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**Ratifying the Constitution – A Document Based Question**

The following packet contains all the information you will need to effectively answer the question:

**What were the major arguments used by each side (the supporters and the opponents) in the debates over the ratification of the U.S. Constitution?**

After reading and analyzing the documents in this packet, you will be asked to complete a four-paragraph essay answering the above question. By effectively analyzing the documents, you will have the tools you need to construct an effective compare and contrast type essay.

This document based question packet and essay will be worth 55 points. See the due dates and point breakdown below for more information

**Document Based Questions Due Dates:**

* Completed DBQ packet: Due Monday 12/1 EVEN 12/2 ODD (20 pts)
* Completed four paragraph essay: Due Monday 12/8 ODD 12/9 EVEN (35 pts – See Attached Rubric for details)

Tips and Tricks for writing good essays:

* Be sure to remember the tools you use in Language Arts
* Follow the rubric that is provided. Rubric will provide a guide for writing the best essay you can.
* Read your essay out loud after you complete it. Spell check does not catch everything so make sure you sufficiently edit/revise your own work.
* If you have any questions, please email Mr. Tamayo TamayoA@dadeschools.net
* Please check at TamayoA.weebly.com for updates

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Constitutional Convention DBQ Rubric**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Category | Exemplary **5 points** | Accomplished **4 Points** | Developing**3 points** | Beginning**2 points** |
| Introductory Paragraph | Paragraph introduces topic of essay and provides sufficient background information | Paragraph introduces topic of essay and provides little background information | Paragraph mentions topic of essay and provides little background information | Paragraph does not introduce essay topic and provides no background information  |
| Body Paragraph 1 | Paragraph effectively presents information and maintains a strong focus | Paragraph uses information fairly well and maintains a somewhat strong focus | Paragraph contains little factual information and/or maintains a weak focus  | Paragraph does not present information well and maintains no focus |
| Body Paragraph 2 | Paragraph effectively presents information and maintains a strong focus | Paragraph uses information fairly well and maintains a somewhat strong focus | Paragraph contains little factual information and/or maintains a weak focus  | Paragraph does not present information well and maintains no focus |
| Closing Paragraph | Paragraph effectively restates the information from the intro paragraph and provides a good closing | Paragraph somewhat restates the information from the intro paragraph and provides an adequate closing | Paragraph does not restate information from the intro paragraph OR does not provide an adequate closing  | Paragraph does not restate information from the intro paragraph AND does not provide an adequate closing |
| Use of Documents | Essay effectively uses documents to support statements made in paragraphs  | Essay uses some documents to support statements made in paragraphs | Essay uses few documents to support statements made in paragraphs | Essay uses no documents to support statements made in paragraphs |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Category | Exemplary **5 points** | Accomplished**4 Points** | Developing**3 points** | Beginning**2 points** |
| Grammar and Style | 0 -1 grammatical mistakes | 2-3 grammatical mistakes | 4-5 grammatical mistakes | 6 or more grammatical mistakes |
| Neatness and Organization | Paragraphs are well organized and transition well. |  | Paragraphs are not well organized and do not transition into each other |  |

**Total Project Grade: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_/35 points**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Historical Context

 Today, over 200 years after it was written and ratified, most Americans think of the U.S. Constitution as something almost sacred. We assume that this great document has always been honored and revered. This is not true. When it was written in 1787 and submitted to the states for ratification, it set off months of fierce and often bitter debate. There were, of course, many who welcomed it as a stronger and more effective national government, which could successfully tie the 13 states together into a common nation. But others were fearful of this proposed powerful new national government. Only a few years earlier they had fought a war against a too powerful, distant central government. Why should they now erect a new distant central government which could threaten their liberties just as King George and Parliament had? The debate went on in towns and villages across the country for months. Some of the smaller states ratified the new Constitution quickly, but in most states the debate continued, hi February of 1788, the Massachusetts convention voted 187 to 168 to ratify the Constitution. In June, Virginia ratified, 89 to 79. New York followed almost immediately. Now, with the approval of 11 states, the new government was established. In April of 1789 George Washington was inaugurated President, even though two states still had not approved the Constitution. It took North Caro­lina until November 1789 and Rhode Island until May 1790 to join the new government.

**Directions**: The following question is based on the accompanying documents (1-6). As you analyze the documents, take into account both the source of the document and the author's point of view. Be sure to:

1. Carefully read the document-based question. Consider what you already know about this topic. How would you answer the question if you had no documents to examine?
2. Now, read each document carefully, underlining key phrases and words that address the document-based question. You may also wish to use the margin to make brief notes. Answer the questions which follow each document.
3. Based on your own knowledge and on the information found in the documents, formulate a thesis that directly answers the question.
4. Organize supportive and relevant information into a brief outline.
5. Write a well-organized essay proving your thesis. The essay should be logically presented and should include information both from the documents and from your own knowledge outside of the documents.

**Question: What were the major arguments used by each side (the supporters and the opponents) in the debates over the ratification of the U.S. Constitution?**

**Part A:** The following documents address various arguments made in support of, or in opposition to, ratifying the U.S. Constitution. Examine each document carefully, and answer the question or questions that follow.

**Document 1**

This excerpt is from a newspaper, The Massachusetts Sentinel, October 20,1787.

Let us look and behold the distresses which prevail in every part of our country . . . the complaints of our farmers ... the complaints of every class of public creditors ... the melancholy faces of our working people . .. our ships rotting in our harbors ... the insults that are offered to the American name and character in every court of Europe. . . . View these things, fellow citizens, and then say that we do not require a new, a protecting, and efficient federal government if you can.

**Why does the editor of this newspaper support ratifying the Constitution?**

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**Document 2**

This excerpt is from "Observations on the New Federal Constitution and on the Federal and State Conventions," by Mercy Otis Warren. It originally appeared as a newspaper article in the spring of 1788.

There is no security in the system [under the proposed new U.S. Constitution] either for the rights of conscience or the liberty of the press.. .. The executive and the legislature] are so dangerously blended that they give just cause for alarm. . . . There is no provision for a rotation nor anything else to prevent a political office from remaining in the same hands for life.

**Why did Mercy Otis Warren oppose ratifying the Constitution?**

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**Document 3**

These excerpts are from a letter written by George Washington to John Jay, dated August 1,1786. In these lines, Washington is agreeing with Jay's criticism of the Articles of Confederation.

Your sentiments, that our affairs are drawing rapidly to a crisis, accord with my own. . . . We have errors to correct. We have probably had too good an opinion of human nature in forming our confederation . . .

. . . thirteeen sovereign, independent, disunited States are in the habit of ... refusing compliance with [our national Congress] at their option.

Would to God, that wise measures may be taken in time to avert the consequences we have but too much reason to apprehend. . . .

**What did Washington mean by saying "we have errors to correct?"**

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**What do you suppose he meant by saying "we have probably had too good an opinion of human nature in forming our confederation?**

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**Document 4**

This excerpt is from a speech by Patrick Henry, a delegate to the Virginia State Constitutional Ratification Convention, given in June 1788.

. . . Here is a resolution as radical as that which separated us from Great Britain. It is radical in this transition; our rights and privileges are endangered, and the sovereignty of the states will be relinquished. . . . The rights of conscience, trial by jury, liberty of the press . . . are rendered insecure.

**Why did Patrick Henry oppose the Constitution?**

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**Document 5**

This excerpt is from a speech by Amos Singletree, member of the Massachusetts Constitutional Ratifica­tion Convention, given in January 1788.

These lawyers and men of learning, and monied men, that talk so finely and gloss over matters so smoothly, to make us poor illiterate people swallow down the pill, expect to get into Congress themselves . . . and get all the power and all the money into their own hands, and then they will swallow all us little folks . . .

**Why did Amos Singletree oppose the Constitution?**

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**Document 6**

This excerpt is from a resolution from the Massachusetts Constitutional Ratification Convention, February 1788. This Convention approved the Constitution with a vote of 187 to 168.

... it is the opinion of this Convention that certain amendments and alterations in the said Constitution would remove the fears and quiet the apprehensions of many of the good people of the commonwealth [the resolution goes on to recommend such amendments as] . . . that all powers not expressly delegated by the . . . Constitution are reserved to the several states . . . that no person be tried for any crime . . . until he be first indicted by a grand jury . . .

**What addition to the U.S. Constitution was suggested as a way to win the approval of many of its opponents?**

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**What were the major arguments used by each side (the supporters and the opponents) in the debates over the ratification of the U.S. Constitution?**