The Articles of Confederation Evaluation Assignment

After the Revolutionary War, the new nation looked for a way to effectively govern itself

while avoiding what they saw as an unfair and harsh system like the one they had endured

under King George III of Great Britain. They thought they had found a solution with the

Articles of Confederation. Drafting of the Articles had begun even before the end of the

American Revolution, and the view that a weak central government would be best for an

independent nation became a common theme throughout the document.

Assignment:

Read and closely analyze the Articles of Confederation. Answer the following questions completely based upon your classroom discussion and reading of the Articles. Be prepared to share and defend your answers in class discussion.

1. Which states supported the Articles of Confederation? Why do you think each state’s name is listed in the introduction to the Articles?

2. Article II of the document notes that each state “retains its sovereignty, freedom, and independence.” What do you think this implies regarding the stability of the union?

3. Article V deals with the legislative branch of the government. How many delegates would each state be entitled to according to this article?

How many votes would each state be entitled to according to Article V?

What sort of problems or situations might this cause?

4. Article X notes that nine of the thirteen states would need to vote for any legislative bill before it became law. How might this provision have handicapped the central government?

5. What kinds of powers do the Articles give to State and the Federal Government?

 State:

 Federal:

6. Which branch (state or federal) had more powers? Why do you think this is?

7. According to Article XIII, describe how the Articles of Confederation could be amended. In your view, would this be a workable way to change the Articles? Why/why not?

8. Near the bottom of Article XIII, the date of the writing of the Articles of Confederation is noted as July 9, 1778, with the date the Congress commissioned the writing of them set as November 15, 1777. Both dates occur before the end of the Revolutionary War in 1783. Why was it important that the Articles be written and in place before the United States achieved independence?

9. The framers of the Articles decided not to include an executive branch or a federal court system. Why do you think the framers did this? Do you think this was a good idea or a bad idea? Defend your answer.

10. What would you consider to be the strengths & weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation?

 Strengths:

 Weaknesses:

11. What sort of problems did the weaknesses in the Articles of Confederation lead to in the new republic?

12. Historical Critical Thinking: You are a member of Congress and are summoned to a Committee Meeting regarding the Articles of Confederation. Do you support attempting to amend the Articles or abandoning them and writing a new Constitution? How will you explain your decision to the people you represent back home?