

## Document Analysis Practice

### Document 1

. . . The [whiskey] rebellion has long been interpreted as a milestone in the creation of federal authority, and in most respects that is its chief significance. Certainly to the Federalists, who had long been striving for a strong national government, it was a major test: the new government successfully crushed organized and violent resistance to the laws. As Hamilton put it, the rebellion “will do us a great deal of good and add to the solidity [stability] of everything in this country.” . . .

Source: Richard H. Kohn, “The Washington Administration’s Decision to Crush the Whiskey Rebellion,”  
The Journal of American History, December 1972

1. Define the vocabulary listed below, and underline the words in the document.

Federalist

Alexander Hamilton

Whiskey Rebellion

3. What does the constitution provide for us, as shown in this document show?
4. According to Richard H. Kohn, what was the significance of the Whiskey Rebellion?

### Document 2

“The United States shall guarantee to every state in this Union a republican form of government, and shall protect each of them against invasion; and on application of the legislature, or of the executive (when the legislature cannot be convened), against domestic violence.”

— United States Constitution, Article IV, Section 4

1. Define the Key vocabulary listed below, and underline the words in the document.

Executive

Legislature

2. What does the constitution provide for us, as shown in this document?
3. According to this excerpt, what was a goal of the framers of the Constitution?

### Document 3

He [the President] shall have power, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to make treaties, provided two thirds of the senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, judges of the Supreme Court, and all other officers of the United States...

— Article II, Section 2, Clause 2, Constitution of the United States

1. Define the Key vocabulary listed below, and underline the words in the document.

Senate

Nominate

Supreme Court

Concur

2. What does the constitution provide for us, as shown in this document?
3. How does this excerpt of the constitution, illustrate the principle of checks and balances?
4. Under Article 2, Section 2, Clause 2, what role does the Senate play in the appointment of ambassadors or the appointment of judges to the Supreme Court?

#### Document 4

The preamble to the Federal Constitution says: "We, the people of the United States ..." It was we, the people; not we, the white male citizens; nor yet we, the male citizens: but we, the whole people, who formed the Union. And we formed it, not to give the blessings of liberty, but to secure them: not to the half of ourselves and the half of our posterity, but to the whole people women as well as men.

1. Define the Key vocabulary listed below, and underline the words in the document.

Federal

Preamble

Liberty

Posterity

3. What does the constitution provide for us, as shown in this document?

4. What expectation does the author of this document have for the government in terms of treatment for people other than white men?

#### Document 5

The House of Representatives . . . shall have the sole power of impeachment. . . . The Senate shall have the sole power to try all impeachments.

— United States Constitution, Article 1

1. Define the Key vocabulary listed below, and underline the words in the document.

House or representatives

Impeachment

Senate

2. What does the constitution provide for us, as shown in this document?

3. Which branch of the United States government is responsible for the impeachment process?

#### Document 6

*This excerpt is from "Observations on the New Federal Constitution and on Federal and State Conventions," by Mercy Otis Warren. It originally appeared newspaper article in the spring of 1788.*

There is no security in the system [under the proposed new U.S. Constitution] either for the rights of conscience or the liberty of the press.... The executive and the legislature are so dangerously blended that they give just cause. Alarm.... There is no provision for a rotation nor anything else to prevent political office from remaining in the same hands for life.

1. Define the Key vocabulary listed below, and underline the words in the document.

Liberty of the press

Provision

Executive

Legislature

2. What does the constitution provide for us, as shown in this document?

3. Why did Mercy Otis Warren oppose ratifying the Constitution?

4. Why would she have been in favor of a bill of rights?

## Document 7

*These excerpts are from a letter written by George Washington to John Jay, dated August 1, 1786. In these lines, Washington is agreeing with Jay's criticism of the Articles of Confederation.*

Your sentiments, that our affairs are drawing rapidly to a crisis, accord with my own.... We have errors to correct. We have probably had too good an opinion of human nature in forming our confederation ... . . . thirteen sovereign, independent, disunited States are in the habit of ...refusing compliance with our national Congress at their option. Would to God, that wise measures may be taken in time to avert the consequences we have but too much reason to apprehend....

1. Define the Key vocabulary listed below, and underline the words in the document.

Confederation

Sovereign

Sentiments

2. What does the constitution provide for us, as shown in this document?

3. Washington said "we have errors to correct", what is an example of an error that needed correction?

4. What do you suppose Washington meant by saying "we have probably had too good an opinion of human nature in forming our confederation"?

## Document 8

*This excerpt is from a resolution from the Massachusetts Constitutional Ratification Convention, February 1788. This Convention approved the Constitution with a vote of 187 to 168.*

... it is the opinion of this Convention that certain amendments and alterations in the said Constitution would remove the fears and quiet the apprehensions of many of the good people of the commonwealth [the resolution goes on to recommend such amendments as] ... that all powers not expressly delegated by the ... Constitution are reserved to the several states ... that no person be tried for any crime ... until he be first indicted by a grand jury...

1. List and define the Key vocabulary in this document.

Convention

Amendment

Commonwealth

Delegated

Reserved

2. What addition to the U.S. Constitution was suggested as a way to win the approval of many of its opponents?

3. How would this addition help to give more power to the states?