

Name _____

The Birth of a Nation: Why Were the Articles of Confederation Created?

Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. The Founding Fathers were hesitant to establish a strong central government because they had just fought a war for independence against what they saw as an oppressive government (Britain). They wanted to avoid replacing one oppressive authority with another and were wary of concentrating too much power in a single government.
2. The central government under the Articles of Confederation had limited authority. It could conduct foreign affairs, make treaties, declare war, and maintain an army and navy. However, it lacked the power to tax citizens or regulate trade between states. This contrasted with the current U.S. government, which has a broader range of powers.
3. The requirement for unanimous approval from all thirteen states for amending the Articles of Confederation made it nearly impossible to adapt the government to changing needs. This inflexibility hindered the government's ability to address emerging issues effectively.
4. The Articles of Confederation contributed to maintaining unity among the states during and after the Revolutionary War by creating a framework for cooperation and a central authority to conduct foreign affairs and coordinate efforts, even though that authority was relatively weak.

