



# UNIT 1

## LESSON 2

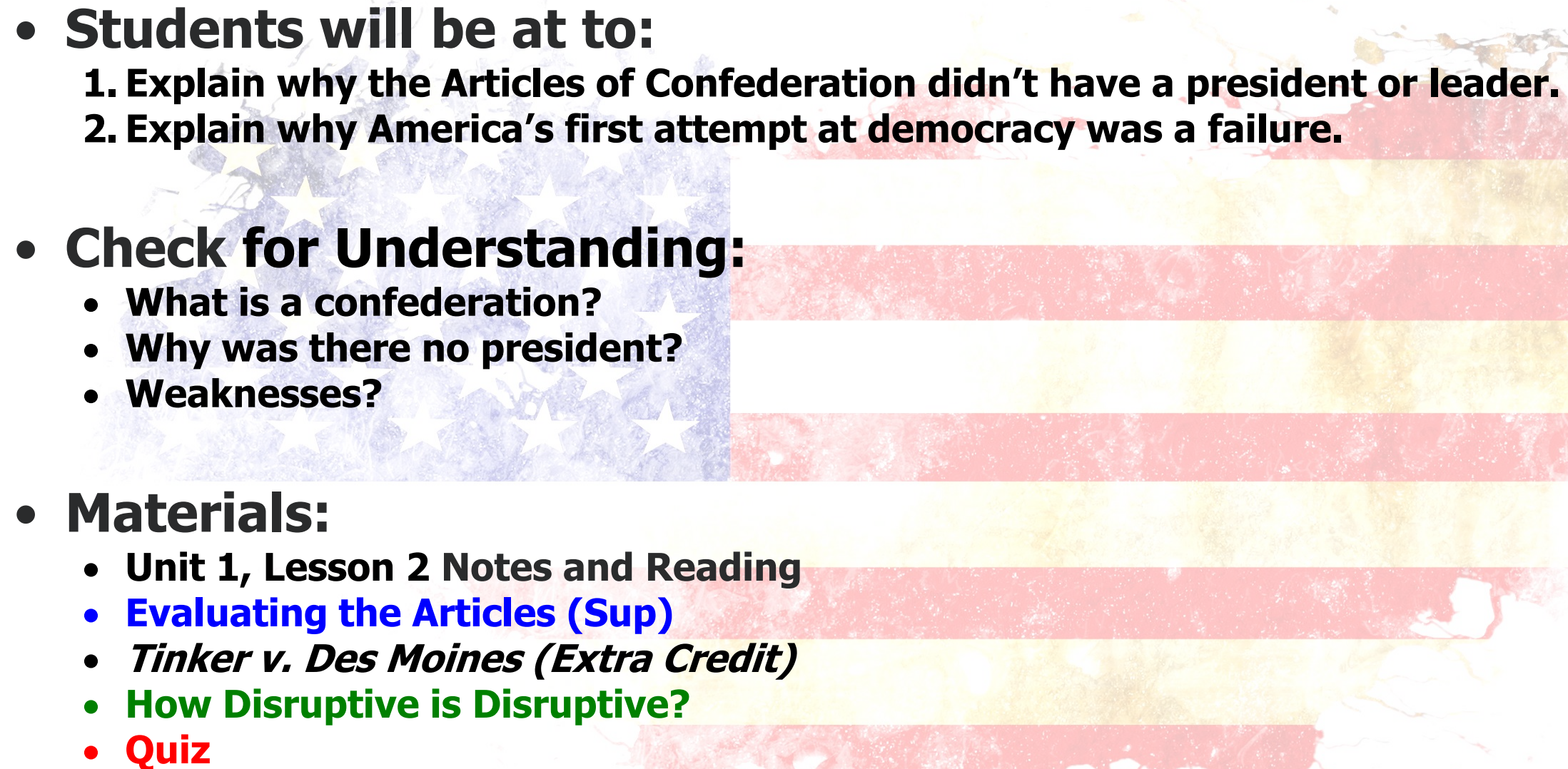
# Our 1<sup>st</sup> Government - The Articles of Confederation

## **Lesson 2 – Learning Objective and Warmup**

***Students will be able to explain why America's first attempt at democracy (the Articles of Confederation) was a failure.***

- 1. COLLABORATE:** In your group, think of a new government with no leader (such as a president or a king). Who will be the final decision maker of the new government?
- 2. CRITICAL THINKING:** Why did America establish a new government with no leader?
- 3. REVIEW:** Why was the Declaration of Independence written?



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- **Students will be at to:**
    1. Explain why the Articles of Confederation didn't have a president or leader.
    2. Explain why America's first attempt at democracy was a failure.
  - **Check for Understanding:**
    - What is a confederation?
    - Why was there no president?
    - Weaknesses?
  - **Materials:**
    - Unit 1, Lesson 2 Notes and Reading
    - Evaluating the Articles (Sup)
    - *Tinker v. Des Moines (Extra Credit)*
    - How Disruptive is Disruptive?
    - Quiz

# OUR 1<sup>ST</sup> GOV'T - THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

The Articles of Confederation was the first written constitution of the United States after it was ratified in 1781. **Yep, our first attempt at democracy was a failure! Most first attempts are failures.**



# OUR 1<sup>ST</sup> GOV'T - THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

1. How did America gain its independence from Britain?

- The American colonists gained their independence from the British after the Revolutionary War.

2. What was the Articles of Confederation?

- It was the first written constitution of the United States after it was ratified (approved) in 1781.

3. What is a confederation?

- A confederation is a group of individuals united together for a purpose – in this case, the 13 states that had been British colonies before the war – but retain considerable independence. "Loose league of friendship."

4. Under the Articles of Confederation, what was the only branch of government? How many votes did each state get?

- Congress was the only branch of government (no president or courts).
- In Congress, each state got one vote.

5. Why was it difficult to pass laws and amendments?

- It was difficult to pass laws because Congress needed 9 of 13 states to pass any laws.
- It was difficult to pass amendments because all 13 states would need to agree on a change.

6. What was the issue with currency under the Articles of Confederation?

- States had their own money systems which made trade between the states, and other countries, extremely difficult.

7. Why was Shays' Rebellion the "final straw"?

- The central government couldn't put down an internal rebellion. With no money, the central government couldn't act to protect the "perpetual union."

# WEAKNESSES OF THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

The left side lists the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation, and the right side lists some possible consequences of those weaknesses. Identify each weakness from the left to match it to its likely effect on the right.

## WEAKNESSES OF THE ARTICLES

- A. Congress had no executive power to enforce laws.
- B. Congress had no sole power to coin money.
- C. Congress had no power to levy taxes.
- D. Congress had no power to regulate commerce (trade).
- E. Congress had no power to amend the Articles w/out a unanimous vote.

## EFFECTS OF THE WEAKNESSES

- 1. E *NO NEW CHANGES* - New attempt at revising the Articles fails to garner enough votes for approval
- 2. B *YOUR MONEY IS WORTHLESS* - Connecticut says it will no longer accept Rhode Island's "worthless currency"
- 3. D *NOT FOR SALE HERE* - Virginia bans all goods from Maryland and North Carolina
- 4. A *STATES CHALLENGE NATIONAL LAWS* - A Georgia citizen disobeys a congressional resolution, but the Georgia legislature says, "O.K."
- 5. C *DEBT ON THE RISE* - France sends collection notices for war debts; Congress petitions Virginia for a loan



# GOLDILOCKS OF GOVERNMENT



**DON'T EVEN GET ME STARTED ON THE FACT  
THAT GOLDILOCKS WAS A CRIMINAL!!!**