

Name _____

Articles of Confederation vs. Constitution: Understanding the Differences

Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. The Articles of Confederation established a weak central government with limited authority, relying on voluntary state contributions. This led to financial instability and hindered effective governance. In contrast, the Constitution established a stronger central government with taxation powers, allowing for better funding and governance.
2. Amending the Articles of Confederation required unanimous approval from all thirteen states, making it almost impossible to adapt. The Constitution introduced a more flexible amendment process, requiring approval from two-thirds of both houses of Congress or a constitutional convention called for by two-thirds of the states.
3. The introduction of the executive branch (the presidency) and the federal judicial branch in the Constitution provided for the enforcement of laws and the resolution of disputes at the federal level. These branches were absent in the Articles of Confederation, where there was only a president of the Continental Congress.
4. The Constitution's grant of taxation powers addressed a significant limitation of the Articles of Confederation. It allowed the federal government to generate its own revenue, providing financial stability and the means to fund its operations and responsibilities. This was in stark contrast to the Articles, where the central government relied on voluntary contributions from the states.

