

WHO WERE THE PEOPLE AT THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION?

Time Allocated: One 50-55 minute period, plus 10-15 minutes of a class period three to four days prior to the lesson.

Correlation to the Alabama High School Graduation Exam:
Standard II, Objectives 1, 2

Correlation to the Alabama Course of Study:
United States History to 1877 – Tenth Grade Standards: 4
United States Government – Twelfth Grade Standards: 2

Lesson Objectives:

The student will be able to:

1. Construct a profile of the average delegate at the Constitutional Convention.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the roles of significant individuals in constructing the Constitution.
3. Explain the key issues at the Constitutional Convention and identify the position of the leaders of each issue.

Materials Needed:

1. Handout: List of Fourteen Delegates

Introduction:

The Delegates

1. Each state appointed its delegation.
2. Typically at this time, only white male property owners, called freeholders, were eligible to be delegates. Therefore, no women, blacks, or American Indians were delegates. These groups lacked political and legal rights.
3. White males without property could not hold any political office.
4. Patrick Henry stayed home, saying he, “Smelt a rat.”
5. Samuel Adams was not elected as a delegate.
6. Thomas Jefferson was in Paris, as the minister to France.
7. John Adams was an envoy to England and Holland.
8. Thomas Paine was also in Europe.
9. Rhode Island boycotted the convention.

Major Instructional Sequence:

1. Three or four days before the lesson have each student choose one of the fourteen names from the list.
2. Each student should create a database and write a one-page paper by researching the delegate and concentrating on his age, state of residence, occupation, education, socioeconomic class, political ideology, and participation at the Constitutional Convention.
3. Have students with the same delegate share information with each other for about 10 minutes.

4. Each group (all students with the same person) shares their information with the class.

Closure or Evaluation:

Make a general profile of the delegates that have been discussed in class. i.e., what was their average age, education, etc.

FOURTEEN DELEGATES OF THE 55 AT THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

Choose one of the delegates from the list. Create a database on the delegate. Include age, state of residence, occupation, education, socioeconomic class, political ideology, and participation at the Constitutional Convention. Use the information gathered in the database to write a one-page paper about the delegate.

Gouverneur Morris

James Wilson

Edmund Randolph

George Mason

James Madison

William Paterson

Elbridge Gerry

Luther Martin

Roger Sherman

John Dickinson

Alexander Hamilton

George Washington

Benjamin Franklin

Charles Pinckney