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WHO WROTE THE CONSTITUTION?

Multiple Choice Quiz



ABOUT THIS QUIZ



Who Wrote the Constitution?

This quiz is about the authors of the Constitution.

All questions have 4 possible answers of which only 1 is correct.

You may read the article over the next few pages to freshen up before taking the quiz!

At the back of the book, will be an answer sheet.

For more information, go to:
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There is no one author of the constitution. It was written by several different people. Also, it includes language that was directly lifted from other sources.

Who Is the Father of the Constitution?

The most straightforward (but wrong) answer is that James Madison was the author of the Constitution in May 1787 at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia.

James Madison Is Known As the Person Who Wrote the US Constitution and the Father of the Constitution.

James Madison is known as the Father of the Constitution, but there were other contributors.

Early Life of James Madison

Born on March 16th, 1751, James Madison was the eldest of twelve children. James and his siblings were given a privileged life filled with love and education on a 2600 acre plantation in Port Conway, Virginia.

At 18, Madison went to the College of New Jersey, which is now known as Princeton University.

Upon graduating from college, James developed a profound interest in political matters, which introduced him to the idea of a constitution.

His brief attempt at a military career began when he was appointed a colonel in his local militia during the American Revolutionary War.

From the Military to Politics

Because he was small and in poor health, James Madison left his position three years later and switched to a political career. He was elected to be the youngest delegate in the Continental Congress in Philadelphia during the year 1780.

He left in 1780 to focus his time on furthering the call for religious freedom and passing such a statute in his home state Virginia.

Madison Wrote the Virginia Plan

During his time in the Continental Congress, he was highly influential. During that time, Madison drafted, wrote, and passed the Virginia Plan, which the country would utilize in years to write the text of the original Constitution.

The Virginia Plan outlined the three distinct branches of the central government:

- The executive branch of government
- The legislative branch of government
- The judicial branch of government.

A successful government will have different branches, which will ensure fairness and checks and balances. The Founding Fathers wrote the constitution to bring that about.

It also introduced having a House and Senate forming the national government.

Articles of Confederation Demanding Change

Upon leaving the Continental Congress, Congress passed the Articles of Confederation in 1777, which served as the unofficial first form of an American Constitution. Unfortunately, as helpful as the document was, the Articles of Confederation were full of flaws. They needed to be reconstructed if they were to be used for the successful running of the country.

James Madison, along with John Jay and Alexander Hamilton, composed what came to be known as the Federalist Papers. The Federalist Papers were a radical series of thoughts and demands that boldly called for the revision of the Articles of Confederation. They were printed in the newspaper for all to read.

Writing the United States Constitution

Finally, in 1787, James Madison was called back to the Continental Congress, where he joined 56 other state delegates at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. Congress determined that it would rectify the Articles of Confederation once and for all.

George Washington presided over the convention. Soon after the convention began, on May 14, 1787, the delegates unanimously elected George Washington to be the convention president.

At the Constitutional Convention on September 17th, 1787, James Madison, known as the Founding Father formatted and wrote what we know as the US Constitution. All fifty-six delegates signed it, giving their unyielding approval.

Ratification of the Constitution

On June 21, 1788, New Hampshire became the ninth state to ratify the new Constitution. At that time, this was over half of the nation and was enough to officially make the Constitution the law of the land. Not long after that, upon creating the US House of Representatives, James Madison was among its first members.

Madison's Later Career

Not only was James Madison monumental in the creation of the Constitution, but he also was allowed to compose much of the Bill of Rights. In addition, he became influential in writing a particular essay on the importance of the separation of church and state. Madison served as Vice President to Thomas Jefferson, then United States President, in the year 1808.

Madison as a President

James Madison was the first United States President to officially declare war against Britain with the approval of both the House of Representatives and the Senate, starting the War of 1812. In fighting that war, Madison firmly believed that war emergencies were tests to adhere to the United States Constitution rather than ignore it altogether.

When the War of 1812 ended in February of 1815 with The Treaty of Ghent, it showed the rest of the world that America was a unified nation worthy of respect. As a result, James Madison served two presidential terms as Commander in Chief of America. While his presidential career had both highs and lows, he was ultimately viewed as a good president who served America well and made her stronger.

He achieved everything he had initially set out to accomplish: established a national banking system, a successful taxation system, and an active weaponized military. The vision he had for America, written within the United States Constitution's pages, was finally coming together beautifully.

End of James Madison's Life

James Madison retired from Washington DC in 1817 with his beloved wife, Dolley, and lived out his days at the same plantation he grew up at. He was respected by all and known for his knowledge.

He died peacefully over breakfast in his home on June 28th of the year 1836 from congestive heart failure. He was buried in the family cemetery, where his wife eventually joined him.

Remembering the Man Who Wrote the US Constitution

Perhaps one of James Madison's most famous quotes was one penned within the Federalist Papers:

"If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed, and in the next place oblige it to control itself."

James Madison was incredibly influential in bringing about a free America, and we owe him our gratitude. But, as a nation, we must never forget where we came from and how hard our Founding Fathers fought to create a free nation.

Constitution Day remembers the incredible achievements of both James Madison and others in creating the US Constitution. The US has a day called Constitution Day, which is on September 17th.

Multiple Choice Quiz

1. Who is known as the Father of the Constitution?

- A. George Washington
- B. Thomas Jefferson
- C. Benjamin Franklin
- D. James Madison

2. Where was James Madison born?

- A. Massachusetts
- B. Virginia
- C. New Jersey
- D. Rhode Island

3. What college did James Madison attend?

- A. Harvard
- B. Yale
- C. Dartmouth
- D. Princeton

4. What plan did Madison author at the Constitutional Convention?

- A. Virginia plan
- B. New Jersey plan
- C. Massachusetts plan
- D. Proportional Representation plan

5. What 3 branches of government did the Virginia Plan establish?

- A. Legislative, Administrative, and Judicial
- B. Executive, Judicial, and Administrative
- C. Legislative, Executive, and Judicial
- D. Administrative, Executive, and Military

6. What principle was behind the reasoning for creating 3 branches of government?

- A. Capitalist economy
- B. Checks and balances
- C. Equal representation
- D. Fairness under the law

7. What 2 legislative bodies were created by the Virginia Plan?

- A. Senate and House of Representatives
- B. Senate and parliament
- C. House of Representatives and National Assembly
- D. National Assembly and National Committee

8. What was the name of the first constitution adopted by the Continental Congress?

- A. Declaration of Independence
- B. Articles of Incorporation
- C. Declaration of the Rights of Man
- D. Articles of Confederation

9. Which of the following Founding Fathers did not author the Federalist Papers?

- A. James Madison
- B. Thomas Jefferson
- C. John Jay
- D. Alexander Hamilton

10. What year did the Constitutional Convention begin?

- A. 1776
- B. 1783
- C. 1787
- D. 1788

11. Who presided over the Constitutional Convention?

- A. George Washington
- B. John Adams
- C. Thomas Jefferson
- D. Benjamin Franklin

12. When was the US Constitution officially ratified?

- A. July 1787
- B. November 1787
- C. March 1788
- D. June 1788

13. In addition to playing a major role in developing the original US Constitution, what other document(s) did James Madison develop?

- A. Declaration of Independence
- B. Bill of Rights
- C. Articles of Confederation
- D. Declaration of the Rights of Man

14. What war did the United States get involved in with James Madison as president?

- A. War of 1812
- B. Mexican-American War
- C. Blackhawk War
- D. Cherokee War

15. What treaty ended the war that surrounded much of James Madison's presidency?

- A. Treaty of Paris
- B. Treaty of London
- C. Treaty of Ghent
- D. Treaty of New Orleans

16. Which of the following is not an accomplishment of Madison's presidency?

- A. Significant progress on internal improvements
- B. Establishment of a national banking system
- C. Establishment of a successful taxation system
- D. Development of an effective military

Multiple Choice Quiz Answers

- 1. D
- 2. B
- 3. D
- 4. A
- 5. C
- 6. B
- 7. A
- 8. D
- 9. B
- 10. C
- 11. A
- 12. D
- 13. B
- 14. A
- 15. C
- 16. A