

APUSH TERMS 211-245

211. John Paul Jones (1747-1792)

Revolutionary War naval officer. His ship, the *Bonhomme Richard*, was sunk in a battle with the British ship *Serapis*, but he managed to board and gain control of the *Serapis*.

212. *Bonhomme Richard* and the *Serapis*

The *Bonhomme Richard* was John Paul Jones' ship, which was named for Benjamin Franklin's pseudonym, Poor Richard. The *Serapis* was the British ship he captured.

213. French Alliance of 1778, reasons for it

The colonies needed help from Europe in their war against Britain. France was Britain's rival and hoped to weaken Britain by causing her to lose the American colonies. The French were persuaded to support the colonists by news of the American victory at the Battle of Saratoga.

214. Major battles: Saratoga, Valley Forge

In 1777, British General John Burgoyne attacked southward from Canada along the Hudson Valley in New York, hoping to link up with General Howe in New York City, thereby cutting the colonies in half. Burgoyne was defeated by American General Horatio Gates on October 17, 1777, at the Battle of Saratoga, surrendering the entire British Army of the North. Valley Forge was not a battle; it was the site where the Continental Army camped during the winter of 1777-'78, after its defeats at the Battles of the Brandywine and Germantown. The Continental Army suffered further casualties at Valley Forge due to cold and disease. Washington chose the site because it allowed him to defend the Continental Congress if necessary, which was then meeting in York, Pennsylvania after the British capture of Philadelphia.

215. Yorktown, Lord Cornwallis

Because of their lack of success in suppressing the Revolution in the northern colonies, in early 1780 the British switched their strategy and undertook a series of campaigns through the southern colonies. This strategy was equally unsuccessful, and the British decided to return to their main headquarters in New York City. While marching from Virginia to New York, British commander Lord Cornwallis became trapped in Yorktown on the Chesapeake Bay. His troops fortified the town and waited for reinforcements. The French navy, led by DeGrasse, blocked their escape. After a series of battles, Cornwallis surrendered to the Continental Army on October 19, 1781, which ended all major fighting in the Revolutionary War.

216. Treaty of Paris, 1783

This treaty ended the Revolutionary War, recognized the independence of the American colonies, and granted the colonies the territory from the southern border of Canada to the northern border of Florida, and from the Atlantic coast to the Mississippi River.

217. Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, John Jay

They were the American delegates who signed the Treaty of Paris in 1783.

218. Social impact of the war

The Revolutionary War saw the emergence of the first anti-slavery groups, and many of the

northern states abolished slavery after the war. Women gained a small status increase for their efforts in the war, but they were primarily valued as mothers of future patriots.

219. Disestablishment, Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom

1779 - Written by Thomas Jefferson, this statute outlawed an established church and called for separation of Church and State.

220. New state constitutions (Massachusetts adopted by popular vote)

The first set of constitutions drafted by the individual states placed most of the government's power in the legislature, and almost none in the executive in order to promote democracy and avoid tyranny. However, without the strong leadership of the executive, the state legislatures argued among themselves and couldn't get anything done. After the Constitution was written, the states abandoned these old constitutions and wrote new ones that better balanced the power between the legislative and the executive.

221. Newburgh Conspiracy

The officers of the Continental Army had long gone without pay, and they met in Newburgh, New York to address Congress about their pay. Unfortunately, the American government had little money after the Revolutionary War. They also considered staging a coup and seizing control of the new government, but the plotting ceased when George Washington refused to support the plan.

222. Articles of Confederation: powers, weaknesses, successes

The Articles of Confederation delegated most of the powers (the power to tax, to regulate trade, and to draft troops) to the individual states, but left the federal government power over war, foreign policy, and issuing money. The Articles' weakness was that they gave the federal government so little power that it couldn't keep the country united. The Articles' only major success was that they settled western land claims with the Northwest Ordinance. The Articles were abandoned for the Constitution.

223. Constitution

The document which established the present federal government of the United States and outlined its powers. It can be changed through amendments.

224. Constitution: Preamble

"We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

225. Constitution: Logrolling

This refers to the practice of representatives or senators exchanging votes for each other's pet bills.

226. Constitution: Riders

Separate, unrelated clauses added to a bill in the legislature, either in order to ensure that the bill passes or to ensure that it fails.

227. Constitution: Committee system

After a bill is introduced in Congress, it is assigned to a small group of legislators for review and consideration, and the committee must vote to approve the bill before it is returned to the Senate or the House for a vote.

228. Constitution: Majority leader

The person elected, by the majority party of Congress, to be leader of the majority party in Congress.

229. Constitution: Majority whip

The person who tells members of the majority party in Congress how they should vote.

230. Constitution: Minority leader

The person elected, by the minority party of Congress, to be leader of the minority party in Congress.

231. Constitution: Minority whip

The person who tells members of the minority party in Congress how they should vote.

232. Constitution: Gerrymander

The practice of drawing the boundary lines of Congressional voting districts to give a particular political party an advantage when electing representatives. First used during Eldbridge Gerry's second term as governor of Massachusetts, the term comes from a combination of Gerry's name and a reference that the shape of the distinct boundary resembled a salamander.

233. Constitution: Executive branch

One of the three branches of government, the executive enforces laws. It is headed by the president, who has the power to veto legislation passed by Congress.

234. Constitution: Judiciary branch

One of the three branches of government, the judiciary interprets laws. The highest authority in the judiciary is the Supreme Court, which determines the constitutionality of laws.

235. Constitution: The amendment process

An amendment to the Constitution may be proposed if 2/3 of the members of Congress or 2/3 of state legislatures vote for it. The amendment may then be added to the Constitution by a 3/4 vote of state legislatures, or special state conventions elected for that purpose.

236. Constitution: Supremacy clause

Article VI of the Constitution, which declares the Constitution, all federal laws passed pursuant to its provisions, and all federal treaties, to be the "supreme law of the land," which overrides any state laws or state constitutional provisions to the contrary.

237. Constitution: Checks and balances

Each of the three branches of government "checks" (i.e., blocks) the power of the other two, so no one branch can become too powerful. The president (executive) can veto laws passed by Congress (legislative), and also chooses the judges in the Supreme Court (judiciary). Congress can overturn a presidential veto if 2/3 of the members vote to do so. The Supreme Court can declare laws passed by Congress and the president unconstitutional, and hence invalid.

238. Maryland, cession of western land claims

After the Revolutionary war, many states claimed all of the western land between their northernmost and southernmost borders, which meant that many strips of land were claimed by more than one state. The Continental Congress was trying to get the states to ratify the Articles of Confederation, but Maryland refused to ratify it until all the states gave their western land claims. Maryland held out, and the western land claims were abandoned.

239. New state constitutions during the Revolutionary War and after

The first set of constitutions drafted by the individual states placed most of the government's power in the legislature, and almost none in the executive in order to promote democracy and avoid tyranny. However, without the strong leadership of the executive, the state legislatures argued among themselves and couldn't get anything done. After the Constitution was written, the states abandoned these old constitutions and wrote new ones that better balanced the power between the legislative and the executive.

240. Pennsylvania militia routs Congress, 1783

Unpaid Revolutionary War veterans staged a protest outside Congress' meeting hall, forcing Congress to move to Princeton, New Jersey.

241. Land Ordinance of 1785

A major success of the Articles of Confederation. Provided for the orderly surveying and distribution of land belonging to the U.S.

242. Northwest Ordinance, 1787

A major success of the Articles of Confederation. Set up the framework of a government for the Northwest Territory. The Ordinance provided that the Territory would be divided into 3 to 5 states, outlawed slavery in the Territory, and set 60,000 as the minimum population for statehood.

243. Shay's Rebellion

Occurred in the winter of 1786-7 under the Articles of Confederation. Poor, indebted landowners in Massachusetts blocked access to courts and prevented the government from arresting or repossessing the property of those in debt. The federal government was too weak to help Boston remove the rebels, a sign that the Articles of Confederation weren't working effectively.

244. Noah Webster (1758-1843)

Wrote some of the first dictionaries and spellers in the U.S. His books, which became the standard for the U.S., promoted American spellings and pronunciations, rather than British.

245. Philadelphia Convention for the Constitution (Constitutional Convention)

Beginning on May 25, 1787, the convention recommended by the Annapolis Convention was held in Philadelphia. All of the states except Rhode Island sent delegates, and George Washington served as president of the convention. The convention lasted 16 weeks, and on September 17, 1787, produced the present Constitution of the United States, which was drafted largely by James Madison.