

A More Perfect Union: Constitutional Delegate Letter

Imagine you are a delegate at the Grand Convention. The document has just been signed and ratified by the members of the Convention, and now it must be ratified by each of the states. Counties in each state will elect delegates to meet and vote on whether to approve or reject this new constitution, and once nine states approve it, the Constitution will go into effect.

Your job is to write a letter to the citizens of your home state in an effort to convince them to ratify (or approve of) the new constitution (unless, of course you are a delegate who did not support the constitution, in which case you will persuade them to reject it). The letter should be broken up into three sections, with each being approximately one page in length.

1. What happened at the Convention?

- The convention was a secret, so no one knows what happened. Explain this to your readers. Who were the important and well-known people present? What were the major arguments? Major plans of government? Compromises? Was it an easy process or a hard one?
- Be sure to mention *your* role in the convention

2. What does the Constitution say? In other words, what kind of government does the Constitution create?

- What kind of government was created?
- Explain the federal system of Government, the three branches, what their basic responsibilities are, and the political principles behind it (for example, popular sovereignty, proportional representation)

3. Persuade your readers to support the Constitution at their state ratifying conventions.

- Write about specific problems with the current government under the Articles of Confederation, and how the new constitution will correct those problems. Explain why we need this constitution and how it will be better than the Articles. Use any other methods of persuasion that make sense for you as a delegate and for your state. You should name at least three good reasons. If you did not support the Constitution, your letter should reflect that belief and explain why.

You should include a bibliography with your paper. Everyone's bibliography should include the film we watched in class, "A More Perfect Union" and your textbook. The bibliography should be in MLA format. You can use your student handbook and/or the Purdue OWL website for guidance on how to use the MLA format. (There is a bibliography link on the webquest and our Weebly page to Purdue OWL.)

Your paper should include three biographical facts about your delegate's life, career, family, etc. Things they did at the convention do not count as biographical facts; these need to be facts about their background, education, family, or career. Weave them into your paper – don't make them a separate paragraph. For example, if you were John Adams, you might say something like, "As an ambassador to Great Britain, I know firsthand the difficulties we face with foreign trade under the Articles of Confederation. This new constitution will allow us to impose tariffs on British goods and keep international trade fair and balanced." In this example, a fact about Adams's career helped to lead into an important reason to support the Constitution.

Address the letter to the people of your home state and be sure to put your name on the back of the letter.

Your letter should be typed, double spaced, and in any font that is equivalent in size to Times New Roman 12 point font.