

Matrix for Analyzing Features of the Articles of Confederation

Directions: Each placard you will receive explains one of the features of the Articles of Confederation. Carefully examine the drawing on the placard, read the information on it, and discuss the question(s). Then complete the information in the appropriate place on the matrix below.

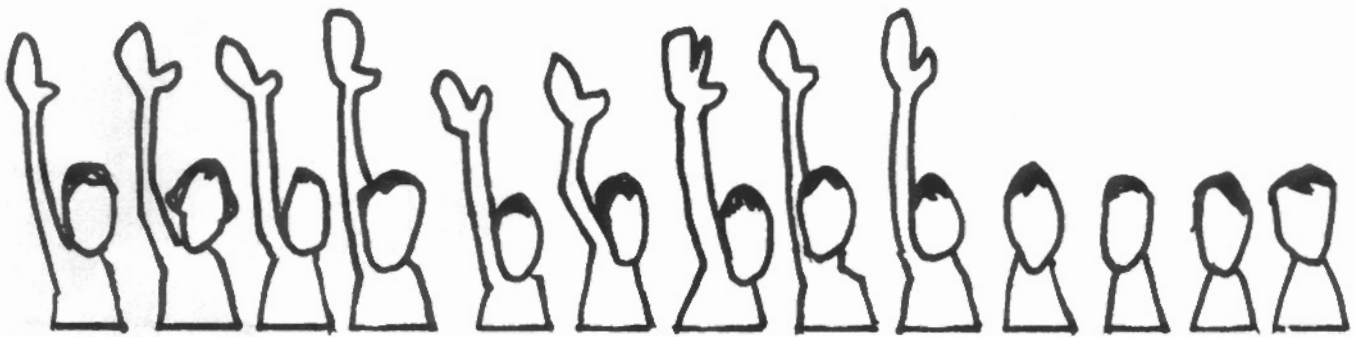
Placard	Feature	Why This Was Included in the Articles of Confederation	Possible Problems with This Feature
A	No Chief Executive.		Lack of leadership from central government. No single leader for the government.
B	Laws needed approval by nine of the thirteen states.	Wanted to protect individual states' power. Fear of a strong central government.	
C	Congress did not have the power to tax citizens. It could only request tax money from states.		States often chose not to pay taxes, and the federal government didn't have the funds to operate effectively.
D	Congress did not have the power to draft an army. It could only request states to send men for military services.	Fear of a central government with a strong army that might take away citizens' rights.	

Placard	Feature	Why This Was Included in the Articles of Confederation	Possible Problems with This Feature
E	No national court system.	Fear of a central government with a court system that might be unfair to the rights of states.	
F	Any amendments (changes) to the Articles must be approved by all 13 states.		Nearly impossible to make changes to Articles. Any one state could stop an amendment that all the other states wanted.
G	Congress did not have the power to collect state debts owed to the federal government.	Fear of a strong central government that could force states to pay for things they didn't want.	
H	Congress did not have the power to settle disputes among states.		Disputes among states often could not be resolved. Created disunity among states.



One feature of the Articles of Confederation was that the government had no chief executive, such as a president or a king. As a result, the government under the Articles suffered from a lack of leadership since there was no single leader.

- **What experiences from 1763 to 1776 would have made Americans fearful of a president or a king?**
- **Why, then, do you think this feature was included in the Articles of Confederation?**



One feature of the Articles of Confederation was that new laws needed to be approved by nine of the thirteen states. This was included in the Articles because the delegates to the Continental Congress wanted to protect the rights of states and did not want the central government to become too powerful. With this feature, new laws would have to be agreeable to nine of the states instead of a simple majority of seven.

- **What possible problems do you think this feature might have created?**



One feature of the Articles of Confederation was that Congress did not have the power to tax its citizens directly; instead, it could only request money from the states. This created financial problems because states often did not pay what was requested of them by the federal government.

- **What experiences from 1763 to 1776 would have made Americans reluctant to allow Congress to tax citizens directly?**
- **Why, then, do you think this feature was included in the Articles of Confederation?**



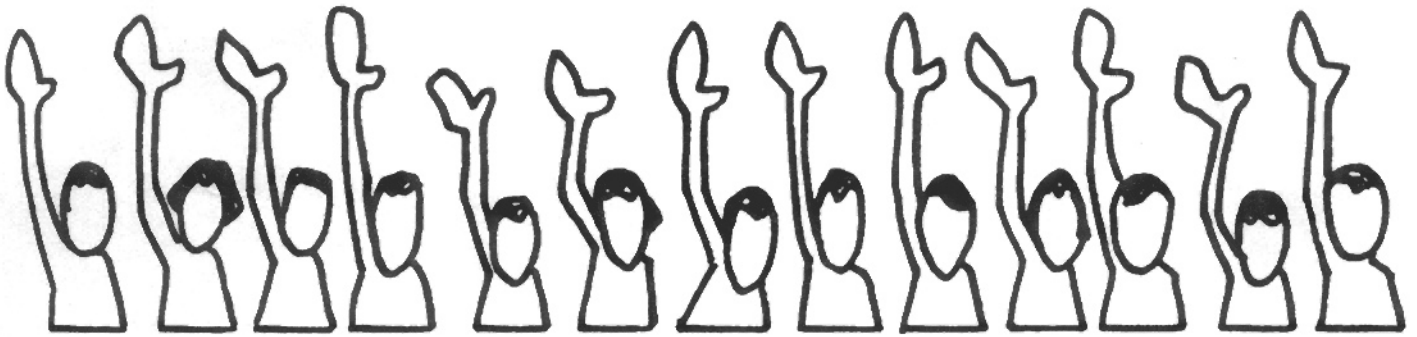
One feature of the Articles of Confederation was that Congress did not have the power to draft men into the Continental Army; instead, it could only request states to send men into military service. The delegates to the Continental Congress were fearful that a federal government with a powerful army might take away the rights of citizens, as the British army had done to them.

- **What possible problems do you think this feature might have created?**



One feature of the Articles of Confederation was that there was no national court system. Instead, each state had its own court system. Disputes between states had to be settled in one of the states' courts. The delegates to the Continental Congress provided for no national court system because they believed that a national court may be unfair to the rights of states.

- **What possible problems do you think this feature might have created?**



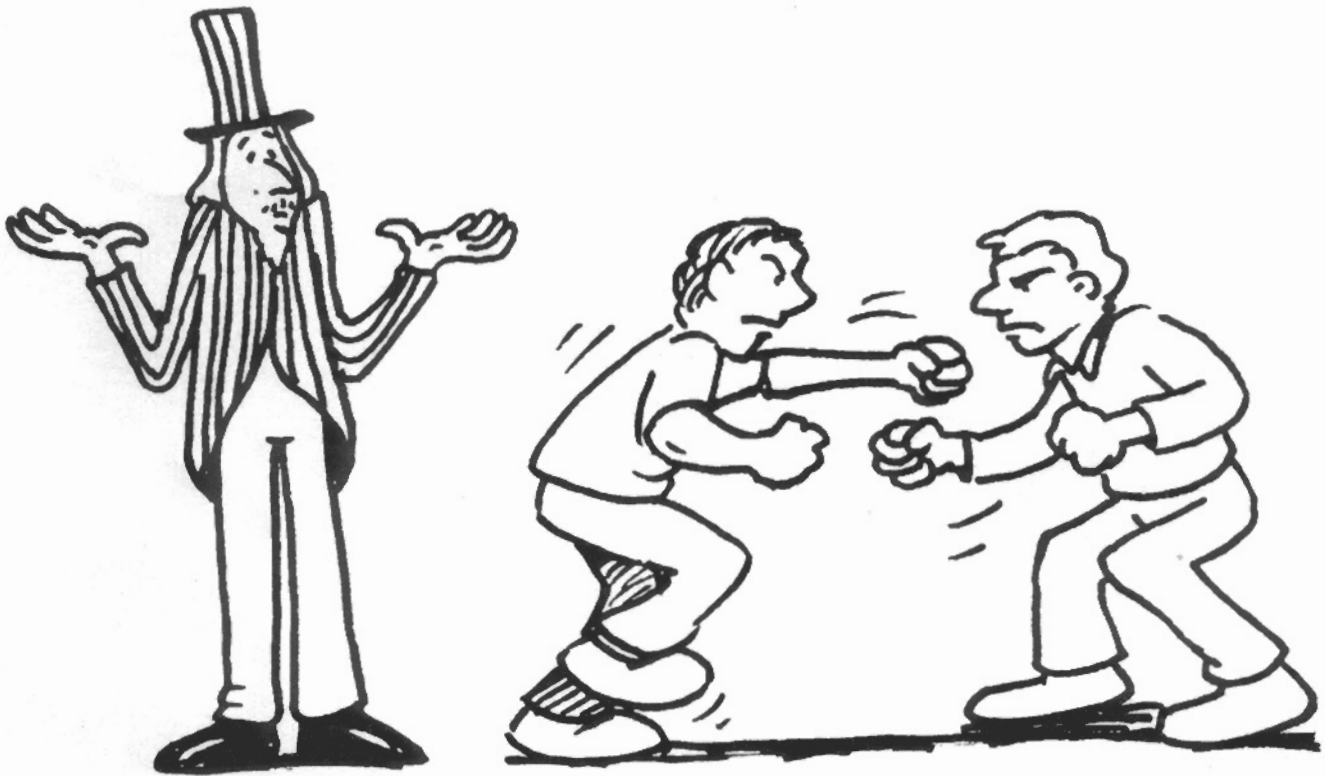
One feature of the Articles of Confederation was that any amendments, or changes, to the Articles required the approval of all 13 states. This made changes to the Articles nearly impossible—any single state could prevent a change that the rest of the nation wanted.

- **Why, then, do you think this feature was included in the Articles of Confederation?**



One feature of the Articles of Confederation was that Congress did not have the power to collect state debts (money owed) to the federal government. The delegates to the Continental Congress wanted to ensure that the federal government could not force states to pay for things that states did not want.

- **What possible problems do you think this feature might have created?**



One feature of the Articles of Confederation was that Congress did not have the power to settle disputes among states. The Articles guaranteed that each state would keep its individual power, freedom, and independence. As a result, Congress did not have the power to help states work out conflicts among them, and states became increasingly disunited.

- **Why, then, do you think this feature was included in the Articles of Confederation?**