

X-TREME FACTS: U.S. HISTORY

THE CONSTITUTION

The delegates were tormented by mosquitoes.



Benjamin Franklin was carried to the meetings in a chair!

James Madison used a secret alphabet when he wrote to his friends.

We the People

Article 1

by Campbell Collison



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THE CONSTITUTION



by Campbell Collison



Minneapolis, Minnesota

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Philadelphia Heats Up

The city of Philadelphia was hot and smelly during the summer of 1787. But a group of state delegates was locked in a stuffy room with the windows shut and the doors locked. Tempers were short. Disagreements were common. Shouting was loud. How could anyone create a government in these conditions? It wasn't easy but these men had to press on with the convention. They were drafting a new **constitution**. The survival of the United States depended upon these overheated men.

To keep their debates secret, delegates kept all windows closed and all doors locked and guarded.



Independence Hall is the birthplace of both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

The convention was set to begin on May 14, but **almost all the delegates arrived days or even weeks late!**



WHERE IS EVERYBODY, BENJAMIN? ARE WE THE ONLY ONES ON THE LIST?

NOPE, THERE ARE MANY MORE NAMES HERE.

Only the delegates from Pennsylvania and Virginia—including George Washington—showed up on time!

The delegates were bugged at night. Swarming mosquitoes and flies made it hard to sleep.

Connecticut delegate **William Samuel Johnson** kept a diary during the convention. He **described how hot everybody was.**

THIS HEAT IS JUST TERRIBLE, ISN'T IT?

MAYBE WE SHOULD WEAR T-SHIRTS IN SUCH WEATHER.

WHAT'S A T-SHIRT?

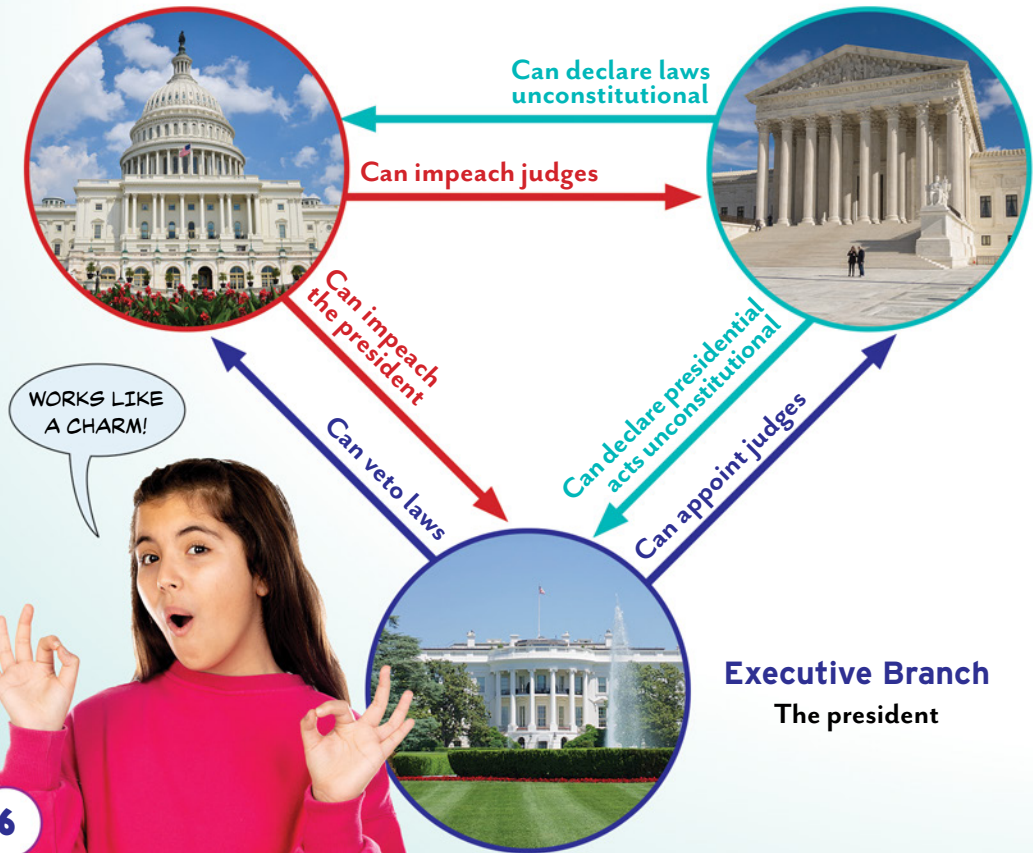


A Special Document

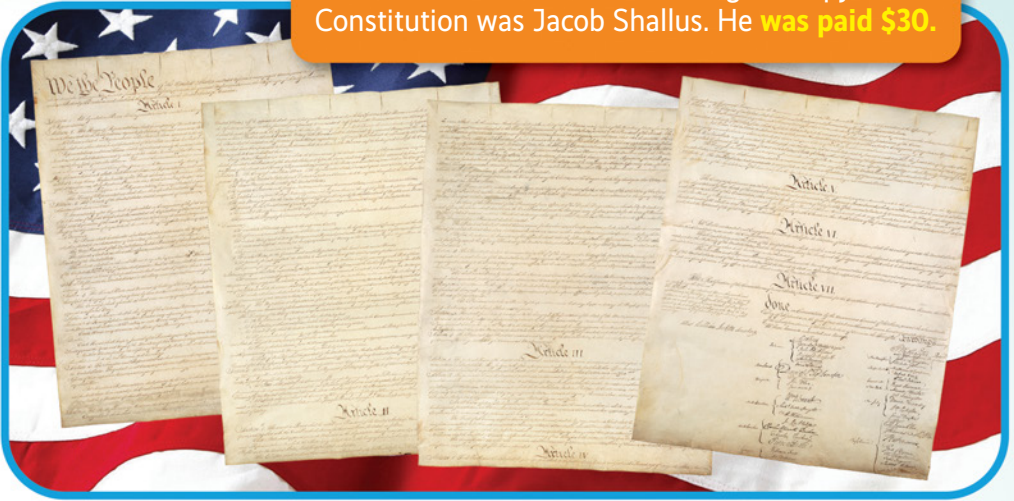
Writing the rules for a brand-new country is a huge job. The founders had to create a strong government in order to keep things running. But it couldn't threaten states' or citizens' rights. They settled on a federal government whose power would be divided and shared among three branches. These were the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. Each branch would provide **checks and balances** for the other two, making sure no one branch had too much power. The founders' hard work was finished on September 17, 1787.

Legislative Branch Congress

Judicial Branch The Supreme Court



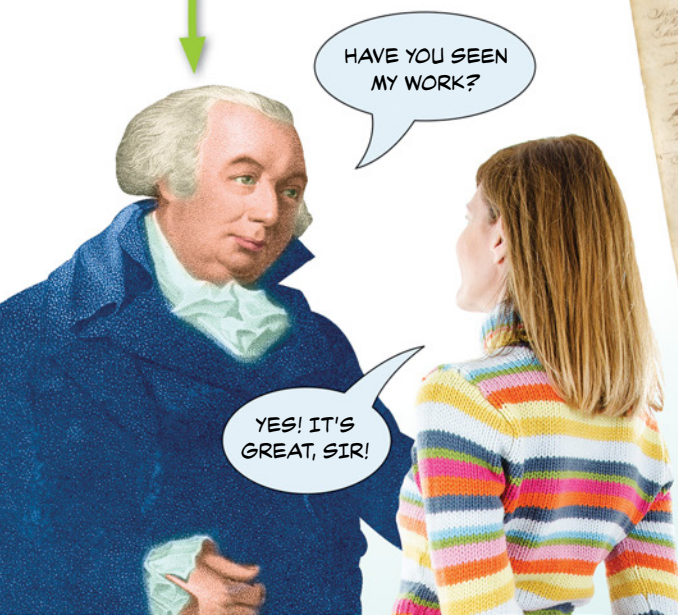
The **clerk** who handwrote the original copy of the Constitution was Jacob Shallus. He **was paid \$30**.



At 4,400 words, the U.S. Constitution is the shortest written constitution of any major government in the world.

New York delegate Gouverneur Morris is responsible for the famous "We the People . . ." **preamble**.

The delegates should have used **spell-check**. They forgot one of the "n"s in Pennsylvania. Oops!



HAVE YOU SEEN MY WORK?

YES! IT'S GREAT, SIR!



CHECK IT OUT! THEY GOT CONNECTICUT RIGHT!