald eagle as the national bird?

A: No. He told his daughter that, "For my own part, I wish the Bald Eagle had not been chosen the Representative of our Country. He is a bird of bad moral character. He does not get his living honestly."

(Source: <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/american-myths-benjamin-franklins-turkey-and-the-presidential-seal-6623414/>)

Q: The Constitution establishes a system of _____.

A: Federalism.

Q: Who was the oldest person to sign the U.S. Constitution?

A: Ben Franklin. He was 81 years old at the time.

(Sources: <https://bensguide.gpo.gov/j-constitution-facts>)

Q: Which Constitutional Amendments have not been incorporated into the Due Process Clause of the 14th Amendment?

A: 3rd and 7th

Q: Which two founding fathers did not attend the Constitutional Convention?

A: Thomas Jefferson (Ambassador to France) and John Adams (Ambassador to Great Britain)

(Source: <https://www.archives.gov/files/boston/education/teachable-texts/10-constitution-facts.pdf>)

Q: What is the only amendment to have been repealed?

A: 18th Amendment, which prohibited the manufacture, sale, or transportation of alcohol.

(Source: <https://www.archives.gov/files/boston/education/teachable-texts/10-constitution-facts.pdf>)

Q. Who presided over the Constitutional Convention?

A. George Washington, chosen unanimously.

Q. How long did it take to frame the Constitution?

A. It was drafted in fewer than 100 working days.

Q. Did some of the deputies to the Constitutional Convention refuse to sign the Constitution?

A. Only thirty-nine signed. Fourteen deputies had departed for their homes, and three--

Randolph and Mason, of Virginia, and Gerry, of Massachusetts--refused to sign. One of the signatures is that of an absent deputy, John Dickinson, of Delaware, added at his request by George Read, who also was from Delaware.

Q. Did George Washington sign the Declaration of Independence?

A. No. He had been appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army more than a year before and was, at the time, with the army in New York City.

Q. How many words are there in the texts in the present volume, and how long does it take to read them?

A. The Constitution has 4,543 words, including the signatures but not the certificate on the interlineations; and takes about half an hour to read. The Declaration of Independence has 1,458 words, with the signatures, but is slower reading, as it takes about 10 minutes. The Farewell Address has 7,641 words and requires 45 minutes to read.

Q. What party names were given to those who favored ratification and to those who opposed it?

A. Those who favored ratification were called Federalists; those who opposed, Antifederalists.

Q. In ratifying the Constitution, did the people vote directly?

A. No. Ratification was by special State conventions (Art. VII).

Q. The vote of how many States was necessary to ratify the Constitution?

A. Nine (Art. VII).

Q. In what order did the States ratify the Constitution?

A. In the following order: Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Georgia, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, South Carolina, New Hampshire, Virginia, and New York. After Washington had been inaugurated, North Carolina and Rhode Island ratified.

Q. What is meant by the term "constitution"?

A. A constitution embodies the fundamental principles of a government. Our constitution, adopted by the sovereign power, is amendable by that power only. To the

constitution all laws, executive actions, and judicial decisions must conform, as it is the creator of the powers exercised by the departments of government.

Q. When did the phrase, "The United States of America," originate?

A. The first known use of the formal term "United States of America" was in the Declaration of Independence. Thomas Paine, in February 1776, had written of "Free and independent States of America." The terms "United Colonies," "United Colonies of America," "United Colonies of North America," and also "States," were used in 1775 and 1776.

Q. How extensively has the Constitution been copied?

A. All later Constitutions show its influence; it has been copied extensively throughout the world.

Q. The United States government is frequently described as one of limited powers. Is this true?

A. Yes. The United States government possesses only such powers as are specifically granted to it by the Constitution.

Q. What constitutes the [Bill of Rights](#)?

A. The first ten amendments to the Constitution.

Q. When the first amendments to the Constitution were submitted there were 12, of which 10 were adopted. What were the other two about?

A. The two amendments of the 12 submitted as the Bill of Rights which were rejected were the one which related to the apportionment of Representatives in Congress and the one fixing the compensation of members of Congress. (Note: The rejected second amendment was ratified on May 7, 1992 as the 27th amendment.)

Q. Do the first 10 amendments bind the States?

A. No. They restrict the powers of the national Government. They do not bind the States; but several of their restrictions have been applied to the States by the [Fourteenth Amendment](#).