

Study Guide



Chapter 7, Section 2

For use with textbook pages 199–205

CONVENTION AND COMPROMISE

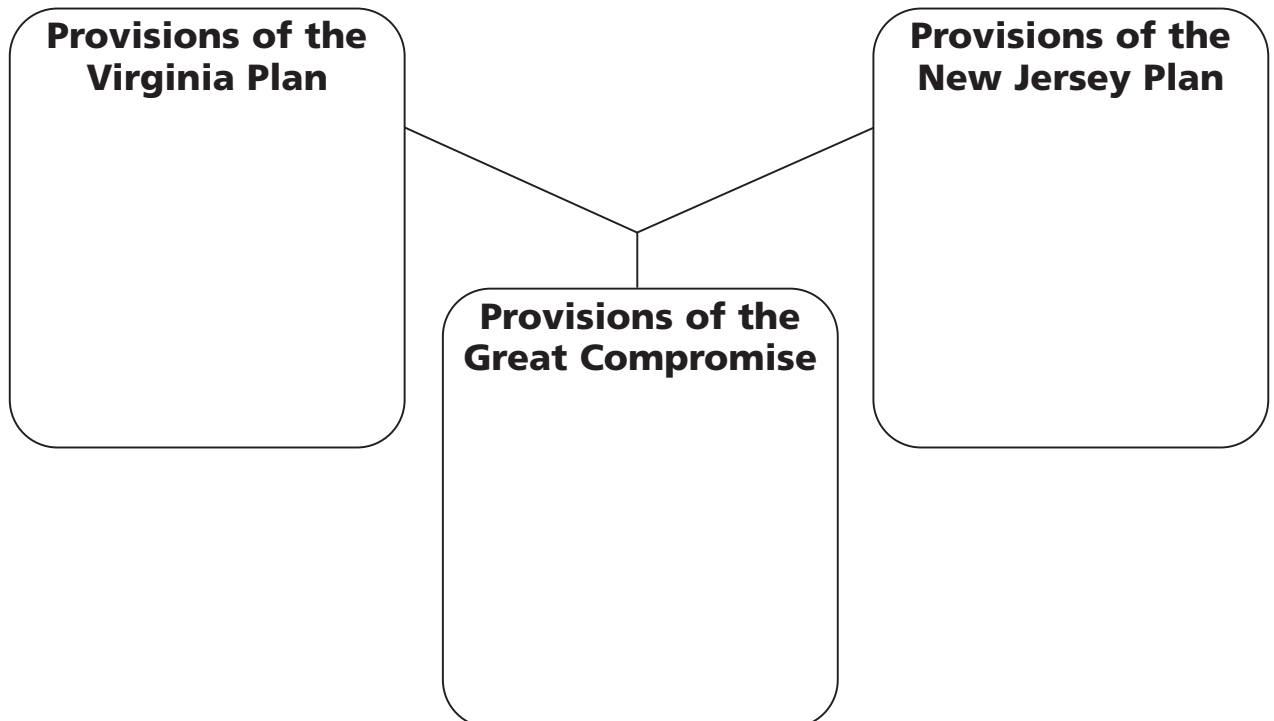
KEY TERMS

<i>Depression</i>	A period of slow economic activity and increased unemployment (page 199)
<i>manumission</i>	The freeing of individual enslaved persons (page 201)
<i>proportional</i>	To match up in size (page 203)
<i>compromise</i>	An agreement between two or more sides in which each side gives up some of what it wants (page 204)

DRAWING FROM EXPERIENCE

Have you ever had a disagreement with someone? Did you and the other person agree to compromise, that is give up something to gain something more important? What did you give up? What did you gain?

In the last section, you read about problems the United States had under the Articles of Confederation. This section focuses on the issues confronted in the Constitutional Convention.



Study Guide



Chapter 7, Section 2 (continued)

ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS

Use the chart on the previous page to help you take notes as you read the summaries that follow. Think about how the delegates to the convention compromised to draft a new constitution.

READ TO LEARN

- **Economic Depression** (pages 199–201)

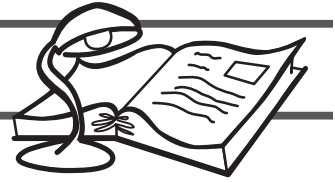
Americans faced financial troubles after the Revolutionary War. The economy was in a *depression*. Unemployment or joblessness was high and economic activity was slow. Plantations were damaged, rice exports dropped, and the British blocked American trade with the West Indies. The government owed large debts to other countries for their help during the war. Farmers could not sell their goods. States could not afford to pay the government to help pay off the war debts. There was a serious shortage of money.

Farmers in Massachusetts disliked the way the government treated its citizens. Citizens were upset with the government for taking farmers' lands and putting people in jail because they could not afford to pay their debts. They wanted the government to help people in debt. In 1786 Daniel Shays and a group of farmers rebelled, forcing courts to close. Their actions prevented judges from taking farmers' lands away. Then, in 1787, Shays and more than 1,000 farmers tried to take weapons and ammunition from the federal arsenal in Springfield, Massachusetts. Shays and his followers refused to stop even after they were warned. The state militia fired their weapons and killed four rebels, ending Shays's Rebellion.

Between 1776 and 1786, eleven states had laws that banned slavery or heavily taxed importing enslaved Africans. Slavery was legal in South Carolina and Georgia because plantations and the economy in Southern states relied on slave labor. Many Americans did not agree with the practice of slavery. The Quakers were the first Americans to organize an antislavery society in 1774. In 1780 enslaved people in Pennsylvania were gradually freed as a result of a new law. Other states followed, abolishing slavery. Virginia law encouraged *manumission*, the freeing of enslaved persons. The country was divided over the issue of slavery. In 1787, when a new government was being planned, each side gave up some of what it wanted in order to make a *compromise*.

1. What were the causes of Shays's Rebellion?

Study Guide



Chapter 7, Section 2 (continued)

- **A Call for Change** (page 201)

Because of all the problems faced by the Confederation of Congress, many states wanted to reform the Articles of Confederation. Some states favored a strong national government. Others wanted each state to have its own power. In 1786 Alexander Hamilton proposed a meeting of delegates in Philadelphia to discuss trade issues and to consider changing the Articles of Confederation. James Madison supported change. When George Washington agreed to attend, other political leaders agreed.

2. Why did Alexander Hamilton propose a meeting of delegates?

- **The Constitutional Convention** (pages 202–203)

Fifty-five well-educated delegates, ranging in age from under 30 to over 80, met in Philadelphia in May 1787. There were several leaders in the group of white male delegates, including George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and James Madison. Washington was chosen to lead the meetings, which were secretive and not open to the public. A majority of states had to be represented at all meetings. Each state had one vote. Decisions were based on a simple majority, or having the most votes. James Madison, known as the *Father of the Constitution*, was the author of the plan of government that the Convention approved.

Edmund Randolph and the Virginia delegates surprised everyone by proposing that a strong national government be created instead of revising the Articles of Confederation. Their plan, created mainly by James Madison, was called the *Virginia Plan*. Smaller states were against the plan because it called for a *proportional* number of delegates to both upper and lower houses of a two-house legislature. The number of representatives would correspond in size to the population of the states. States with the greatest populations would have more representatives and, therefore, more power. The plan also called for a chief executive officer and a court system. The smaller states wanted all states to have an equal number of representatives.

3. What three branches of government did the Virginia Plan propose?

Study Guide



Chapter 7, Section 2 (continued)

- **Compromise Wins Out** (pages 203–205)

The convention delegates voted to create a new national government. The constitution of the new government was based on parts of the Virginia Plan. Both sides agreed to compromise, or each give up some of what it wanted. Roger Sherman's *Great Compromise* was adopted.

A major compromise by the delegates, called the *Three-Fifths Compromise*, settled the issue of whether or not enslaved people would be counted in the population for determining representation and taxation. The Northern states wanted enslaved people counted for taxes. The Southern states wanted them counted for representation. No states suggested that enslaved African Americans be given the right to vote. It was agreed that enslaved people would count as three-fifths of a free person for taxation and representation. Northern states and Southern states also compromised on slavery and the slave trade. Both sides agreed that Congress could not interfere with the slave trade until 1808. Beginning that year, Congress could limit the slave trade if it chose to.

The Constitution was approved without a bill of rights. Most delegates felt that the Constitution protected individual rights. The draft of the Constitution was approved in Philadelphia in September 1787. It was sent to the states and needed 9 out of 13 states' approval in order to be adopted.

4. What compromises were made during the Constitutional Convention?
